



## **Reconciliation Expert Network (REN) Meeting**

**Stockholm  
15 – 17 March 2006**

**REPORT\***

*\* Thanks are due to Kajsa Ericsson for her assistance with the initial drafting of this report.*

## Introduction

International IDEA's work on reconciliation forms part of the Institute's **Democracy Building and Conflict Management Programme**. The second meeting of the Reconciliation Expert Network (REN)<sup>1</sup>, of which this is a report, was initially due to be held in Sri Lanka in November 2005. Due to the prevailing security situation in Sri Lanka, however, it was eventually decided to hold the REN meeting in March 2006 at IDEA's headquarters in Stockholm, Sweden.

Meeting participants came from three principal constituencies:

- Contributors to the IDEA Handbook *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict*
- Practitioners involved in different ways in IDEA-sponsored reconciliation programmes in the field
- Selected reconciliation researchers and academics.

35 people from around the world and with a wide collective range of expertise gathered with the following objectives in focus:

- take stock of current developments in the broad field of reconciliation
- identify issues deserving of further attention and analysis by IDEA and/or other relevant actors
- critically assess IDEA's current and future reconciliation-directed programming
- reflect on the potential function and future role of the REN.

## CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

### 1. Truth-telling (Mark Freeman, ICTJ)

Three principal forms of truth-telling should be highlighted when examining developments in the field in the last few years.

- **The 'right to truth'**  
All states have obligations to take effective steps against human rights violations, to investigate human right violations and identify both victims and perpetrators. Investigation and identification are fundamental issues for the right to truth. The right to truth was previously more a political claim than a legal right, but it is now emerging more widely as a legally recognized 'right'. The right to truth concerns both individuals and societies, and there is now a draft international convention on the protection of all persons from enforced disappearance, article 24(2) of which explicitly refers to the right to truth. To further enhance the emerging focus on the right to truth, a UN Special Rapporteur on Disappearances has reaffirmed that individuals citizens have a 'right to truth' regarding missing family and relatives.
- **Truth and reconciliation commissions**  
Since 2004 four commissions have ended their work: **Ghana's National Reconciliation Commission**, the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Sierra Leone**, the **Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconcilia-**

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<sup>1</sup> The first REN meeting, hosted by Canada's **International Development Research Centre (IDRC)** was held in Ottawa in October 2004. A meeting report is available at [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int) and [www.idrc.org](http://www.idrc.org)

tion in Timor L'Este<sup>2</sup>, the **Moroccan Equity and Reconciliation Commission**<sup>3</sup>, and the **Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission**<sup>4</sup>. Together with the pursuit of truth and justice, reconciliation was a key issue for these commissions, which has in turn helped to define the focus of future efforts in this regard.

All four commissions are broadly considered to be success stories, not least due to their emphasis on holding public hearings and producing final reports that were made public. Reconciliation has been an explicit objective, and all the commissions in question went further than pure truth-telling, i.e. they attempted to create a space for national democratic dialogue, included discussion of reconciliation in their activities etc. The Timor L'Este Commission had a profound impact on Timorese society, while the other commissions in question experienced some noticeable setbacks alongside a number of positive achievements.

Currently there are five commissions at work:

- The **Grenada** Truth and Reconciliation Commission started in 2001 and is due to finish its work in the near future.
- A Truth and Justice Commission (CVJ) was established in **Paraguay** in June 2004. To date it has been largely starved of resources and is not very functional.
- In the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** a Truth and Reconciliation Commission<sup>5</sup>, established in 2003, has a robust mandate to investigate, but has not yet taken a single victim statement or held any public hearings.
- The recently inaugurated (June 2006) **Liberia** Truth and Reconciliation Commission follows up where previous efforts to establish a commission failed.
- The **Indonesia** Truth and Reconciliation Commission has met much resistance from NGOs since it is seen as leaning towards an endorsement of impunity.

Other commissions that should be mentioned in this context:

- The Chilean experience introduced the notion of linking truth-telling with reconciliation; however, there is a trend in some recent commissions towards a focus on reconciliation as opposed to – even as some see it, at the expense of – truth-telling.
- Canada has established a truth commission to look at the state's treatment of native peoples in residential schools.
- There are indications that Spain will initiate an official enquiry into the Franco era and possibly even establish a body intended to promote reconciliation.
- Bosnia Herzegovina has set up a commission of inquiry into the June 1995 massacre in Srebrenica.
- Sri Lanka set up a commission specifically to examine the 1983 anti-Tamil riots.
- Argentina has had 'truth trials', even if no sanctions could be imposed.

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<sup>2</sup> Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliação (CAVR)

<sup>3</sup> Commission nationale pour la vérité, l'équité et la réconciliation.

<sup>4</sup> Comisión de la verdad y Reconciliación.

<sup>5</sup> Commission de Vérité et Réconciliation.

In the area of reconciliation and transitional justice the global south has taken a lead in developing truth and reconciliation efforts, and the north/developed world has still much to learn from this.

- **Other truth-telling bodies**

- The Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Commission (NC), USA, has developed a recognized methodology for promoting truth and reconciliation. Despite focusing on a different area of activity, an important contribution is made towards truth telling where national human rights commissions and ombudsmen are central actors.
- Ad hoc bodies that are not truth commissions but have a similar function, e.g. Srebrenica and Sri Lanka.
- Multilateral commissions of inquiry, e.g. Darfur.
- Thematic commissions, e.g. Turkey

TRCs are increasingly promoting discussions of justice in the public domain. Serious inquiries are conducted through the medium of victim-centered public hearings, an approach that combines reconciliation with the pursuit of truth and justice. This approach promotes a 'win-win' situation instead of privileging one objective over another ('reconciliation' or 'justice'/ 'truth'). It is possible to link truth *seeking* with truth *telling*. South Africans played a pioneering role in promoting this new approach.

Domestic human right NGOs have an extremely important role to play in relation to monitoring truth-telling processes in specific countries. A challenge in this regard is that outsiders tend to have a romanticized image of the situation just because a truth commission is in operation. Domestic NGOs, however, can continue monitoring and reporting on the critical climate within a country.

TRCs are 'monumental spectacles' that can sometimes crowd out other measures undertaken in post-conflict societies: they can serve to put the spotlight on one specific issue and leave everything else in the shadow. However, it is vital to realize that TRCs have a limited purpose, and cannot be expected to solve all problems linked to the reconstruction of post-conflict societies.

Another important issue is the relation between truth commissions and investigatory work. The case of the DRC is extreme in this respect. In the DRC the TRC is operating in an atmosphere of fear and conflict, which only serves to complicate the issues at stake. Currently the focus is on mediating disputes and mending relationships, and activities are often led by the clergy. Other creative activities such as performed plays, photo exhibitions, art competitions, reconciliation ceremonies and radio programmes are also linked to the TRC.

These are not truth-seeking or truth-telling activities as such, but they none the less serve a useful purpose. TRCs are doomed to fail if there is no investigation aimed at truth-seeking and/or telling, but it is important to understand that TRCs also contribute to post-conflict societies in many other positive respects. There is often cooperation between truth commissions and national courts and justice. Sometimes the two are completely separated, sometimes totally integrated.

## 2. Justice (David Bloomfield, Berghof Centre)

The link between justice and truth-telling is sometimes ignored, but there is a danger in disconnecting the elements of justice, truth-telling and reconciliation. Transitional justice is often treated as something separate from the rest of the reconciliation agenda, which is very unfortunate. Reconciliation can usefully be viewed as an overarching framework with justice as one vital component, alongside truth-seeking, healing and reparation. It is unrealistic to ask victims to reconcile in the absence of justice.

In the discussion of justice and reconciliation the question of *what reconciliation is really is about* is, of course, central. If, as some meeting participants argued, reconciliation after violent conflict is fundamentally about doing 'good post violence politics', then what form should that 'good post violence politics' take? One step towards some kind of clarity in the matter comes from questioning the 'traditional' concept of reconciliation, in particular the widely-held view that 'forgiving' the perpetrators of war crimes and other serious human-rights violations is intrinsic to the meaning and practice of reconciliation. Forgiveness has a religious dimension that is none the less problematic in many contexts, particularly to victims. Therefore, in contradiction to the view of Desmond Tutu, it was argued that forgiveness is analytically separate from reconciliation and justice. Forgiveness is a matter of private conviction, and something that has to be earned, not assumed, by perpetrators.

Is it possible to achieve reconciliation without forgiveness? The answer, as suggested by some participants, is 'yes', not least because every person in a post-conflict situation has the right not to forgive unless he/she chooses to do so. Forgiveness, in other words, is not a requirement for achieving reconciliation. Additionally, reconciliation is often linked to concepts of love and harmony, which are neither inherent components nor logical consequences of reconciliation. This leads us to the ongoing necessity of redefining and clarifying our operational concept of reconciliation.

In reference to the IDEA Handbook *Reconciliation After Violent Conflict*, reconciliation and retributive justice are understood as qualitatively different processes. Retributive justice is crucial, not least for victims, because it sends a clear message of accountability for crimes, to perpetrators and victims alike. When dealing with post-violence contexts, however, it is also important to *expand* the concept of justice – to 'thicken and deepen' it, as one participant expressed it. In particular, issues of fairness and social justice should be incorporated into a broadened notion of post-violence justice. It is equally important to consider the restorative and distributive dimensions of justice, not least because these kinds of justice focus on victims as well as perpetrators.

For example, the International Criminal Court (ICC) focuses primarily on the pursuit of traditional, retributive justice, which is obviously important, but it reflects an approach that can – as in Uganda today - diverge significantly from people's experiences on the ground. The ICC and its role and impact on reconciliation processes is important, but, some meeting participants argued, reconciliation and justice at the national level are ultimately more important than the international and political dimensions of the issue.

Another highly problematic issue is the relationship between traditional and formal legal justice in dealing with mass crimes. IDEA is in the process of developing a

comparative research project on 'African Traditional Justice Mechanisms' to look closely at this issue in a number of specific countries.

### 3. Reparations (Stef Vanderginste, IOB)

An overview of six different post-conflict reparation practices that have developed during the last few years was proposed:

- UN General Assembly, Resolution 60/147, 16 December 2005  
Adoption of the "*Basic Principles and Guidelines of the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law*"

This resolution is significant for the guidelines it presents, but it is disappointing from a legal point of view. It only identifies mechanisms involved in existing guidelines. On the positive side, however, for the first time there is overview of what a state can and should do to promote reparations. It is thus an important reference document. Concerning remedy and reparation, the resolution proposes equal access to relevant information for individual victims and groups of victims, which is clearly necessary for reparations to be effective.

- International Criminal Court, Assembly of States Parties, Resolution ICC ASP/4/RES.3, 3 December 2005, Adoption of the "*Regulation of the ICC Trust Fund for Victims*"

The resolution states that reparations orders can be issued by the court, either directly or via Trust Funds. The Trust Fund can intervene on its own initiative but it has to notify the court. Trust funds can engage in reparation for victims in situations under investigation. There are large mandates for the trust funds and they can start as soon as possible; it is necessary to act fast because people, as well as evidentiary proofs, disappear.

- International Criminal Court, Pre-Trial Chamber Decision, Situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 17 January 2006

This is a decision on the application for participation in the proceedings of victims during the stage of investigation. This means that information should be available for victims and that victims are allowed to attend pre-trial hearings. Their participation is not prejudicial to the court proceedings. There is broad consensus that legally speaking this is a very important decision, cf. the Nüremberg Tribunal.

- International Court of Justice, Judgment of 19 December 2005. A case concerning armed activities on the territory of the Congo (DRC vs. Uganda)

The judgment treats the right to reparation in conflict between states. Injuries caused by a state on the territory of another states have to be adequately compensated for by the offending state.

- International Commission on Inquiry on Darfur – Report on the UN Secretary-General, January 2005

In the report it is recommended that a Compensation Commission should be established.

- UN SC Resolution 1593 of 31 March 2005: referral to the ICC, but no Compensation Commission
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission for Sierra Leone, Report, October 2004, which includes a specific chapter on reparations as well as recommendations in this regard (Vol. 2, Chapter 4).

One problem facing reconciliation efforts that address the issue of reparations is institutional fragmentation. It was argued that states take responsibility when citizens have the capacity to voice their concerns. This means that in cases where people do not have that capacity, it is much more difficult to enact reparations measures. In cases where the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has ruled for reparation in the favour of victims, the court intervenes if sentences of payment for compensation do not materialized. However, the issue is too recent to make any clear observations on the impact of the ICJ's involvement in reparation practices. In addition, concerns were raised concerning the broad accountability of post-conflict reparations processes.

The issue of corporate complicity/responsibility was raised. It is seen as an interesting line of enquiry and although there is still limited practice of applying the principle of corporate complicity, there are movements towards it, e.g. in Switzerland. The notion of corporate complicity has also been raised recently in South Africa, and is now being evaluated. In this case it partly has its origin in the challenges of finding funds for reparations when there are many other competing development and reconstruction claims.

The question of the reproduction of victim identity is an important one. It is now understood that victims potentially compete for being 'the most victimized' and therefore, in most need of reparation. Hence, it is important that states take responsibility, and that victim groups organize and press claims.

In addition, there is the question of the definition of victims. A broad definition of victim incorporates not only direct victims, but also their families, which in post-conflict settings implies involving a considerable number of people. Under this definition, victims are those who have suffered direct personal or collective harm. Obviously, this greatly complicates the issue of reparations within the framework of reconciliation efforts. Who should get what as reparation for their suffering? It was also noted that there needs to be a focus on the victim before, not only after, a court judgment is delivered.

#### **4. Healing (Brandon Hamber, Democratic Dialogue)**

Thanks to the broad spectra of the discussion on reconciliation, healing fits well into the subject. Political violence is not only directed towards individuals or communities: the whole of a given society is involved. The question of how to deal with political violence has to be seen in the context of trauma. Healing – dealing with the human consequences of violence - is a critical component of reconciliation. Both individual and social healing need to be incorporated into the concept of healing with respect to political violence and reconciliation. Victim groups are very important in a reconcilia-

tory process focused on post-conflict healing because they are located between the political process and the damaged individual.

There is a clear psychological dimension to post-conflict healing, principally due to the individual and collective processes that need to be addressed. One concern is how to narrow the gap between the two processes. Some important gaps are identified:

- Victims' rights still need to be spoken about and developed. The rights to truth and reparation are but the first of these rights. Procedural rights, treatment, support etc also need to be worked out and incorporated.
- A *social re-framing* of the rights debate is needed. How do you prioritize reconciliation from a victim's point of view? Amnesty is often seen as undermining the right of victims.
- The gender dimension has to be seriously addressed, not least because male and female experiences of violence are often very different.
- The impact of a lack of post-violence healing processes on the uninvolved needs to be taken into consideration. Mental health problems, youth violence, domestic violence, alcoholism etc, are manifestations of untreated post-violent traumas. In South Africa, women's rights are viewed by some men as taking away from both their rights and their self esteem. The new setting for combatants following their return is often difficult to deal with, not least because of the new issues and dilemmas involved.

The healing process from the perpetrators' point of view must also be kept in focus; a transformative process is also required here. An interesting issue is the use of the term 'closure' and the relationship between closure and healing. It was argued that closure does not have to be synonymous with the ending of a conflict, and in this sense the use of the word "closure" needs to be interrogated; 'well-being' is sometimes preferred, but 'moving on' is another term commonly employed.

It is recognized that while healing is essentially an individual process, it is none the less still widely 'touted' at the national level. The focus on national and collective healing in relation to an individual process raises concerns. In Northern Ireland, for example, individual-level healing has been shown to be relatively successful. In this context, it is commonly argued that individual healing contributes to the collective healing process. At the national level, politicians need to give positive messages of 'moving forward'. That should not, however, exclude personal demands for accounting with the past. 'The nation will be healed' is often heard in connection with healing processes in post-violence settings. This, it was argued, entails a language problem with serious practical ramifications. Individual and national healing are different processes, and indeed there is often a tension between the collective and the individual in this respect.

It was suggested that therapeutic interventions have been over-privileged to some extent, often at the expense of other healing methods. However, it is not the therapeutic event itself that creates lasting healing, but rather the *context* in which people find themselves when they interpret their experience that counts and has to be dealt with in order to reach healing. We have to separate the traumatic incident from the political context. There also has to be an interchange between the different dimen-

sions of healing; justice and mental health are both important issues for the healing process.

Additionally, there are concerns regarding the cultural dimensions to healing. Can we justifiably speak about different kinds of victimhood, different kinds of trauma and different kinds of healing processes? There is growing research on the cultural dimensions of healing in the context of reconciliation. It is necessary to look at the different institutions that contributed to the conflict, rather than simply adopt the perspective of looking at the contribution of victims themselves to their victimhood. Institutional contributions to the healing process are a good place to start in this regard.

## **OVERVIEW OF IDEA'S CURRENT REGIONAL AND THEMATIC RECONCILIATION ACTIVITIES**

### **South Asia**

IDEA's South Asia Programme has a broad approach focused on supporting and promoting institutional developments in countries of the region. To date the programme has engaged with reconciliation-related issues in Indonesia, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Faced with many challenges in the different countries of the region, we can learn from the Indian experience of successfully establishing new relationships of cohabitation and co-existence between different ethnic and religious communities. IDEA aims to assist policy makers in their thinking on and support for reconciliation processes. The IDEA Reconciliation Handbook has proved to a very valuable tool in this respect. Beside promoting institutional changes and monitoring implementations, another important aspect of work on reconciliation in the region relates to truth telling. In this endeavour IDEA also co-operates with regional and local civil society actors, as well as other non-state actors. Reconciliation work is difficult in South Asia, however, not least due to the sheer complexity of the region.

In Sri Lanka a translation of the Policy Summary of the IDEA's Handbook *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict* has been published in both Tamil and Sinhala. In addition the programme has organized a series of reconciliation enquiries aimed at all the key communities of the island, initiated dialogues for policy makers, and held inter-religious dialogue. Restoration has been identified as a focal point for reconciliation discourse in Sri Lanka, because it is evident that inter- and intra-community relationships based on mutual recognition and respect have to be restored – and in some cases created from scratch - before any direct reconciliation work can begin.

In this respect it is also important to note the impact of the 2004 tsunami on efforts to promote reconciliation in the country (initially positive, subsequently less so). The South Asia programme works in an integrated fashion with other themes in IDEA's work e.g. democracy building and constitution building processes. In addition, the Policy Summary of the Reconciliation Handbook has been translated to Burmese, and a number of follow-up activities are planned in this regard.

In March 2005 a joint IDEA and Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP) symposium was held in Delhi. Three main thematic rubrics were treated.

- Mapping different regional reconciliation discourses.

- Mapping regional resources for reconciliation. Where are the resources located? Are they chiefly in secular or political settings? Do they treat different religions differently?
- Dilemmas of reconciliation. Reconciliation cannot only deal with relationships. How can we make reconciliation meaningful and relevant e.g. in the political domain? Reconciliation involves active struggle and must be treated holistically, as is the case in for example Buddhism and Ghandism.

A major problem identified during the symposium is the prevailing culture of militarism in the region. There has to be a change of mindset: militarism needs to be replaced with dialogue in order to create a new, reconciliation-oriented culture. Issues of memory and trauma healing, both individual and social, need to be addressed as well as tensions between the dictates of punitive justice and the social need for reconciliation.

Gender and security are two more critical issues that need to be addressed in reconciliation work. Gender has been under-theorized and is still insufficiently mainstreamed in/integrated into reconciliation discourse. The concept of hyper masculinity needs to be looked at, and overall there is a need for re-conceptualization of the meaning of gender in ongoing and post-violence contexts.

Issues of apologizing and psycho-social healing were highlighted in the Delhi symposium. Disorders and psychological problems in the aftermath of conflict and political violence are crucial questions to address. In tandem with a focus on individuals, this in turn implies the necessity for a community-based approach to reconciliation.

## Latin America

The starting point of IDEA's reconciliation work in Latin America to date has been the need to contextualize reconciliation to bring it closer to the lived experience of the people of the continent. One step in this direction was the 2005 publication of a regionally adapted Latin American version of the IDEA Reconciliation Handbook *Verdad, justicia y reparacion - Desafios para la democracia y la convivencia social* (*Truth, Justice and Reparations: Challenges for Democracy and Social Coexistence*). Alongside sections of the original Handbook the Latin American version includes: a set of five regional country case studies; an overview of current regional reconciliation trends and challenges; and some regionally specific, policy-related conclusions.

Regional associations of the term 'reconciliation' with moves to install amnesty, politically-engineered 'forgiveness' and even impunity render the notion problematic for countries with painful experiences of long periods of authoritarian rule and/or military dictatorship. In part because of these regionally specific conceptual obstacles, a key point of emphasis in the Latin American version of the Handbook is the need for strategies intended to promote tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

Specific for the Latin American region is a prevailing lack of trust in democracy and its capacity to deliver social and economic rights, which has in turn served to slow down reconciliation efforts in a number of countries. However, there is a strong demand for justice in Latin America, and impunity for perpetrators is widely viewed as a critical obstacle to the process of reconciliation. In Argentina, for example, military impunity has now been constitutionally abolished. Additionally, reconciliation efforts

need to be mindful of the fact that throughout the region, repression has been particularly severe in states with significant indigenous Indian populations.

### **Western Balkans**

A project within the framework of IDEA's Democracy Building and Conflict Management (DCM) programme focusing on sustainable reconciliation in the Western Balkans may commence later in 2006. The issue of reconciliation has received extensive attention in the region over the last decade, and many NGOs are active in the field. But there is a missing link at the institutional level, where there is as yet little evidence of willingness to promote reconciliation within and between the states of the region, or even reluctance to do so out of fear that this will be perceived as evidence of attempting to 'go back' to the Yugoslav era.

Despite these obstacles, there are none the less some positive aspects of the current situation worth noting. First, many young people and students are active and interested, and see the need for reconciliation. Second, prospective membership of the European Union is a very strong carrot for the Western Balkan countries to increase their efforts to promote regional co-operation, good relations and even – ultimately – initiate reconciliation programmes.

It thus appears that national and regional reconciliation 'windows of opportunity' are beginning to open up in the Western Balkans, not always at the same pace or in the same specific direction, but at least based on renewed activity and discussion regarding the issue of reconciliation. At the same time, on the other side of the balance sheet it is important to note that a number of recent events, for example the pursuit of General Mladic and death of Slobodan Milosevic, have resulted in renewed outbursts of nationalism. Overall, however, the regional picture suggests that the time is now ripe to begin addressing reconciliation at the institutional level, an approach that sits well with IDEA's emphasis on a democracy/governance approach to reconciliation.

A step in this direction for IDEA is a brainstorming consultation with experts from and on the region, to be held at IDEA headquarters in April 2006<sup>6</sup>. The main objective of this meeting will be to test the hypothesis that regionally speaking, the time is now ripe for identifying institutions receptive to such a process, specifically to an identification of critical legacies of the conflicts of the 1990s that need to be addressed in order for a healing process to take place. Based on this, the aim will be to identify specific national institutions that could and should be motivated to come together to initiate, develop and support national and regional processes of reconciliation.

### **West Africa**

IDEA's reconciliation work in the West Africa is at an exploratory stage. The first step was a Francophone West Africa regional seminar held at the Gorée Institute, Dakar

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<sup>6</sup> A report on the IDEA April 2006 Western Balkans Regional Reconciliation Consultation will be available at [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int).

in May 2005.<sup>7</sup> The participants, who included academics and civil society representatives from the seven Francophone countries of the region, discussed key concepts and practical tools outlined in the IDEA Reconciliation Handbook and outlined critical reconciliation needs and challenges in the own diverse national contexts.

At the conceptual level, a key challenge in West Africa concerns the understanding of the word reconciliation. In a number of countries it is apparent that the term reconciliation is widely used in a way that appears to equate it with high-level deal-making and 'fixing' in the aftermath of a domestic political dispute. As result the meaning and content of the term is diluted, the resulting challenge being to promote a deeper, 'thicker' understanding of the meaning of 'dealing with the past' in the aftermath of violent conflict - a reality all too familiar in many countries of the region.

Today, there is a major regional difference between countries either emerging from or still embroiled in conflict, and 'stable' countries on the path of democratic consolidation. In countries emerging from conflict where democracy is gaining ground it is critical to focus on identifying what needs to be done to address the legacy of the violent past, and the specific ways in which that legacy still impacts on people's everyday experiences and perceptions.

For example, perpetrators may still be walking freely, victims may not have received any material assistance or political recognition. In other words, an ongoing (re)assessment of the situation with regard to reconciliation is required. Especially interesting for reconciliation in the West African region is the micro-macro relationship, in other words, the connection between individual and national reconciliation processes. In Senegal, for example, the reconciliation situation is very favourable, and parliamentarians are seen as important potential agents of a concrete reconciliation process with respect to the 20-year old conflict in the southern Casamance region.

### **Parliamentarians and Reconciliation**

In 2005, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and IDEA published jointly *Making Reconciliation Work: The Role of Parliamentarians*, now available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. IPU's work on reconciliation is rather recent, but the assumption that parliamentarians are an essential factor in a process of reconciliation is now widely accepted.<sup>8</sup> IPU works to promote the establishment of effective national legislatures in the aftermath of political violence and/or authoritarian rule, and to raise awareness of the important contribution that parliamentarians can make to national reconciliation processes.

As representatives of the diverse communities and interests within a country, parliamentarians can play a potentially important role in modeling a reconciliation process. In addition, they also have an important function in promoting transitional justice in a post-conflict setting (e.g. legislating for the establishment of a TRC).

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<sup>7</sup> A report from the May 2005 Francophone countries regional workshop (in French) is available by request from IDEA. A report on a follow-up Anglophone West African countries regional workshop held in Accra, Ghana in April 2006 will soon be available at: [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)

<sup>8</sup> An illustration of this is provided by the *Guidelines for the International Community on Parliaments, Crisis Prevention and Recovery* produced by UNDP in spring 2006. (See [www.parlcrpr.undp.org](http://www.parlcrpr.undp.org)). The IDEA/IPU *Making Reconciliation Work: The Role of Parliamentarians* Handbook is cited as a key reference text for the UNDP Guidelines.

A greater IPU presence in Burundi has been suggested, as well as an organized follow-up activity to the launch of the IDEA/IPU 'Parliamentarians and Reconciliation' Handbook held in Bujumbura in November 2005.

At the same time, once again we have to ask ourselves what is actually meant when using the term 'reconciliation'? One way of looking at the problem is that not having a specific concept of reconciliation does not in principle pose any problems if the idea effectively exists in practice in the specific culture in question, as for instance is the case in Sri Lanka. None the less, there are still many questions regarding the concept. Too often the idea of reconciliation is 'hijacked' by a particular interest group within society, thereby rendering the term problematic or even impossible to use effectively in a conflict management or post-conflict context (c.f. discussion of Latin America above).

Hence, operational understandings of reconciliation may need to be clarified or even redefined before a broader application can be achieved and various actors in conflict affected societies feel enabled to use the term, e.g. those for whom the religious connotations of the word are problematic. There must be a consensus on the meaning of reconciliation for it to be useful at all. One way to deal with this dilemma can be to promote the notion of reconciliation as a pragmatically-rooted process rather a religiously-inspired 'end goal', as advocated in the IDEA Reconciliation Handbook. When reconciliation's principal components of truth and justice have reached the stage of institutionalization and are respected in a war-torn society, then perhaps a process of reconciliation can truly be said to have been initiated.

## **DILEMMAS OF RECONCILIATION: LESSONS AND CHALLENGES FROM THE FIELD**

***Mo Bleeker, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Political Affairs Division IV, Human Security, Switzerland***

Field experiences in Latin and Central America, in particular in Guatemala, have led to some thinking about what the state or a state actor can do to make a reconciliation process come about. The Guatemalan case shows how difficult it is to implement peace agreements and promote a transition from a culture of violence to a culture of peaceful conflict management when there is a prevailing lack of political will to move in this direction.

Dealing with past issues of conflict is an important part of attempts to promote reconciliation in a post-conflict state. After the end of the conflict in Guatemala the word 'reconciliation' was so over-used that it began to have little sense, even to assume negative connotations. The term was widely used as synonymous with a final 'return' to peace, or even as the 'end of the story'. There was little recognition of context or the root causes of conflict when talking about reconciliation. As a result the risk of eventual conflict resumption increased.

Reconciliation is often used as a catch-all concept, an ahistorical utopia, and a vision denying the facts of the recent conflict. Additionally, reconciliation is often seen as akin to nation-building, but we should ask ourselves if that really is true, or if reconciliation is different to, or maybe more than, nation-building? This nation-building/reconciliation nexus is often a dilemma in post-conflict societies, but it can be medi-

ated by creating a feeling of belonging to the community. A two-way process of accountability is also needed. Furthermore, reconciliation should never be seen as a 'bi-product' of transitional justice, a conjuring trick, nor as an automatic result of a process of transitional justice.

It is necessary to focus on establishing a social fabric in order to identify the common ground and common needs, etc. Civil society is an important factor in the weaving together of this social fabric, but a major problem is the leadership crisis it often experiences. Civil society is often seriously divided, which makes it very difficult to negotiate with the government. A major problem in Guatemala is that the issues addressed in the peace process have not been implemented: for example, the issue of reparation has still not been addressed.

In Guatemala the peace agreement was an extraordinary achievement, but actual implementation has been thin on the ground and there has been little, if any, focus on the establishment of institutions capable of protecting the peace agreement and addressing what would happen in the event of its non-implementation. A number of important questions concerning the security sector are as yet unresolved. There is still no security sector reform and the issue of small arms proliferation has still not been seriously addressed. Much of the problem lies in the lack of formality in the dialogues initiated in Guatemala. Implementation was not achieved because it was not binding, which has to be the case for an agreement to be transformed into reality.

Reconciliation is a tool for the transformation of conflicts, but we should avoid only thinking about it in relation to the aftermath of violent conflict. Reconciliation also needs to be addressed both before and during an armed conflict. Mediation, consultation and dialogue on all the elements that constitute transitional justice are needed. International mediators working on negotiations must think of how they can clarify spaces and move forward peace agendas, while recognizing that amnesties for genocide and egregious crimes are no longer acceptable. There is a need to have dialogues that will lead to binding consultative mechanisms for the reconciliation process.

**Response: *Andrew Rigby*, Center for Peace and Reconciliation, Coventry University, UK**

Security is very important because it is a crucial aspect of peoples' lives. But states and their armed capacities should not be ignored in a discussion of reconciliation. A conflict does not end just because a peace agreement is signed. It is essential to understand that if external actors are involved in the process, they must help to create sustainable conditions for peace when they eventually extricate themselves from the process. Additionally, there is not only a problem with divisions within civil society in many post-conflict states. External actors are often divided and have varying agendas underlying their involvement in the first place. Such fragmentation is often due to the competitive pursuit for funds, which can in turn bias the motives for mediation in the first place.

Regarding the role of dialogue in post-conflict reconciliation, it was pointed out that there is widespread disappointment with the efficacy of dialogue, and that this is often due to a lack of civic trust. To remedy such a situation institutional developments that support post-conflict dialogue are required; words alone are not enough. Victims of conflicts do not have to leave the past behind, but they have to learn to live with the past, and that is what reconciliation can help them with.

Some related issues that emerged during the ensuing discussion:

- How to approach the issue on reconciliation and children? It is a very important question for a nation such as India with a significant percentage of the population under the age of 25.
- External actors should be included in national-level reconciliation efforts regarding both the design of appropriate mechanisms and their implementation.
- How should we deal with parliaments when there is a lack of implementation of reconciliation initiatives? Innovative responses are needed with regard to problems in this area. Parliaments have to be accountable, and civil society has a very important role to play in awareness raising in this regard.
- What can be seen as missing in Guatemala is the lack of a social dynamic. In addition, there is no international support for deep social reform with respect to land issues, indigenous rights, etc.

### **Conclusions**

What are the implications of a reconciliation agenda for democracy and democracy building? There is a need to move beyond the 'personal transformation' paradigm, beyond ahistorical and apolitical approaches to reconciliation, towards more politically rooted, societal transformative understandings. The difficulties inherent in such an approach should not, however, be underestimated. Sensing that a more 'political' approach to reconciliation potentially means giving more attention to issues of structural change, dominant power relationships etc. governments tend to resist venturing down this path.

Implicitly, too, a pragmatic and 'political' approach to reconciliation points to the need for analytical (and practical) distinction/separation from the specific religious, context in which the Judaeo-Christian notion of reconciliation initially emerged. In particular it needs to be stressed that while reconciliation may be accompanied by victims forgiving the perpetrators of past crimes it does not require - or depend on - their doing so.

At the same time, it is widely felt that reconciliation needs to be underpinned by some form of transformative discourse. Without this, it is argued, the whole reconciliation project is in danger of missing its point, of losing sight of precisely what distinguishes it from the everyday notions of political compromise and reform. This political dimension of the reconciliation discourse is at the heart of the subject.

Consequently, it was argued, a call for changes in power relations is at the heart of a serious approach to reconciliation. For example in Latin America, the focus of reconciliation efforts has rarely been on political economy and the exclusion of the poor from land ownership, representation etc. In Sri Lanka, too, the critical issue undercutting the prospects for reconciliation is majority community resistance to recognizing the political demands of the Tamil minority, and to altering state structures in the direction of a federalized national polity.

## **Sri Lanka Round Table**

### ***Ranil Wickremesinghe, former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka***

Ranil Wickremasinghe (RW) began by outlining the history of the Sri Lankan conflict, its dynamics and the events leading to the February 2002 Ceasefire Agreement (CFA) with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). RW sees the conflict as requiring a resolution between the main protagonists – i.e. the government of Sri Lanka and the LTTE, and all other actors as somewhat extraneous to this process.

The conflict took on the nature of an armed struggle from the 1980s and despite intensive government efforts, they could not militarily defeat the LTTE and push them out of their stronghold in the north of the island. Although parts of Jaffna were captured by the government in 1996 the LTTE were able to stage attacks, the most significant being on the airport near Colombo in July 2001. The late 1990s were dominated by intense fighting and advanced rearmament on both sides. The conflict resulted in a negative growth rate in Sri Lanka, and the government was under increasing pressure from the international community to negotiate a settlement and re-start a peace process.

The history of the peace process can be traced to previous interventions by the Indian government. The first set of talks sponsored by India was held in 1985 in Thimpu. These broke down and there was a return to war. In 1987 the government of India signed an Accord with the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL). It did not include consultations with Tamil rebel groups or even a broader discussion within the Sri Lanka parliament. That too eventually broke down and the LTTE ended up fighting the Indian army contingents that had been sent to enforce the peace accord. This experience dissuaded India from direct involvement in further peace initiatives in Sri Lanka. However, India's support for a settlement remains vital.

The conflict has taken a severe toll on the economy. When the GoSL was pressured by the international community to find a way to negotiate a settlement, President Chandrika Kumaranatunge accepted Norwegian facilitation, which also had the approval of India, but the process did not move very far. However, according to RW a negative growth rate combined the ruined state of the economy put his government (2001-2004) under a lot of pressure to find a way out and doing so became the governing goal for his government. The peace process was reactivated and prioritized, and with the assistance of the Norwegian facilitators, a CFA was drafted in early 2002.

RW stated that he saw the CFA document, approved it and signed straight after the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran had done so. RW did not however consult President Kumaratunge and this later led her to disassociate herself from the document. A ceasefire managed to hold on the basis of the document, however, and it became the basis on which to formulate and develop a peace process. The peace process had to address the issue of the hardship faced by the Tamil people in the North and East and this was the next phase to be taken up.

The government was keen to take up these issues, but when the LTTE was not invited to the donor meeting held in Washington in March 2003 due to the US banning of the LTTE as a terrorist organization, they stayed away from the next round of talks held a month later in Japan. The government was ready to discuss a mechanism for the LTTE to administer development assistance and reconstruction in the

North and East, but President Kumaranatunge's takeover of key ministries in November 2003 prevented the government from moving to the next phase of the peace process. A General Election was held in April 2004. As a result a new government led by Mahinda Rajapakse assumed power, with the attendant responsibility of taking the talks further.

A political settlement to the conflict in Sri Lanka has always been hostage to politics. A consensus between the two major Sinhala political parties<sup>9</sup> on the basic contours of this settlement is essential for progress on this score. The lack of bipartisan consensus has led to the emergence of new political forces. The present government's coalition with the ultra-nationalist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) Party makes consensus building more difficult. Splinter groups within the Tamil community also challenge the LTTE leadership, thereby putting additional pressure on both the CFA and the broader peace process. In RW's view, what is needed is a coalition for peace, and to build a consensus for peace outside the formal peace process as well.

The December 2004 tsunami created further pressures, and the donor community was insistent that funds would not be released unless they were also distributed to the North and East of the country. A June 2005 initiative by President Kumaranatunge to bring the LTTE into delivering relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction to areas affected by the tsunami did not gain all-round political support, and following a court ruling against it also fell through.

The November 2005 presidential elections put the CFA at centre stage. The majority of people support a settlement, which could potentially have been endorsed by a combination of the moderate Sinhala and minority community votes. In RW's view the spoilers at this election were not the ultra-nationalist JVP but the LTTE, which called for an election boycott in areas under its control. The election has given more space to the hardliners, but this does not take away from the basic issues that have to be addressed in order to achieve a political settlement to the conflict. The key question for the moment is how to maintain the CFA.

Currently President Rajapakse wants to review the CFA, while the LTTE wants it to serve as the basis for moving forward. In the meantime a spate of ceasefire violations have been occurring<sup>10</sup> and this must also be addressed.

Some issues raised in the ensuing discussion:

- RW pointed out that federalism is a highly controversial term in Sri Lanka and in his view is thus not really seen as a solution to the country's problems. Federalism is associated with the demands of Tamil political parties and is seen by many as synonymous with the division of a hitherto 'undivided' country. There is a need to find the right terms and concepts to make them acceptable to the people. The problem is also that power-sharing, which can be a positive concept, is viewed negatively in Sri Lanka. Devolution of power might thus be an alternative path to consider. The India experience of successful federalism is largely seen as a result of Gandhi's leadership, and a similar development is unlikely in Sri Lanka.

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<sup>9</sup> Currently the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and the United National Party (UNP).

<sup>10</sup> During the following months the situation on the ground has deteriorated significantly, resulting in what many view as a *de facto* return to war in Sri Lanka.

- It was argued that a key problem is that since independence Sri Lanka has adopted a highly majoritarian approach to democracy, and that this has constituted a significant structural impediment to advancing political management of existing divisions within the country. The political leadership in Sri Lanka has not been sensitive to this. Even in India, there were attempts made to impose unity through a common language (Hindi) but when it was resisted, Nehru backed down and allowed linguistic boundaries for states to give expression to ethnic identities. Indian and Sri Lankan approaches to governance are different in this respect. RW replied that there has been a majoritarian approach in Sri Lanka, but not exclusively so. The major political parties have received minority support from time to time. In his view, the main problem arose came when Tamil leadership passed from Colombo-based figures to a leadership that was not connected to the South.
- Regarding the (by comparison) reconciliatory effects of the 2004 tsunami in the Ache province of Indonesia, RW argued that developments were different in Sri Lanka. The tsunami did not change much concerning reconciliation in the country. It did not lead to the creation of special measures to deal with prevailing problems, and a hard-line approach still prevails among the conflicting parties.
- During the period 201-2004 RW stated that as Prime Minister he had been willing to put an interim administration in place in the North and East and let the LTTE take responsibility for running it. That would have locked them into the process. However, he admitted that his view was not shared by the majority. They wanted to know the final outcome of the peace process before making concessions. None the less, he felt that it was important to keep the process going.
- A requirement for peace is an internal consensus within and among the conflicting groups, but spoilers are often an obstacle in this regard. RW stated that spoilers on both sides have obstructed the peace process. Hardliners within the Sinhala community criticized the CFA in 2004, and mobilized against the government. The spoiler in the 2005 Presidential elections, however, was the LTTE.

**SRI LANKA: CURRENT STATE OF THE PEACE PROCESS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES** *Dilrukshi Fonseka and Devanand Ramiah, UNDP Sri Lanka*

The reconciliation process in Sri Lanka very much follows the popular notion that 'good fences make good neighbours', but there is not a common understanding of what reconciliation could and should involve. There are many different conceptual frameworks, providing different meanings and textures to the idea of reconciliation. But it is important to give a defined shape and framework to the term that clearly articulates what concretely is meant by reconciliation, i.e. the term has to be locally re-conceptualized.

One major definitional aspect is the necessity not only to rebuild relationships that have been destroyed by the conflict, but also build new relationships where none have previously existed. This is very poignant in Sri Lanka where there are large chasms between the conflicting groups and major gaps in their understanding of each others' experiences. Due to the decades-long nature of the conflict, there is a generation e.g. of Tamil youth in the North, that does not have any relationships to

rebuild with other groups. In addition, it is essential that the process of reconciliation be continued independently, whatever the pace and dynamics of the formal conflict resolution process. Below some salient principles of good process that are also presented in the forthcoming IDEA Policy Paper *Reconciliation And The Peace Process In Sri Lanka: Frameworks, Challenges And Ways Forward*.<sup>11</sup>

There are many post-conflict variants of reconciliation and the reconciliation palette offers a wide array of choices and combinations. Reconciliation actors can work at different levels focusing on different populations in their work. The reconciliation processes must be adapted to every specific setting and geared to a common set of visions for the society in question.

Timing and sequencing are also very important aspects since in case of miscalculations there is a great risk of conflict escalation. The time has to be ripe for a reconciliatory approach that can be introduced within the overall framework of a peace process.

Inclusiveness, representation and public participation are essential aspects of the reconciliation process in Sri Lanka. There need to be a multitude of smaller processes that provide a forum for people to talk and exchange experiences and concerns. On an inter-group level of analysis, the relationships between the conflicting groups, LTTE, the Muslim community and the Sinhalese government have to be re-established at the societal level. In addition to the 'Track 1' approach, however, intra-group divisions and cleavages within the different communities also need to be addressed. There are 'hard' and 'soft' liners in all the different groups. These deep divides point to the necessity of considering other strategies, not only official/elite-level approaches.

Other specific aspects of the relational analysis are generational. While the older generation can relate to the memory of a pre-conflict co-existence between the different communities, younger generations do not remember the 'good old days', but only violence and bombings. Hence, they tend to evince a higher potential for deep(er)-rooted animosities. Further, relational analysis highlights the political elite's systematic failure to deliver solutions to the problems caused the replacement of previously conciliatory relationships between groups by ones of antagonism. In terms of challenges faced by the reconciliation process in Sri Lanka, there are mainly three issues:

1. *The tension between reconciliation and the peace process:* the Norwegian-facilitated peace talks between the government and the LTTE (the 'Track 1' process) were widely seen as a panacea for resolving all substantial and operational issues. Somewhat paradoxically, however, the official focus on the talks proved to be the main reason for the downfall of the process. It would thus be wise to explore alternative and parallel process (Track 2 and 3) in order to integrate reconciliation into official-level peace talks.
2. *Stakeholders' points of view have to be seriously considered:* It is important to understand that all the different constituencies negotiate on reconciliation from different ideological vantage-points, based on diverse positions, interests and needs. Different groups and communities can be at different levels of maturity in their readiness for peace and reconciliation. Therefore the approach

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<sup>11</sup> Now available in print version and at [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)

has to be flexible and adaptable. Stakeholders sometime resist the reconciliation process in lieu of power-political realities and not on behalf of the needs of their constituencies. It is important to respond to different positions, understanding their fears and limitations, but while doing so also to protect the process.

3. *The role of the state and non state actors:* Seeing reconciliation as a 'palette of options' also opens the process up to a multitude of actors, intermediaries, levels and time-lines. Operational tools regarding reparative justice and collective memory, both of which address the root causes of the conflict, could be developed to advantage in relation to non-state actors.

In the discussion that followed some practical recommendations were put forward for advancing the reconciliation process in Sri Lanka, involving issues such as e.g. the relation between reconciliation and development in the country. Key stakeholders in the peace process have understood the critical links between peace and development, and they can use the developmental arguments to promote reconciliation among their constituencies. Another incentive for stakeholders is that through reconciliation they will get access to compensation, reparation and socio-economic reform. It was also mentioned that the reconciliation process in Sri Lanka lacks role models; there is no Nelson Mandela type national leader figure perceived as transcending factional interests and thus able to push the process forward decisively.

**Response: *Jehan Perera, National Peace Council, Sri Lanka***

A three-level approach is essential for reconciliation to take place:

1. Reconciliation between the state and the LTTE, which means reconciliation between separate administrative and political entities in order to create mixed and united institutions.
2. Reconciliation between the political parties. Peace making is not an exclusively Track 1 phenomenon in which there is no place for either the political opposition or civil society. A politically inclusive approach to reconciliation is necessary due the obstacles the main opposition party of the day has historically placed in the way of the government moving the peace process forward. Political will is lacking among the opposing parties to support in the process also because habitually, the government of the day does not acknowledge the place of the opposition in the process.
3. Reconciliation between civil society groups. Sri Lankan governments have often stated that civil society does not have a role to play in a reconciliation process, and that there is no deep rooted hatred in Sri Lanka. There was basic civic trust during the 1950s, they argue, and the problems only started when power sharing measures were established. Conscious initiatives thus have to be taken by civil society in Sri Lanka to ensure that an effective reconciliation process will take place.

There is a slight change of attitude among the Sinhalese political community today. The opposition UNP has changed attitude a little and – as expressed by the former prime minister earlier (see RW above) - is now committed to not putting obstacles in the way of the process, which is a different stance from that adopted by e.g. the current government when they were in opposition. In addition, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapakse now appears to see a role for civil society in work for reconciliation. However, the need for greater bipartisan collaboration between the government, opposi-

tion and civil society with respect to the peace process is still not widely recognized, which remains a serious obstacle to progress. Government and leaders do indeed have to take a lead in order to restart the process. But they must work at making sure that they are followed and supported by other stakeholders e.g. the parliamentary opposition. This in turn means having a dialogue with, explaining to and engaging with the people.

Below some related issues that emerged during the ensuing discussion:

- Security issues need to be addressed early during a process towards reconciliation. A reconciliation process is often a commitment venture between two conflicting parties, but unfortunately there is often room for interfering outsiders, spoilers, who can make it very difficult for the process to maintain its momentum.
- The role of the civil society in a reconciliation process should be to focus on securing peace; the kind of peace where people are seen to matter, which rules out making war for making peace. A lot can be done through education. The values of principles of consociationalism and federalism as a basis for government, for example, have to be *taught* to the people in post-conflict societies.
- There are subversive values in post-conflict societies and if the systematic cycle of violence is to be broken, it is necessary to look for borderline actors who can intervene and create a new strategy to break the cycle of violence. These borderline persons with mixed and sometimes cross-cutting identities are very important, and their frustration over the situation can actually serve to push the process and mobilize antagonistic communities in support of measures necessary to initiate or to push forward a reconciliation process.
- While the lack of a 'reconciliation role model' in Sri Lanka makes it very difficult to convince people of the necessity for such a process, this should not be regarded as an excuse for inaction. A useful approach is to spread the vocabulary so it is not only the 'usual suspects' who are talking about reconciliation. Simple definitions should be spread within civil society but also, for example, within the business community.
- It has often been seen as essential to have a person who that serves as a personifying example of the reconciliation process. But the fact is that not every post-conflict setting has a Mandela-style role model. It was thus recommended to stop calling for Mandela-type figures in contexts where there are none. Instead, the rallying call should be for maturity and bi-partisanship among the current leadership.
- The issue of the role of Diasporas in peace processes is a complex one. Those who have left a country often prove to be more radical in their views than people in the home country itself. In this context, a key challenge is find ways to moving the Diaspora in the direction of positive impact on the process, for example by funding their engagement in the process. In the case of Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese Diaspora is generally much more hard-line than people in the country, often due to isolation (often self-imposed) in new countries of residence. One can even talk about a 'ghettoization' of the different communi-

- ties, which is in turn reinforcing mutual anger, without implying any serious consequences for the Diaspora communities themselves.
- The three-level approach proposed by Jehan Perera was viewed as a useful mechanism for analysis. Only to talk about relationship, however, is not enough. When traditional concepts of reconciliation have connotations that are not compatible with hardliners' ideologies, to obtain their adherence it is necessary to find a broader definition of reconciliation and justice. For stakeholders who are resistant to reconciliatory measures, it was further suggested that it is more appropriate to deploy approaches specifically tailored to regional settings that speak to the people concerned rather than resort to artificially imported concepts.
  - A great contribution to the general field of reconciliation thinking could be to further develop the concept and modalities of 'interim reconciliation measures', as outlined in the IDEA Reconciliation Handbook and explored in the Institute's reconciliation activities in Sri Lanka to date.<sup>12</sup>

## **CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN RECONCILIATION: REPORTS FROM THE FIELD**

### **SADC Region – *Hugo van der Merwe*, Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV), South Africa**

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission dealt chiefly with issues of truth-seeking and healing. Promoting justice was not one of its main objectives, and there was overall political discomfort with the issue of justice within the TRC. Prosecution was a difficult issue for the government. The emphasis was on national reconciliation, and to avoid political difficulties there was no prosecution of apartheid-era perpetrators when it was felt that this might interfere with reconciliation objectives. As in many other states where reconciliation processes have been initiated through the medium of a TRC, there are unresolved tensions and problems regarding the meaning of reconciliation in post-apartheid South Africa, and a multilevel approach to reconciliation is required today.

Some observations stemming from the South African TRC:

- Perpetrators are coming forward long after the end of the formal TRC process, asking for forgiveness from the victims' families.
- Regarding the issue of reparation, to date the government has only paid out a quarter of what was recommended the TRC. Moreover, in many cases by the time payment came it had lost its symbolic meaning for the victims, because the political momentum was lost and the money no longer truly served as reconciliatory reparation.
- Truth seeking was mainly achieved chiefly via the information provided by media coverage of the TRC process. What truth was the truth commission supposed to reveal? Forensic evidence is still needed for the revealing of truth, and access to this kind of truth comes through access to official archives.

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<sup>12</sup> For more information see reports from the series of IDEA-sponsored reconciliation workshops and dialogues held in Sri Lanka in 2004-5 visit [www.idea.int](http://www.idea.int)

- When it comes to healing, psychological support is still needed around specific issues, and for that cultural events, such as art initiatives, are often used today for the purpose.

Post-apartheid era South Africa faces many serious newly-emerging problems. The socio-economic situation is widely perceived as worse now than during the Apartheid era. Exploitative systems are still in place and to 'cover up' that reality there is instead a focus on the increased violence experienced today. To date the ANC-led government has not managed to address and remediate these kinds of societal challenges. There is a resistance from the government to real structural changes, and there is widespread resentment over the lack of the transformations expected to come in the wake of the end of apartheid and the TRC process.

It is widely said that the white population has not really sacrificed anything, a perception that contributed to undermining the credibility of the TRC process. As the situation is now, new forms of outsider groupings are emerging. For example, both the white and black communities in South Africa are uniting against the external 'threat' that refugees and immigrants from surrounding countries are felt to constitute. The prevailing division is no longer the racial black-white divide but rather economic and social inequalities.

There is a need for a reconstruction of relationships. The mistrust fed into society has to be replaced by a new basis for community built on an inclusive social contract. However, rebuilding relationships between groups and individuals is superficial if the systems upholding social divisions are not torn down.

In the public discourse in South Africa on the current displacement of violence, increasing gender violence is considered a particularly serious problem. In South Africa, the linkage between democratization and reconciliation is seen in the fact that the social contract still needs to be re-established. One important aspect of that is to focus on general economic growth for the country as opposed to redistribution. In addition active citizenship, civic trust and civil mobilization are as important to the equation as building interpersonal relationships. There must be an ability and will to rebuild society, and the generational dimension is also important in the South African experience. The younger generation does not have the history of Apartheid in their consciousness. They do not want to hear and constantly be reminded of Apartheid; they want to 'move on'.

### **Maghreb Region – *Mark Freeman*, International Center for Transitional Justice, (ICTJ), Brussels**

Of the five countries of the Maghreb region there are three worthy of specific mention concerning issues of reconciliation.

- **Mauritania:** Astonishingly, slavery was not abolished until 1981. The country is ethnically and racially divided between so-called white and black Moors. In recent decades there has been a significant expulsion of black Moors to Senegal. Concerning reconciliation, after a bloodless coup in August 2005 an open gesture was made to the black population with an invitation to return from Senegal. In this regard, a truth and reconciliation commission may be established further down the line.

- **Algeria:** In March 2006 President Bouteflika issued a decree enacting new legislation based on a 'Charter of Peace and Reconciliation' proposed in October 2004, and subsequently approved by a national referendum held in September 2005. The new legislation proposes a near-blanket amnesty for those involved in killings and other serious acts of violence in the period following the first round victory of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) victory in general elections held in December 1991, and the subsequent declaration of a national state of emergency in early 1992 up until the present day<sup>13</sup>. The process backing the latest amnesty moves has been undertaken outside the public eye, and any confessions by those involved in the killings of the 1990s have not been made public. No figure for the number of people to be pardoned under the new amnesty law has been given,<sup>14</sup> which seriously undermines its credibility. In addition a ban has been pronounced on public debate on the atrocities of the past, spelling the effective criminalization of truth-telling and seeking in the country.
  
- **Morocco:** Since succeeding his Father Hassan II in 1999, King Mohammed VI has initiated a number of significant reforms. A tribunal was established in 1999 to determine compensation for the victims of forced disappearances, arbitrary detention and other serious human rights violations during the preceding decades. To date there have been 5000 beneficiaries, but the commission did not engage in investigative work. In January 2004 the King announced the setting up of an 'Equity and Reconciliation Commission' (IER), the first TRC to be established in the region. After over a year of activity, most notably holding public hearings around the country at which victims of past human rights abuses gave testimony, the Commission presented its final report in December 2005. Despite an often difficult relationship between the commissioners and human rights NGOs, a positive effect of the IER process is that it gives reconciliation in Morocco its 'own story'. Its context in Morocco is no longer fundamentally antagonistic or polarized, so the reconciliation process is not viewed as operating between opposing groups or communities within the country.

The focus of the reconciliation process in Morocco is on the rule of law and a rather broad notion of reparation is applied. The gender dimension is an important component of the process, as are issues of citizenship and more broadly of promoting social transformation, all of which suggests that a change in attitudes is taking place in the country. Morocco is not a full democracy, and the monarchy remains the highest political authority, which in turn means that, for example, human rights issues are being addressed and discussed in a very specific context. In addition, it should not be forgotten that Morocco continues to occupy the Western Sahara, as it has done since 1975.

Concerning the issue of blanket amnesty in Algeria it can be argued that France is now experiencing the consequences of the fact that it also granted blanket amnesties

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<sup>13</sup> National human rights organizations estimate the number of people killed during the period 1992-2005 at up to 150,000, and a government-commissioned report issued in March 2005 stated that the security forces were responsible for the deaths of more than 6000 civilians during the 1990s.

<sup>14</sup> According to a government report released in late June 2006, to date around 40,000 people – 2,200 former Islamist fighters and 37,800 'others' – have applied for amnesty or compensation under the new law.

for crimes committed by its forces during the Algerian war of independence (1954-1962). There is always a risk associated with throwing a blanket over political discussion on the past. It is very important to link developments in Algeria to France and specifically the 2005 anti-discrimination riots. Algeria's critical role as an energy producer and supplier, on which France in particular is particularly dependent, renders it immune to criticism in some respects. In general, oil-producing states are regarded as untouchable by the West.

In the Algerian case the population has very different experiences of the conflict and is divided due to the fact that the violence (both government and Islamist-instigated) affected people very differently, and without any clear basis in ethnicity or other forms of social identification. However, 'reconciliation' on the basis of a national referendum is a problematic approach in Algeria, because it has not been accompanied by an attempt to reckon with or speak about the past, less still to investigate it. Internationally speaking, at least in the short term the new Algerian legislation constitutes a shrewd political move, because the amnesty provision combined with the new official ban on discussing the past effectively undercuts international pressure on the country.<sup>15</sup>

### **Thailand – *Gothom Arya*, National Reconciliation Commission, Thailand**

The current conflict in southern Thailand centres around issues of local and national identity, or more precisely local patriotism as against central nationalism. The country has long been governed by the general notion of 'one state, one nation'. Until recently the assimilation policies pursued by successive governments were widely viewed as a success, with 1.4 million Malay Muslims living alongside 400,000 Buddhist/ethnic Thais in the south of the country. For a long time there was no real communal conflict, but over the last decade a latent conflict between the Muslim and Buddhist communities has emerged. One factor underlying increased tensions is the fact that the ethnic Thai population supports the presence of the central authorities in the region, while Muslim tends to view their presence as provocative and/or oppressive.

An example of the increasing hostilities is that while there were only about 60 violent incidents reported in the southern region in the period 1993-2003, in 2004 there was a sudden and alarming escalation of violence<sup>16</sup>. A key factor in the escalation of conflict is the emergence of armed Muslim militants, driven by a sense of both national and international injustice. In response, proposals to set up of a 'national harmony institute' were initially tabled, but under pressure from the media among others, a national reconciliation<sup>17</sup> commission was proposed instead. A national reconciliation commission was thus set up in early 2005 with a mandate to analyze the situation in general, the conflict in the south in particular, and to make recommendations in this regard.

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<sup>15</sup> It is worth noting that sections of the US Administration have already commended the 'Algerian approach' as one worth paying attention to in the context of government efforts to promote national reconciliation in Iraq.

<sup>16</sup> In the period January-March 2004 alone, for example, around 100 people were killed in the region.

<sup>17</sup> In Thai the word translated as 'reconciliation' actually comes closer to the English word 'harmony'.

There is freedom of religion in Thailand, but there are vertical cleavages within society. Overall there is a need for Thais outside the South to rethink dominant notions of Thai identity in order to advance pluralism in the country.

Reconciliation in Thailand means addressing issues of historical memory, both locally (e.g. in the South) and nationally. It implies rebuilding trust between local people and officials, building relationships both within and between ethnic groups. Other components of the reconciliation agenda such as healing, reparation, forgiveness and justice are also important. A focus on restorative justice would include consideration of issues of both social and legal justice. The application of reconciliation in conflict transformation would imply dialogues and active listening, and a willingness to take risks together.

Research and dialogue creates a body of knowledge whose creative application requires political will. Currently there is uncertainty regarding both who the Reconciliation Commission's final report will be submitted to and how it will be used in practice, as the political situation remains very fluid. The king is an essentially non-political figure, but he has been advocating self-sufficiency in the South through the promotion of development projects, with the hope that some local frustrations will thereby be alleviated.

### **Afghanistan – *Jawaid Danishyar*, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission**

The December 2001 **Bonn Agreement** serves as national benchmark and a national human rights commission<sup>18</sup> was established by governmental decree in June 2002. It is important to seek mechanisms to deal with past violations. Rehabilitation and reconciliation are issues in all post-conflict societies and starting in 2004, the AIHRC conducted an extensive series of consultations with people around the country on how to address them in the Afghan context. A critical issue to emerge from this process has been identification of the types of mechanisms that would best suit Afghan society and its specific needs.

A common response has been a demand for 'peace based on justice', implying that the Afghan population do not believe that peace can be achieved until efficient means of seeking truth and justice are established. A report based on the national consultation process titled '**A Call For Justice**' was submitted to the Afghan government in January 2005 and has resulted in the drafting of action plans, including round table talks with relevant stakeholders held in every province of the country.

Key elements of the 'A Call For Justice' report are an acknowledgement of the suffering of the Afghan people, and its emphasis on the need to establish accountable state institutions for the implementation of the concrete action plans developed in the basis of the report. True and effective accountability is the main concern in Afghanistan today. Documentation and truth seeking are also important, and are being undertaken today by a number of national institutions. Interviews and collective discussions are organized by the AIHRC to give people an opportunity to voice their expectations and concerns. The traditional councils in Afghanistan, the *Loya Jirga*, have been very important in the reconciliation process. In addition, other types of tradi-

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<sup>18</sup> For more information on the work of the **Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)** visit: <http://www.aihrc.org.af/>

tional council as well as the peace commissions now active around the country provide further, locally-based mechanisms for promoting dialogue.

A dilemma arises from the fact that while transitional justice is a necessary component of reconciliation in Afghanistan today, the human rights commission is not addressing issues of justice. Pending further political developments, documentation aimed at establishing the truth regarding the country's past sufferings is critical. It is, however, difficult to pursue a reconciliation programme in the absence of a functioning peace agreement.

It is also necessary to realize that people's high expectations will be difficult to fulfill. It is true that inclusive consultations constitute an important element of the progress achieved in Afghanistan to date, but how is it possible to ensure realistic perspectives on delivery and avoiding generating unachievably high expectations in the process?

**Western Balkans – Goran Bozicevic, Quaker Peace and Service, Zagreb/Skopje**

In the Balkans reconciliation today is about learning to deal with the past. War veterans and peacemakers in the region live in different worlds; how is it possible to create a common space for dialogue between them? There are very complex processes at play, and people have to discover their own potential to contribute to a peaceful future. For example, the gender dimension of reconciliation is very important, and experience to date is that women's groups are often almost the only people seriously attempting to reach across national borders. In regard to violence directed against women during and after the Balkan wars, it is important to address the issue and not let time pass by in the absence of clear strategies.

During the discussion the question of whether the Hague-based International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) has contributed positively to the reconciliation process in the Western Balkans was raised. In response it was stated that in the absence of the ICTY, realities on the ground would have been very different today. The problem now is how to end the ICTY's work, and if the work of bringing perpetrators to justice is to be continued within region, who should take over the process and how it should be carried out.

**Northern Ireland – Brandon Hamber, Democratic Dialogue, Northern Ireland and Ian White, Glencree Center for Reconciliation, Republic of Ireland**

Political violence in Northern Ireland has almost completely ended. There has been much reconciliation work, especially with prisoners. Much of the general discourse is focused on coexistence rather than reconciliation: in public discourse reconciliation is often referred to in a very narrow way - Catholics versus Protestants, Irish versus British, etc. It is interesting to note that despite the decrease in violence, segregation has actually increased. All in all, in the Northern Ireland context it is necessary to seek a more robust and all-encompassing definition of the term 'reconciliation'.

The local reconciliation process actually consists of a number of interdependent processes, often standing in seeming contradiction to each other. But addressing tensions between e.g. the demands of peace and the dictates of justice is often what recon-

ciliation is actually about. A recent research project<sup>19</sup> has attempted to find out what ordinary citizens of Northern Ireland think and feel about 'reconciliation'. Based on this research, in general it appears that while people are quite open to talking about reconciliation, they often find it difficult to engage in such a discussion in a general way and find the topic somewhat vague and open-ended. In addition, they are worried about introducing reconciliation into their communities precisely because it is seen as implying something more than co-existence. Overall, reconciliation is seen as something that *other* people have to do, not them.

The reconciliation process in Northern Ireland has faced a number of externally-generated challenges. Since the conclusion of the Good Friday peace agreement the EU has provided substantial funding for the reconciliation process, without, however, defining the term. Today it is necessary to evaluate reconciliation work undertaken to date in Northern Ireland, including an assessment of the way the financial resources provided in support of the reconciliation process have been channelled. For example, based on the idea that increased economic prosperity would bring peace, evaluation tools used to date have been designed to focus on, for example, job creation schemes.

However, one of the problems has been the way this has reinforced the idea that the cause of the conflict in Northern Ireland is poverty, which crucially ignores the role of both politicians and the middle class in fuelling the conflict. It has also reinforced existing centre-periphery disparities: most of the available resources have been put into Belfast-based projects, and far less in other regions.

Following the conclusion of the Good Friday Agreement, some 'peace' NGOs were completely divided or confused as to how to respond. There are still uncomfortable subjects for people to address and while there is undoubtedly still a real need for truth-telling and reconciliation, it is still an open question whether setting up a TRC-type body would be the best means to do this. But despite the problems, it is positive that there still is a reconciliation process in Northern Ireland and it is important to continue managing the impacts of recent conflict in order to achieve a settling in which a process of reconciliation can go forward.

## **RECONCILIATION EXPERT NETWORK: FUTURE CHALLENGES AND DIRECTIONS**

### **Role of IDEA**

It was suggested that IDEA's future work on reconciliation should focus on matching its resources with geographic and thematic areas where the institute can truly contribute and make a difference. IDEA's broad thematic and geographic approach is well reflected in its current reconciliation initiatives, and the Institute's intergovernmental status is a useful component of this work.

### **Meeting Assessment**

Many positive remarks were expressed concerning the meeting, which was felt to have provided an opportunity for some very useful, focused discussions. A forum where academics, analysts, policy-makers and practitioners can meet and discuss issues of reconciliation agenda is felt by many to be valuable in itself. The likelihood of

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<sup>19</sup> See the report 'A Place for Reconciliation? Conflict and Locality in Northern Ireland', by Brandon Hamber and Grainne Kelly, available at [www.democraticdialogue.org](http://www.democraticdialogue.org)

achieving fruitful and 'usable' conclusions will increase if there is an open and dynamic exchange between the different sets of participants.

The meeting was felt to have provided a useful set of snap shots of current reconciliation-related needs and challenges in different region. However, to further sharpen the focus of future meetings it was suggested that some thematic limits should be spelled out. One way would be to split the participants into smaller groups so that more limited and specific subject matters could be discussed in parallel. Both thematic and regional concerns could thus be developed and the discussion deepened accordingly.

It was suggested that instead of the term 'expert', 'generalists' or something similar should be employed since it better reflects the approach and competence of network participants. Reconsidering the name of the network is an important pedagogical issue. Network participants are potential *resources* for others due to their varied and broad experience in the field.<sup>20</sup>

It is important to identify both existing needs in the field and next steps. In the view of many, however, the REN should not create its own agenda, but rather continue to be sensitive to current research and practice-related developments in the field of reconciliation. Issues of power are central, and with this in mind it is important to remember that what matters is not just what is done but *how* it is done. In this sense, establishing a forum for extensive and continuing sharing of experiences is in itself an important function of the network.

It is thus essential to remain self-critical and constantly ask the question who a reconciliation agenda is *for*. Too often reconciliation is seen as primarily the concern of governments and external agencies, but as with democracy, reconciliation is ultimately a process 'by the people and for the people'. In this respect, a key aspect of IDEA's work should be to advocate for an inclusive, broadly-based approach to reconciliation among its member states and other related international actors.

External and national/governmental actors need to think about who is currently being marginalized or excluded from reconciliation processes. Indeed, reconsidering who is participating may be essential to pushing particular processes forward. Additionally, the question of how reconciliatory efforts and broader structural changes within a society work together and influence each other was highlighted as an important theory and practice-related concern.

Several meeting participants suggested that dominant notions of justice need to be broadened to include elements of both retributive justice, focusing on perpetrators, and restorative justice, focusing on the victims. A post-conflict community suffers from multiple shocks. New 'perpetrators' and newly-emerging forms of victimhood need to be identified, and the terms redefined in consequence. For example, perpetrators are also often victims in conflicts, in particular victims of fear. Women's narratives regarding the gender-related dimensions of perpetrators and victims are particularly important in this respect.

In conclusion, it was suggested that the global dimensions of reconciliation need to be reflected in the network's future activities. To meet this challenge a proposal for

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<sup>20</sup> By common consensus, a decision was taken to rename the network the **Reconciliation Resource Network (RRN)**.

IDEA to investigate the possibilities of setting up a dedicated network website was warmly welcomed.<sup>21</sup> It was suggested that such a website should aim to be both an informative resource for the broader circle of actors potentially interested in the network and reconciliation issues in general, and to serve as a practical means of communication and exchange between network members.

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<sup>21</sup> Subsequent to the meeting, funding for piloting the proposed new **Reconciliation Resource Network** website, hosted and managed by International IDEA, was sought and obtained. Addressed to the diverse and geographically dispersed community of reconciliation practitioners, analysts and policy makers, the RNN website is intended to serve as an online forum for sharing information, best practices, links and other resources. In addition, with a view to contributing to the promotion of sustainable reconciliation processes around the world, the RNN will also provide a forum for structured, searchable discussion of emerging issues, challenges and trends in the field of reconciliation.

The site, due to go live at [www.idea.int/rrn](http://www.idea.int/rrn) in September 2006, will feature both a public and a password protected members-only section. The public section will contain expert biographies, organizational profiles, ongoing projects, public discussion forums and links. The members-only section will give participants full access to draft publications for feedback and discussion, provide information on upcoming events and take member requests for information, cooperation, training, consulting and analysis on specific issues.



## Reconciliation Expert Network (REN) Meeting 15-17 March 2006

### Agenda

#### Wednesday 15 March

09:00 **Arrival** (Tea & Coffee)

09:30 **Welcome & Introduction** (Conference room)

09:45 **Session 1**

**Current Developments in Reconciliation (Pt 1): Panel Presentation and Discussion with IDEA Handbook Contributors**

Moderator: Mark Salter, International IDEA

- **Truth-telling** – Mark Freeman, ICTJ, Brussels
- **Justice** – David Bloomfield, Berghof Centre, Berlin

11:15 Coffee Break

- **Reparations** – Stef Vandeginste, University of Antwerp, Belgium
- **Healing** – Brandon Hamber, Democratic Dialogue, Northern Ireland

12:45 Lunch (Library)

13:45 **Session 2**

**Overview of IDEA's Current Regional & Thematic Reconciliation Activities**

Moderator: Judith Large, International IDEA

- **The Latin America Handbook *Verdad, Justicia Y Reparación*** – Goran Fejic, IDEA
- **South Asia** – Sumona Das Gupta, WISCOMP, Delhi & Sakuntala Kadirgamar-Rajasingham, IDEA South Asia Programme\*
- **'Sustainable Reconciliation in West Africa' Project** – Jacob Eben, WANEP, Ghana
- **'Traditional Justice Mechanisms in Africa' Project** – Mark Salter, IDEA
- **Western Balkans** – Goran Fejic & Mark Salter, IDEA

15:30 Coffee Break

16:00 **Session 3**

**Dilemmas of Reconciliation: Lessons and Challenges From The Field**

Moderator: Goran Fejic, International IDEA

Presentation: Mô Bleeker, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland

tion, (Commentary: Andrew Rigby, Centre for the Study of Forgiveness & Reconciliation,  
Coventry, UK)  
Discussion

17:15 **Session 4**  
**Conclusions**  
Moderator: Mark Salter, International IDEA

19:00 Dinner at Restaurant *Leijontorget*, Gamla Stan (The Old Town)

## Thursday 16 March

09:00 **Arrival** (Tea & Coffee)

09:15 **Session 1**  
**Sri Lanka: Current State of the Peace Process and Future Reconciliation Challenges**  
Moderator: Mark Salter, International IDEA

Part I: Building Consensus for Peace: Lessons From Sri Lanka  
The Hon. Ranil Wickremesinghe, Leader, United National Party (UNP) and Prime Minister of Sri Lanka (1993-94 & 2001-2004)

10:15 Coffee Break

10:30 Part II: Presentation: Devanand Ramiah & Dilrukshi Fonseka, UNDP Sri Lanka\*  
Commentary: Jehan Perera, National Peace Council, Sri Lanka  
Plenary Discussion

11:30 **Session 2**  
**Current Developments in Reconciliation (Pt 11). Reports from the Field:**  
Moderator: Sumona Das Gupta, WISCOMP, Delhi

- **SADC Region** – Hugo van der Merwe, CSVR, South Africa
- **Maghreb Region** – Mark Freeman, ICTJ, Brussels

12:30 Lunch

13:30 **Session 2 (cont)**  
**Current Developments in Reconciliation (Pt 11). Reports from the Field:**  
Moderator: David Bloomfield, Berghof Centre, Berlin

- **Thailand** – Gothom Arya, Truth & Reconciliation Commission, Thailand
- **Western Balkans** – Goran Bozicevic, Quaker Peace & Service, Zagreb/Skopje
- **Northern Ireland** – Brandon Hamber, Democratic Dialogue, N. Ireland & Ian White, Glenree Centre For Reconciliation, Republic of Ireland

15:00 Coffee Break

15:30 **Session 3**  
**REN: Future Challenges & Directions**  
Presentation: Mark Salter, DCM Programme, International IDEA  
Plenary Discussion

17:00 **Session 4**

**Concluding Remarks**

Goran Fejic, International IDEA

19:00 Drinks & Dinner at the Grand Hotel (Veranda)

**Friday 17 March**

09:30-13:00 **REN Public Seminar** (See separate agenda)

13:00 Buffet Lunch at IDEA

14:30–17:30 **Asia REN Meeting** (See separate agenda and invitation for those concerned)

Evening Informal dinner arrangements for remaining REN participants

\*See background paper circulated in advance



**IDEA Reconciliation Expert Network (REN) Meeting  
15-17 March 2006**

**Strömsborg, Stockholm, Sweden**

**List of Participants**

*Names in alphabetical order by surname*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Country</b>
<b>Mr Gothom Arya</b>	Director	Research Center for Peacebuilding, Mahidol University	Thailand
<b>Ms Mô Bleeker</b>	Programme Officer "Dealing with the Past"	Political Affairs Division, Human Security, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs	Switzerland
<b>Dr David Bloomfield</b>	Director	Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management	Germany
<b>Mr Goran Bozicevic</b>	Representative in Post-YU Countries	Quaker Peace & Social Witness	Croatia
<b>Mr Jawaid Danishyar</b>	Transitional Justice Officer	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission	Afghanistan
<b>Ms Sumona Das Gupta</b>	Senior Program Officer	Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP)	India
<b>Mr Jacob Enoch Eben</b>	Regional Coordinator	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding	Ghana
<b>Ms Dilrukshi Fonseka</b>	Project Officer	United Nations Development Programme	Sri Lanka
<b>Mr Mark Freeman</b>	Senior Project Manager	International Center for Transitional Justice, Brussels Office	Belgium
<b>Dr Brandon Hamber</b>	Associate	Democratic Dialogue	Northern Ireland
<b>Dr Antje Herrberg (15 March only)</b>	European Policy Director	Crisis Management Initiative	Belgium
<b>Mr Rogier Huizenga</b>	Human Rights Programme Officer	Inter-Parliamentary Union	Switzerland

<b>Mr Toe Zaw Latt</b>	Researcher	Centre for Cross Cultural Research, Australian National University	Thailand
<b>Mr Hugo van der Merwe</b>	Programme Manager	Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation	South Africa
<b>Mr Honoré-Georges Ndiaye</b>	Responsable Formation et Education	Mouvement contre les Armes Légères en Afrique de l'Ouest (MA-LAO)	Senegal
<b>Prof Kjell-Åke Nordquist</b>	Associate Professor in Peace and Conflict Research	Department of Peace and Conflict Research, University of Uppsala	Sweden
<b>Mr Jehan Perera</b>	Executive Director	National Peace Council of Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
<b>Mr Devanand Ramiah</b>	Peace and Development Analyst	United Nations Development Programme	Sri Lanka
<b>Mr Andrew Rigby</b>	Professor of Peace Studies	Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University	United Kingdom
<b>Mr Saray Run</b>	General Manager	Buddhism for Development	Cambodia
<b>Ms Ingrid Samset</b>	Researcher	Chr. Michelsen Institute	Norway
<b>Mr Jonathan Sisson</b>	Program Officer	KOFF - Center for Peacebuilding	Switzerland
<b>Mr S.P. Udayakumar (15 March only)</b>		South Asian Community Center for Education, Research and Action	India
<b>Mr Stef Vandeginste</b>	Researcher	Institute of Development Policy and Management, University of Antwerp	Belgium
<b>Mr Ian White</b>		Glencree Centre for Reconciliation (International Programme)	Ireland

From IDEA:

**Mr Goran Fejic**, Head, Democracy Building and Conflict Management Programme

**Ms Judith Large**, Senior Adviser, Democracy Building and Conflict Management Programme

**Mr Mark Salter**, Senior Programme Officer, Democracy Building and Conflict Management Programme

**Ms Cecilia Bylesjö**, Project Development Assistant, Democracy Building and Conflict Management and South Asia Programmes

**Ms Katarina Jörgensen**, Programme Assistant, Democracy Building and Conflict Management Programme

**Ms Kajsa Eriksson**, Research Assistant, Democracy Building and Conflict Management Programme

**Ms Sakuntala Kadirgamar-Rajasingham**, Head, South Asia Programme

**Ms Leena Rikkilä**, Programme Officer, South Asia Programme

**Ms Zoe Mills**, Programme Assistant, Operations