



Peace Newsletter

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Museum Africa, Johannesburg (Photo: Šejla Dizdarević)

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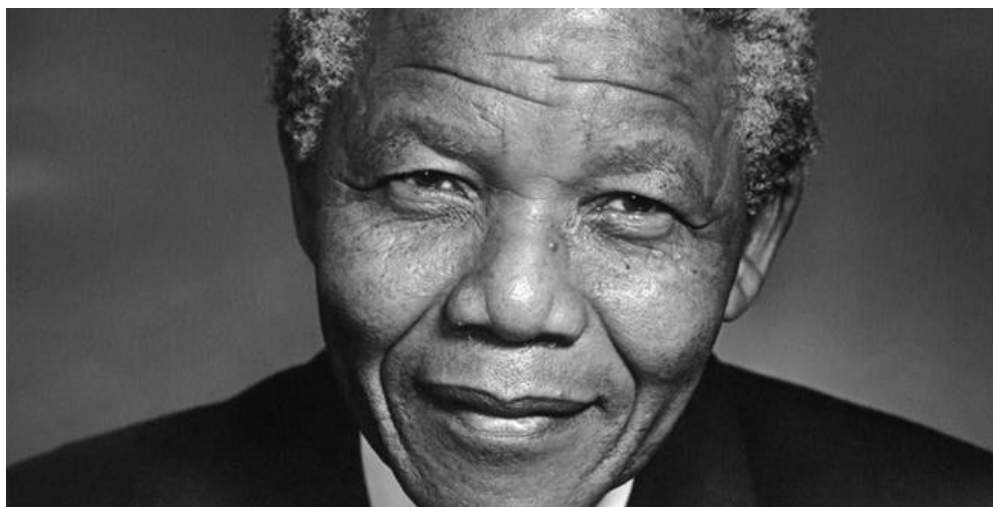


mreža za izgradnju mira



THE WHOLE WORLD IS REMEMBERING NELSON MANDELA

On December 5th, the world lost a great champion of human rights, the South African leader Nelson Mandela. Very few people have ever touched hearts around the world like Nelson Mandela, who continued to advocate for reconciliation after spending almost three decades in prison for his political views and activities.



MANDELA was born in 1918 and joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1943 as a law student. He was finally released from prison in 1990 after great pressure from the international community. He then became the first black president of South Africa. His government replaced the racist regime, whose white minority had implemented the systems known as apartheid.

The Nobel Peace Prize was presented to Nelson Mandela in 1993. His longtime ally and fellow South African Nobel Peace Prize winner, Desmond Tutu, stated after Mandela's death that, "He taught us extraordinarily practical lessons about forgiveness and compassion and reconciliation" and added that Mandela was a great gift to their country.

In 2006 the Mostar Center for Peace and Multiethnic Cooperation awarded Mandela the peace prize "Mostar 2006". On this occasion, Mandela responded to all our citizens saying that, "Although I have received many

"To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. – NELSON MANDELA

awards for my contribution to the preservation of world peace, I was pleasantly surprised when I heard that people from your country have decided to present me with this honor. I am truly delighted if I inspired in any way Bosnian people, who suffered so much, to continue to work on reconciliation and lasting peace. South Africa is far from your country, but we are united by a global fight for peace, which, despite everything, does not have an alternative. Our common goals must be reconciliation and coexistence of different cultures, religions, and races."

Mandela died at the age of 95. At his funeral on Sunday, December 15th there is expected to be an untold number of international leaders and famous individuals from all public spheres. ■

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New peace movement starts from us

2014 marks the 100th year since the beginning of World War I, which was triggered by the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian heir during his visit to Sarajevo. This can be seen as a symbolic date for a century of a "Culture of War and Violence" (let's remember the Balkan wars and the recent 90's wars in the region of the former Yugoslavia). Among the recent wars, what took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina was by far the bloodiest and cruelest, with lasting consequences that we intensively feel and live today.

The 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century have also seen a worldwide rise in nonviolent actions and achievements as an alternative to war and violence. There have been increased efforts for global and social justice, human rights, and peace and reconciliation, which are reflected in the declaration of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence (2001–2010) by the United Nations.

The idea is that the new peace movement should start from us, that we serve as an example to other countries. This idea would be fulfilled if the Year of Peace and Nonviolence is declared at all levels of government, from the state, the entities, the cantons, the municipalities, and the Brčko district.

Manifest for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence

It is time for a new beginning. This is a new chance for the transformation of all of us and our communities. We can now transform the culture of war into a culture of peace and nonviolence.

Since this transformation requires participation from each of us, it must offer young people and future generations a set of values that will inspire them to shape a world based on justice, solidarity, liberty, dignity, harmony and prosperity for all.

This culture of peace supports sustainable development, the protection of the environment, and the well-being of every person. These are each vital to ensure the future wellbeing of mankind, and especially children – today and tomorrow.

I swear that in my everyday life, in my family, work, community, country and region, I will:

- Respect the life and dignity of every human being without discrimination or prejudice.
- Practice active non-violence, rejecting violence in all its forms: physical, sexual, psychological, economic and social, especially against the most vulnerable, such as children and adolescents.
- Share my time and material resources in a spirit of generosity in order to put an end to exclusion, injustice and political and economic oppression.
- Defend freedom of expression and cultural diversity, always giving preference to dialogue and listening without engaging in fanaticism, defamation or the rejection of others.
- Promote responsible consumer behavior and the development of practices that respect all forms of life. I will preserve the balance of nature on the planet.
- Contribute to the development of my community, with the full participation of women and respect for democratic principles, in order to create together new forms of solidarity. ■





GLOBAL CAMPAIGN 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE is an international campaign originating from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute coordinated by the Center for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. Participants chose the dates November 25- International Day Against Violence Against Women- and December 10- International Human Rights Day- in order to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights. This 16-day period also highlights other significant dates including November 29, International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, December 1, World AIDS Day, and December 6, which marks the Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre.

From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World

The theme of this year's campaign is "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence against Women!" Militarism continues to be a key source of violence against women. As an ideology creating the culture of fear, militarism supports the use of violence, aggression and military interventions aimed at solving conflicts and imposing the economic and political interests. The impact of militarism goes deep with material, institutional, cultural and psychological consequences to all our communities. It privileges violent forms of masculinity and assumes that violence is an efficient way of solving issues. Organizations across BiH organize different activities to draw attention to violence issues in BiH focusing on education, distribution of information about causes, problems and solutions on how to eliminate violence from our



Written by: Vedrana Frašto, Foundation "CURE" Sarajevo

lives and finally create the world without violence. Messages to be sent during the 16 Days of Activism are based on the fact that violence is not a private but public matter and that we are all responsible for violence taking place. Also, it is very important to understand that violence can happen to any woman and it is not a consequence of a woman's behavior but a consequence of a patriarchal system in which men abuse power.

Given into the account is a history of a society that traditionally supports violence with excuses for violent behavior. Organizations advocating for equality in society, stress that there is no justification for violence and we should stop looking for excuses with phrases such as "she asked for it





herself”, “she caused violence” or “she likes violence” etc. By doing so, we encourage perpetrators to continue in their behavior because they did not do anything bad.

We also talk about forms and types of violence in explaining that we have all been in situations of violence because violence is every act against our will that endangers us psychologically, physically and sexually regardless if a perpetrator is a son, husband, father, boyfriend, or unknown...

Many women’s organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina organized street actions during the 16 Days of Activism. Foundation “CURE” organized a street action on November 25th, 2013 in Sarajevo on the occasion of the first day of the Global Campaign 16 Days of Activism and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. There was a performance with silhouettes on a street (women and girls killed by partner and husband) aimed at prevention and information of citizens about violence against women and girls taking place across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Educational materials about violence against women and girls were shared. This performance presented 11 silhouettes of women who lost their lives as victims of domestic violence in BiH over the last two years. These Silhouettes passed the message that these women could have freely walked today with us, but, unfortunately, they did not because they were killed.

In the course of the 16 Days of Activism, Foundation “CURE” along with partner organizations, organized workshops in high schools about violence, trainings for women victims of violence at shelters, and meetings with police stations. They engaged with

Statistic data of the Gender Centre of Republic of Srpska and Federation of BiH about violence against women

Over the last 13 days 73 women were killed in Republic of Srpska. Victims of domestic violence are more than 50% of the total number of killed persons. Since 2005, 28.421 phone calls were reported at SOS line in RS. In the first years, the annual level the number of calls was between 1500 and 2000 while 4303 calls were registered in 2012. In 2011, 14 women were the victims of rape. In 2012, 17 women and 2 girls were victims of rape. In the first nine months of 2013, 764 domestic violence cases were reported and out of which 313 were criminal acts.

In Federation of BiH from 2009 to 2012 there were 7.501 phone calls reported to the SOS line. The number of reported domestic violence cases from 2006 to 2011 was 9.597. The number of protective measurements for period 2006 – 2012 was 520. The number of placed victims of domestic violence in six shelters being operative in Federation of BiH is 1.854.

media to increase its interest to report about violence against women professionally, held round tables and workshops with the following topics: “Violence amongst Youth and Violence in Relationships of Youth”, “What is Violence and Resolution 1325”, “Assertiveness and Self-Confidence”, “Prevention of Physical and Sexual Violence against Women and Girls with Elements of Self-Defense”, “Prevention of Young Girls Trafficking”, “Women’s Human Rights and Creating an Image in Political and Public Life”. Foundation “CURE” activities will end with protests marching under the title “HUMAN RIGHTS OUT”. We will take part in marching of citizens whose aim is to unite all marginalized groups in the streets, make their problems visible, and point to every day breach of human rights. It is of key importance for all marginalized groups to protest jointly on this day. ■ More information about 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence at: <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/>



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEALING WITH THE PAST IN PRIJEDOR

Fight Against Fascism in my „Quart“

HOW SHOULD WE COPE WITH MEMORIES OF THE CRIMES, that were committed in our lives and in our names, but without our consent? Why is individual and collective responsibility to blame? Can I help Bosnia and Herzegovina experience the process of “denazification” of Germany? Or follow the very successful German mapping model, only to further confuse already completely disoriented citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina? Who is Srdjan Aleksic? What is the essential meaning of the word “genocide”? How should we live, think, discuss... in the shadow Tomasica? These and other difficult questions in the field of memorials were addressed under the syntagm “Dealing with the Past.” University professors, activists and journalists attempted to respond as the participants of this international conference held on November 29 in Prijedor, organized by the Centre for Youth “Quart” and the German Foundation “Friedrich Ebert”.

The first keynote speaker was Tihomir Cipek, professor at the faculty of political sciences in Zagreb, which preceded the presentation on the politics and history of overcoming the past. Professor Cipek paid tribute to the young activists from Prijedor who have tackled the difficult topics in Prijedor and Bosnia and Herzegovina that have been taboo for years. He stated that the word “neighborhood” reflects the positive energy of one region within a city and creates an important dimension of identity for villagers, especially young people. He talked about the creation of the so-called “Legitimizing Narrative” or the socially desirable “official” version of history. He said that the impact of these narratives have fogged a mirror in which its own past is reflected. Enver Kazaz, professor of the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, dealt with the deconstruction of nationalism in BiH, and Mile Lasic, from the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, spoke about dealing with the past as the basis of building democratic societies in the Balkans. Professor Lasic divided the participants and their experiences and impressions from the time when the war broke out in Bosnia. He told about how he dramatically switched roles and responsibilities overnight changing from a Yugoslav diplomat into the Consul of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby overseeing

the arrival of refugees, many of whom were displaced people from Prijedor. Writer and journalist Ivan Lovrenovic spoke on the issue of guilt and its relationship to war crimes.

How does Serbia perceive the judgment of genocide in Srebrenica? Does such frequent use of that weighty word - which speaks of the worst crime which humanity knows - fade and devalue it? The answer to these questions was offered by professor Dr. Zarko Korac. He was trained as a social psychologist and university professor; later becoming a politician and vice president for Zoran Djindjic within the Serbian Government. Historian Nicolas Mol (“Memory Lab”) talked about the meaning of the act of Srdjan Aleksic, the young Trebinje citizen who was killed in 1993 for defending his fellow Bosniaks, and the other cases that are outside the “mainstream” official history. Tamanja Banjeglav, a historian from the Zagreb organization “Documenta,” shared about the fate of monuments from past wars and spoke about the politics of memory and forgetting in Croatia. Prijedor citizen Edin Hodzic, one of the activists of the civic coalition “Because it Concerns Me,” spoke about the need to communicate with the victims from a civil aspect, not putting to the fore their ethnicity because their identity is thus reduced to one dimension and it dehumanizes the victim.

To what extent are the media and journalists in BiH and the region ready to face the past, especially with the horrors of war crimes. What does the media minimize, neglect, and what does it trivialize and systematically pass over? These were the discussion topics held by journalist Gordana Katana of “Oslobodjenje” in Banja Luka, Milkica Milojevic, the President of the Association of BH Journalists, editor in chief of the magazine, “Dani” Dzenana Karup Drusko, and Boris Pavelic who is a journalist from “Novi List” in Zagreb. ■

Day of the Republic

Participants at the gathering commented that it was symbolic that this conference was held on November 29th, the national day of the former Yugoslavia, a state based on anti-fascism, after whose dissolution there were a series of wars and monstrous crimes.

I will not return - story of Đoko Stevanović

The first time I heard about Đoko Stevanović was at the opening of the memorial room for the internment camp Luka in Brčko, on the 7th of May, 2013. Svetlana Broz, director of the NGO Gariwo, mentioned him as an illustration of someone who did not die for their religion or nation, but in a demonstration of life in accordance with universal human values. Đoko was delivered to Camp Luka along with Smail Ribić, a man who was attempting to pass through Serbian army controlled territory in hopes of connecting with his family. Both their lives were taken there. Shortly after that memorial service I had the chance to explore the story, document it further, and write a scenario for a documentary that is now in the post-production stage within the NGO Gariwo.

Đoko Stevanović was from Gornje Dubravice, a village near Brčko. In the context of this war it is important to emphasize that his village was, and is still today, completely ethnically Serb. There are two neighboring villages Šatorovići (Bosniak) and Donja Dubravica (Croatian) and these three villages had an internal agreement on non-aggression during the war. While only villagers controlled the villages the agreement was respected, but when people started coming in from the other regions, no one could stop the tensions of the war. However, the villagers warned their nearby village neighbors to be prepared for when the strangers in uniform, who were capable of anything, started hanging around.

This is the environment from which Đoko came. One where a neighbor's head during the war was worth as much as their own regardless of the religion and nation.

Before the war started, he had permanently returned from Slovenia (where he had his Interpret firm), to his unfinished house in Gornje Dubravice. He had been expelled from Slovenia, the same as all Yugoslavs who were not Slovenian. Back at home he had left his wife and children of preschool age. And also there were his rabbits, about fifty of them. He used to give them to people who he knew would keep them as pets and take care of them. He never wanted to kill them nor could he bear it if someone else did. His sister Joka says, "Đoko felt a great love for animals, he had rabbits that he fed and he never ate their meat, he never ate for the reason that he could not understand how people can kill and eat."

He was considered a respectable man, and thus soon after returning from Slovenia he received a political offer - to be the representative of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) in his village. Đoko didn't think twice; He accepted the offer, believing that it would not cause him any headaches. He never knew that the SDS could harm so many people. Like many other citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina he never imagined what disasters could happen.

All of the events before the war and even the beginning of the war itself felt like a period of fleeting confusion for him. He

Writer:
Amer Tikveša



considered that everything would be resolved in a few days and that the world would continue living as before. He could see and recognize the fear in other individuals and he would help them as much as he could, but that "as much as he could" would actually mean saving the life of someone else.

This person was Alija, whose last name I will not mention. Đoko saved Alija by driving him across the border to find his family members who were already there as refugees. Words of this compassionate act were, of course, quickly communicated out among other Bosniaks who were then being persecuted like rabbits. Smail Ribić was a man who sought the same service. Smail was secretary of the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) in the municipality of Brčko. During the war he travelled to Šatorovići, his home village, where he felt safer and where neither the Serbian army nor the police had access. He quickly realised that nowhere in Bosnia would be safe, and that he also would not see his family in Germany for a long time, so he decided to leave. He asked Đoko for transport across the border. At this time it was the first half of May in 1992. The bridges in Brčko were blown up. The Luka camp had been formed where many Bosniaks and Croats were trapped. Đoko and Smail knew about everything that was happening, yet they believed in each other for success.

They were stopped at one of the many checkpoints in the villages around Brčko, detained in the police station, and then taken to the Luka camp where both of them were killed. Đoko's body was dumped alongside the bodies of murdered Bosniaks in a mass grave near Brčko.

Edhem Ribić is one of the few witnesses of Đoko's murder who is willing to testify: "One afternoon some people who introduced themselves as members of Šešelji's party came and cursed Đoko's Serbian mother, shot him in the forehead and killed him in front of us. The same people came back after midnight and killed Smail."

Handcuffed together from the police station they were brought into camp Luka. The only witness to their stay in the police station was Adnan Kucalović, who was also killed at camp Luka. He told Edhem about their beating that night at the police station and that after that he questioned whether they could survive.

Mičo Stevanović, Đoko's brother, was on one occasion in the company of a man from the police who knew something about



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Đoko's murder. He did not introduce himself as Đoko's brother, but he asked his colleague to try to make a policeman talk about his brother's case. The man said that they offered Đoko to surrender Smail to them and that Đoko could return home: "Fuck him - he didn't want to", the policeman stated ferociously. That is the moment that takes your breath away, a moment when Đoko leaves an indelible mark. Two kids, a wife, a house, a brother, sister, mother, father and even his rabbits - everything during the war, in danger, and he left them all just to not leave Smail alone. One can only imagine how his family was branded and treated and what could have happened to them. Moreover, it should be mentioned that Đoko and Smail were not friends, they were only acquaintances.

When they were asked about why he did not return, all members of his family responded the same: He could not have lived with the fact that he left someone else to die. I will dare to state my assumption here. On the scale he was faced with, his life was the least important, even though it was about death or to continue living after Smail's death. The most difficult lives, besides Smail, were had by Đoko's family members. They needed Đoko so much and they wanted to continue living without consequences. For that goal even Smail's death could be endured. But at that moment, life as a natural phenomenon lost its meaning for Đoko, because he could not accept the fact that Smail could be tortured for nothing and then afterward killed without being responsible for anything. Such a life, according to those rules, was not worth living. It is more human to suffer with those who suffer in the Luka camp, even if your family will be on the other side, than to remain untouched by those who made others suffer and be a direct witness of their deaths. That is the moment when fear of life becomes greater than the fear of death.

Unfortunately, today we live under the rules of murderers. This is the world that they have created for us and Đoko would not support such a world. His daughter is no longer in BiH and while his wife and son Dalibor are still in Gorlje Dubravce, they are jobless. His son is thirty years old and says that his greatest wish is to finish the house that his father started to build: "If I had a job, I could finish our house, facade for example, (...) garage as well, I know I should do that as well, (...) and a lot more, for instance, change the roof. When it's raining the roof is leaking. If I only had a job, everything would be different. But I see that nothing will change. I am reported to the bureau, they say that something will happen, but I don't think so." How do Đoko and Smail's murderers feel? What are their children's lives like? Who are they? Nobody knows. Only Đoko's mother mentions them while praying to God that the crimes they committed will not return to their children. And if she could see them one day, she says she would weep over them as over her son Đoko, because somehow she knows that they are unhappy and their mothers are unhappy with them. In the memories of his closest loved ones, and in his wife's dreams, Đoko becomes alive. He comes home from work, from



Đoko
Stevanović

Slovenia, Libya...never from any context of war. They talk about their kids and rabbits, Đoko says it is a lie that he was killed. "When our house is done, he is there, helping, it's interesting really, but it's hard when I wake up (...), how happy I feel while it's a dream. (...) I know that that day it will be nice for me." There is no existing record or institutionalized memory about Đoka's story. The city of Brčko has three monuments to their „war veterans“. The Army of Republika Srpska and Croatian Defence Council (HVO) and Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina have, in the memorial culture of Brčko, veteran status and monuments erected in their honor. There is an impression that they were all fighting against an external enemy, so the grateful citizens of Brčko raised a monument. Unfortunately, that's not true. The greatest enemy of Brčko and its people were those who killed Đoko Stevanović and then hid that fact. They hid it. The police, for instance, told Đoko's sister Joka that he died in the war. Therefore, true heroes don't have their own monument.

However, to memorialise the name of Đoko Stevanović would be more than healing for our sick society. This should be one of the many steps that we take to overcome the fear of life here. It would be good if Brčko acts first. In my opinion, it would be the best if they would rename the city after Đoko, but if that is too much at least they should rename a school or a street, organise a memorial tournament, or something. They just need to show that Đoko is not and should not ever be taboo in Brčko. On the contrary, all the citizens and visitors of Brčko should have to confront his name and story, compare themselves and see where they are on the scale of humanity compared this great act of universal value - Đoko's sacrifice. ■

Medica representative participated in Woman Peace Maker programme

Within hundreds of applications, one of four peacemakers selected this year to participate in an eight-week residency at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice (IPJ), located on the University of San Diego campus in San Diego, California, was Sabiha Husić. During that time, she had a chance to present her country Bosnia and Herzegovina, her organization “Medica” Zenica, and her own work and contribution to human rights, justice and peace building in everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Apart from Sabiha Husić, three other women participated: Rehana Hashmi from Pakistan, Philister Baya Lawiri from South Sudan and Rutuparna Mohanty from India. “Medica” Zenica is a non-governmental organization established in 1993. Since its establishment, for twenty full years, it has been in various ways dealing with remedying the consequences of war, restoring mutual confidence and peace building in everyday life. “Medica” Zenica was one of the first organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina that recognized the need for providing psychosocial, health, legal and economic support to women and children, survivors of rape, as well as of other war and post war trauma and violence.

“Medica” was working in the refugee camps, and Sabiha recalls: “The approach towards women whom I saw there gave me the reason to live and my willingness to help other people was even bigger.” She became a volunteer, working directly with women survivors of sexual violence and has continued to help and support victims of sexual and other forms of violence during the war and post war period. So, the vulnerable categories of people are those who are the direct victims of violence and the endangerment of basic and natural human rights, those who are victims of distortion of mutual respect, traditions of mutual respect and non-acceptance of diversity. “Medica” recognized the need for working on peace building and reconciliation from different angles, which included religious issues, among others.

There are numerous activities that are focused in this area. Firstly, help is being provided to everyone regardless of their religion. In addition to the projects that are focused on healing from trauma, it is important to bring attention to some projects such as “Dialogue against violence: gender based violence and interreligious dialogue”, “Youth in interreligious dialogue”, and



“Peace and reconciliation”- for high school students, employees in institutions, members of non-governmental organizations and women from local communities in the area of Zenica, Dobo Canton, and wider.

Sabiha, together with her associates and partners, has advocated and created models that enable approaches adjusted to individual needs of victims/survivors and equal opportunities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In 2010, the first institutionalized networks of support for victims and witnesses in war crime cases, sexual violence, and other criminal acts were established for assistance before, during and after testimony.

In this post-war climate, Sabiha urges reconciliation, bringing together women from all communities through workshops on stress, trauma, dialogue and conflict resolution. Together with two women from Switzerland (Reinhild Traitler-Espiritu and Teny Pirri-Simonian), they lead the European Project for Interreligious Learning, which gathers Christian and Muslim women from five countries to promote understanding, peace and tolerance. For the purpose of learning, mutual bonding, and overcoming mutual differences, “Medica” Zenica organizes, for several years now, a program for students of the Webster University in Geneva. Set in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a place where civilizations have mingled for hundreds of years, the program exposes the students to positive values of tolerance throughout history, as well as the negative sides as told from the period when Bosnia and Herzegovina could not resist to the evil powers which occasionally overpower. ■



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THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPORTS STORY: YOUTH SPORTS GAMES

YOUTH SPORTS GAMES started 17 years ago in Split, Croatia. In 2011, due to the intolerable political situation and divisions between children in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the decision was made to bring Youth Sports Games in to our country. Three years later, the Games have become a well recognized name when it comes to children's sport.

Even two decades after the war ended in Bosnia and Herzegovina the society is still quite divided and these divisions are reflected in a particular way to young children and in small towns. Due to the dire economic and political situation, school age children often do not have the chance to travel and meet peers from places, cities, and entities other than their own. Many children from Republika Srpska and Federation B&H, despite the fact that they live in the same country or even the same city, will most likely not have a chance to meet each other as peers or neighbors. This is due to separate education systems and the general political milieu of the entities. The Youth Sports Games were initiated to develop peace by breaking down national/entity barriers, promoting tolerance, and acceptance through sports programs. These activities have been proven to help communities boost gatherings, foster friendships, bind families together, and reduce anti-social behavior. The Games have developed a national pride that is not based on religion, gender, or national and ethnic backgrounds.

The Youth Sports Games represent the largest free and amateur competitions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The basic premises of the Games are humane ones - friendship, tolerance, fair play, and fun. It could not be any different when the Games are intended for children and young people, those who one day might create a better perspective for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Because this year's Youth Sports Games gathered over 29,000 participants from 19 cities across BiH, it is clear that they are widely recognized among children and adolescents.

"I will remember this for the rest of my life" says Jovana Smiljanić, a young girl from Brčko, as she describes the Games and her arrival to the final contest held in Sarajevo. Her opinion is also shared by other participants, who gladly recommend everyone to apply for the Youth Sports Games. Games are held in 10 sports - football, handball, basketball, tennis, table tennis, volleyball, badminton, beach volleyball, chess, and dodgeball - among which children can choose their favorite and show off their skills. The Games are completely free for all participants.



Thanks to the Ambassadors and Friends of the Youth Sports Games - Ivica Osim, Vedad Ibišević, Predrag Mijatović, Sir Dave Richards, Sven Göran Eriksson and many others - the Games have become an indispensable part of the sporting life of children and young people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The new Ambassador of the Games is Miralem Pjanić, BH representative and football player of Italian Roma. When asked to describe the importance of the Games in BiH, Pjanić said: "It is a great opportunity to gather young boys and girls from all the cities of BiH. I am very proud to be a part of it and of course, I think we will continue to have great success and a lot of children participants."

Haris Deliahmetović, president of the Games in Bosnia and Herzegovina, invited children and young people across the country to apply for next year's contest and enjoy their favorite sport while having fun and socializing: "We are convinced that our story, the most beautiful sports story, succeeded in an attempt to bring together children from all over our country. That's what makes us happy and gives us the enthusiasm to go on."

In 2013, Konjic was honored to be the first city to host this great sports story for children and young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. After Konjic, the Games traveled to Goražde, Doboj, Zenica, Sarajevo, Prijedor, Bihać, Tuzla, Gradačac, Travnik, Bugojno, Visoko, Brčko, Livno, Široki Brijeg, Mostar, Bijeljina, Zvornik and Zavidovići. The final competition of the third Youth Sports Games was held in Sarajevo from 20th to 24th of August of this year.

We invite all young football players, tennis players, basketball, handball, volleyball players, chess players and all the boys and girls who want to try their hand at some of the sports to be part of next year's Youth Sports Games and experience what seems to be the best summer vacation ever. ■

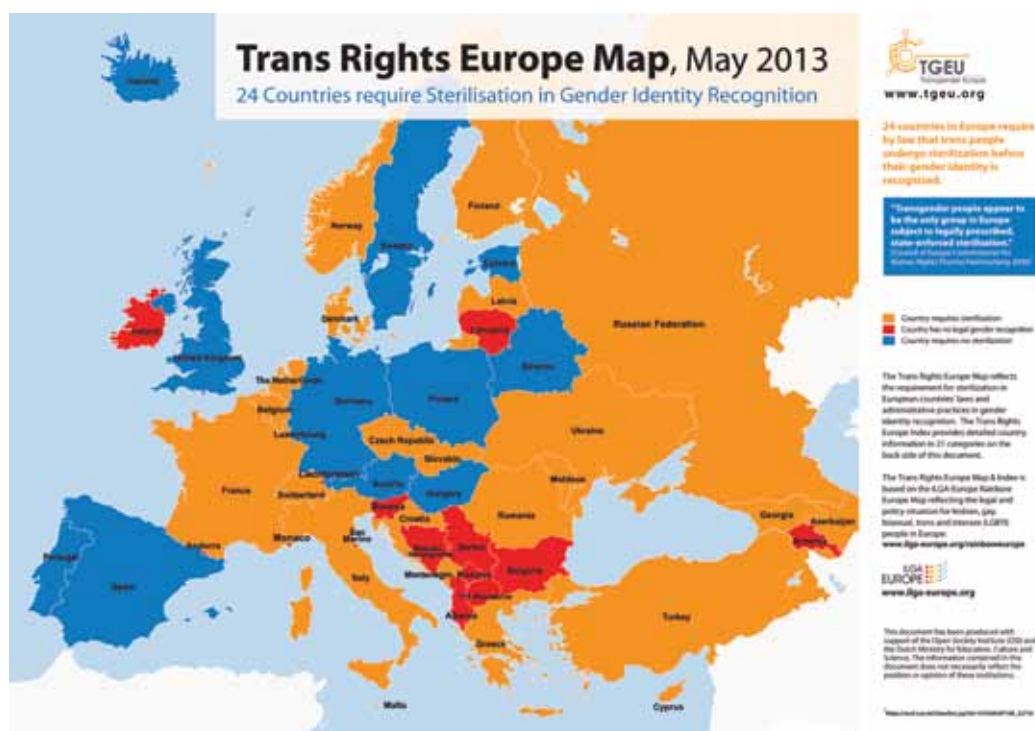
Where are trans* women in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence?

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TRANS* WOMEN are the women who do not identify with the sex or gender that they should according to laws of medicine, biology or society. Trans* women are those women who do not want to be harmonized with the biological sex they were born in. Trans -sexuality is not written with double "s" because it is not a disorder or illness. Trans* women are women just like any other women; they were just born in male body. Transsexual women, cross dressers and transvestites are usually marked as transgender women. Although they are different amongst each other, they share a common bond: the overcoming of, not agreeing with, playing around with of the heterosexual binary normative understanding of sex and gender, i.e. the categories of man/woman and woman/man. Trans* women are those women who want to or have intention to adjust their sex, i.e. women who have partially or completely modified their body (by physical and/or hormone therapy and surgery) to express their female sex and gender identity. The acronym MtF (male to female) stands for a person going through this process towards female sex. The first sex-change operation was performed in 1912 in Berlin.

Unfortunately this year November the 20th did not become a part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign calendar. For the past fifteen years, this day been marked as the Transgender Day of Remembrance to commemorate transgender persons who have been killed in hate-crimes. Trans* persons are often victims of violence – 238 trans* persons were killed over the last few years of whom the vast majority are trans* women, as stated in the Transgender Europe report (<http://tgeu.org/node/435>). Since 2008 up to now 1374 trans* persons, mostly women, were killed in different parts of the world. Two killings of trans* women in Serbia are on this list, whilst the biggest number of killed trans* persons women is in Turkey.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, trans* women are excluded from feminist and LGBT debates. And the state is also deaf to them. Trans* women have no access to appropriate procedures of sex -change. The Federation of BiH, Republic of Srpska and Brčko District do not cover sex adjusting treatment costs, which means that trans* women who want to go through the treatment of sex -change operation are forced to find solutions abroad and at their own cost. Also, BiH must establish the proper procedures for document and ID number replacement for trans* women who have undergone the medical treatment of sex-change operation. Trans* women are the target of hate-based crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the state must ensure the equal protection and implementation of legal regulation of hate-based crime, which needs to include gender identity. Trans* women are the women missing in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is the responsibility of all of us, biological, homogeneous or heterogeneous women, activists, and feminists because these multiple marginalized and discriminated women are not on our maps of interest, care and protection. ■





Do the right thing to us, let some good staff play on

It's not easy to be born. Especially because you do not get to choose the country where you will be born, nor the people who are going to be your parents all your life. It's not easy to carry a name for a lifetime, whether you like it or not.

Either way, life is hard but we have long ago accepted it as such. Especially living in a country like Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although we have accepted this life, one question still remains. But first, back to the beginning of our story: Birth

Imagine ourselves in a time when we were at our smallest. It is difficult to do, but possible. So: We do not say anything, and we're hungry. We are growing our teeth. Crying. We want to turn on the radio and dance to our favorite song but do not know how to recognize what the radio is and even less how to get to it because we have not learned our first step. But why bother when there is someone to lead us? When there is someone who recognizes our emotions and reacts to them. When there is someone who is already singing our favorite song so that we do not have to wait for it to play on the radio. That person also shows us how to take our first step and joins us in celebrating our first dance, first fall, first run. Everything.

How many times do we want to go back to this stage of life? How many times do we want to give up everything because something does not work, or because important people do not recognize our ideas? How many times do we want to change the strategy that everyday pulls us down and doesn't allow us to stand up? How many times in our life do we play "Man, don't be angry". And we're not angry. We just want a chance to change the strategy. Or at least to improve upon it.

And the time for change is not tomorrow, in a month, in a year, or "when the time comes for it". The time is now. Now!

And that's how it is, dear political scene in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Do not forget that you were once somebody's baby. That you were brought up by someone and led through this life, the one you live now. Somebody had a serious strategy for this life. A life which will carry meaning to many other people. Dozens, thousands of people every day pronounce your name, though you are not a parent of those people.

Do not forget how unsafe the melodies of those songs are that we hear for the first time, just like the steps that we make for a safer and better tomorrow. For ourselves. And for the people around us. Do not forget that we are the creators of the perfect life planning strategies. And this time for myself, but also for the others.

To you, Political scene in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a young person I swear that every plan for a better and more successful tomorrow will always have your name in my prayers, hopes and aspirations. I promise to tell everyone about the beauty that you offer. Blue and yellow. Stars that make your soil perfect. But on one condition.

Do not forget that the artist who draws his/her destiny and defines his/her life is often left out by the material which depicts his/her life. Yes. The canvas is large and sharp. Often crayons leave no trace or disappear. Do not forget that the strategy needs someone to support it. Identify and then buy it.

And you. You who hold this page in your hands. Move it. Let go of the story that says you are not worth anything as an individual and that this country cannot bring about anything worthwhile. You are a miracle. And miracles are happening every day. They change the world for the better. For you, someone created the perfect strategy. Continue to maintain it for a better tomorrow. Rid yourself of negativity. Gather strength and create a paradise on earth.

Offer your ideas to the local community. Demonstrate that your hands can remove any obstacle. That your intellect can destroy suspicions and misunderstandings. Take advantage of your talents in creating strategy. And don't forget that you are not only leaving this for the next generation, but for many generations to come.

Show the people who believed in you that you were right. And do not be afraid if some people do not recognize your work, your skill in creating. Well, my God. Not all are artists. But do not give up. Knock on the door, sing under the window, fight like a lion. I know you'll win. And then, every step will be easy. You will no longer walk up the stairs. You'll skip them. With a smile on your face, and a trust in new people to come. Unsafe, just as you were at the beginning.

And yes. Everything you do; do not forget to have a strategy. God has a plan for you. And together, you with Him, can plan strategies for others. Space around you. Space inside you. I keep my fingers crossed for you. Because I know you can do it! And yes. Start now! Your time has come!

Eh, I almost forgot „Do the right thing to us, let some good staff play on“

Yours, Josip Milanović

PEACE, PEACE: MAKING DISTINCTIONS

“Everything that MCC does is peace.”

This oft-heard phrase within MCC circles both excites and frustrates. Excites, because it reflects the passion many MCC workers, supporters, and partners have for peacebuilding work. Frustrates, because claiming that everything that MCC does is “peace” threatens to make the concept so broad that it loses any concrete meaning.

As a ubiquitous word within MCC, peace is used to describe dozens of different things, with its meaning shifting according to the speaker and the context. What does the phrase “everything we do at MCC is peace” mean? Is it a prescriptive call to throw out relief and development and focus only on peacebuilding? Or is it rather a descriptive claim about the nature of MCC’s work?

There is of course something to be said for having a big tent and for letting a thousand flowers bloom in the name of peace. We would argue, however, that we in MCC would do well to be more specific and rigorous about how we use the word peace, taking care to distinguish and define the different realities the word is used to designate. We risk watering down the potency and richness of distinct kinds of work when try to fit them all under one umbrella concept. Being more rigorous about defining the different types of work that get lumped together under the banner of peace does not mean narrowing the breadth of MCC’s diverse involvements. Rather, it will strengthen those diverse involvements by recognizing, for example, that programs as diverse as a strategic conflict prevention intervention in South Sudan, an ecumenical conference about nonviolent Christology, providing resources for pastors on military enlistment and conscientious objection, and facilitating a victim-offender dialogue require different skills and point to different outcomes. Failing to recognize these differences, we suggest, fosters confusion.

Examples of the problem

Some brief examples of confusion, ambiguity and vagueness fostered by the tendency to define everything that MCC does as peace are in order. One example of such confusion revolves around our understanding of advocacy. In many MCC documents advocacy is categorized as peacebuilding work. This categorization reflects how all projects connected to issues of systemic injustice become associated with “peace” within MCC. This expansive definition of peacebuilding to include all forms of advocacy is problematic, we would contend, because it obscures how MCC’s advocacy efforts cut across various program sectors, as MCC offices in Ottawa, Washington, D.C., and



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New York call upon governments to institute more just policies in health, education, and food security sectors. As such, advocacy represents an operational mode.

Affixing the label “peace” onto different projects can also promote fuzzy thinking about the intended outcome of an MCC-supported initiative. Take, for instance, the example of a “peace playground” constructed at a school serving two religious groups. Because the playground is built as a place where children from both religious groups can play together, the MCC Representatives identify the project as a “peace” project. Underlying this decision is the apparent assumption that any project that brings together peoples across any lines of difference is automatically a form of peacebuilding. The problem with such an automatic identification is that it threatens to preempt rigorous thinking about the project’s desired outcomes.

Within MCC the word peace has often functioned as an umbrella under which diverse activities and approaches are gathered, including, but certainly not limited to advocacy, connecting peoples efforts, inter-Mennonite and broader ecumenical education and conversations around peace theology, restorative justice, conflict prevention, strategic peacebuilding, creation care, and more..

What do we mean when we use the word peace? What are we referring to? A vision of shalom around which MCC’s efforts might be rallied? A commitment to nonviolence? Support for strategic peacebuilding and conflict prevention programs? Forums for discussion about peace theology?



mreža za izgradnju mira

A more thorough planning process would require that a conflict analysis be carried out to determine what types of interreligious conflicts, if any, exist in the community and what the likelihood of such conflicts becoming violent might be. If there is little tension or conflict in the community and the likelihood of violent conflict is minimal, it still might make sense for MCC to support the construction of a playground—but then the outcomes would be educational in nature, such as improvement in students' school performance, emotional health, communication skills, or even decreased absenteeism or fewer classroom disruptions. If, however, the conflict analysis indicates a history of violence or the likelihood of violent conflict across religious lines in the community, then MCC and its partners would still need to discern the nature of the desired outcomes. On the one hand, MCC and its partners could articulate educational outcomes for the project, while using conflict sensitivity tools (such as Do No Harm analysis) to ensure that the project is being carried out with awareness of and responsiveness to the conflict dynamics: in this instance the project should be viewed as an educational project being designed and implemented with conflict sensitivity tools. On the other hand, the outcomes could be defined in terms of a reduction in violence or increased positive, cooperative actions among youth from different groups: in this case the project would best be thought of as a peacebuilding initiative.

A final example of how bringing all MCC program under the umbrella of peace promotes vague thinking about outcomes can be found in the tendency to slot all of MCC's one-year young adult programs under the peacebuilding rubric. The confusion in this instance stems from the failure to distinguish between how MCC carries out its work (by connecting peoples) and what of that work (i.e. the particular program sector of the MCC worker's assignment). All MCC Service Workers (be they in one-year assignments or longer) should be committed to connecting peoples: that's part of the how of all MCC work, as named by MCC's operating principles. But connecting peoples happens in assignments across program sectors—from the health sector (e.g. a SALTER assisting in an HIV/AIDS clinic) to the education sector (e.g. a YAMENER assigned to teach English at a high school) to the peacebuilding sector (e.g. a three-year Service Worker seconded to an organization working at conflict prevention) and more. As with the above example, it is critical to determine the desired outcomes of a given MCC project in order to determine the program sector into which it fits.

Making distinctions

How can we be more specific in the language that we use to describe and honor the differences in programs currently all gathered together under the umbrella of peace? To

move in this direction, it is important to name the different aspects of MCC's program that are currently brought under the "peace" umbrella. We would contend that it is imperative to differentiate how peace language is used:

- to name an overarching organizational vision
- to identify particular program sectors
- to specify particular values shaping how MCC carries out its work (i.e., MCC's operating principles)
- to point to particular modes of MCC work.

Some brief definitions and explanations will serve to highlight the distinctions between these different aspects of MCC's program.

Vision: We suspect that when many people claim that "everything we do at MCC is peace" they are thinking about MCC's broad organizational vision. Part of MCC's vision and identity statement reads: "MCC envisions communities worldwide living in right relationship with God, one another, and creation." While the word "peace" is absent here, this sentence functions as a succinct definition of the biblical vision of shalom, a vision of a reconciled humanity drawn from Scripture. As Mennonites in the United States and Canada became less separatist and more engaged with their surrounding communities and undertook worldwide mission and relief and development work through agencies like MCC, Mennonite peace witness became more than the refusal of military service, expanding to encompass work on behalf of the vision of a reconciled humanity, a vision identified with the word peace, or shalom. Because all MCC work—be it in the education, health, food security, or peacebuilding sectors—arguably is carried out as part of this vision, one can claim that all of MCC's work is peace. The strength of this assertion is that it keeps the theological vision of communities reconciled with God, one another, and creation front and center in MCC's work. The potential dangers are that the richness of that theological vision becomes diluted by simply labeling it "peace" and that a sole focus on vision will prevent us from taking care to think critically about the outcomes of the different types of projects carried out under the umbrella of "peace."

Program Sectors: Currently several different types of program get the "peace" label affixed to them. Distinguishing among them will help us think more constructively and thoroughly about the program outcomes to which MCC hopes to contribute.

- **Peacebuilding:** Interventions which seek to improve relationships and address root causes of conflict in order to prevent, reduce or recover from violent conflict.
- **Restorative justice:** Work based on addressing the needs of victims, offenders and communities, with a focus on harm that has been done and, where possible, the restoration of broken relationships.
- **Promoting theological conversations** (inter-Mennonite



PRO-Future

(Trust, Understanding, Responsibility for the Future)

We best celebrate the diversity of MCC work and honor the varied outcomes to which that work contributes by being more focused in what we mean within MCC by peacebuilding work, differentiating peacebuilding projects from other types of MCC program.

Affixing the label “peace” onto different projects can also promote fuzzy thinking about the intended outcome of an MCC-supported initiative.

and broader ecumenical) around peace theology: Support for and engagement with Anabaptist-Mennonite churches around the world as they contextualize the gospel call to love enemies and to respond nonviolently to evil..

Operating Principles: MCC’s seven operating principles name the lenses through which MCC carries out its work and the ways of working that MCC hopes will shape its mission. These are:

- Accompanying the church and partners
- Acting sustainably
- Building just economic relationships
- Connecting peoples
- Dismantling oppression to realize participation
- Practicing nonviolence
- Seeking a just peace

These operating principles cut across program sectors, shaping not only MCC’s peacebuilding work but also its work in other sectors like education and health. So, for example, MCC can and should use conflict sensitivity tools when planning, monitoring, and evaluating a food security initiative. Or, to take another example, MCC will often want to conduct a conflict analysis or a power analysis when developing a health project. Or, as a final example, food security projects will often have a connecting people’s component. Because the operating principles name key aspects of an overarching vision of humanity and the rest of creation reconciled with God, the temptation again is to categorize all work shaped by these operating principles as “peace.” Our contention, however, is that succumbing to this temptation increases the risk that we will not be as deliberate as we should be in thinking through the practical ways that these operating principles should be shaping our diverse programs, be they in peacebuilding or in other sectors like humanitarian relief or education.

Mode: A mode names a particular type of program activity in which MCC program engages. Some modes include grant-giving, public engagement, distributing material resources, and organizing. Of the different modes of MCC’s work, advocacy is the one most often conflated with “peace.” However, as we have seen, advocacy as mode or as a form of MCC action stretches beyond the peacebuilding sector, as MCC’s office at the United Nations and in Ottawa and

Washington, D.C. organize advocacy initiatives related to other program sectors, such as health and humanitarian relief. Likewise, advocacy is a tool that is used by program beyond the walls of the Washington, Ottawa, and United Nations offices, with partners seeking local-level political change and advocating for corporate responsibility (e.g. mining justice or divestment efforts). Advocacy should be seen as a means for seeking both structural change and policy change.

Moving forward

The typology above of the different aspects of MCC’s work that get lumped under the “peace” umbrella within MCC is not meant, we should stress, to denigrate any one particular type of program or approach. We have distinguished among vision, program sectors, operating principles, and modes not to suggest that MCC discontinue one type of program, but rather to foster internal clarity and better planning.

Making these distinctions also offers us the opportunity to think more clearly about what types of projects MCC supports within the peacebuilding sector. Within the peacebuilding sector we should work within these parameters and then take the time to focus on the related best practices. We recognize that even within the peacebuilding field there is debate about whether peacebuilding is the lens through which all kinds of development work is done or a specific set of sectoral knowledge within development organizations. Initial findings from the Alliance for Peacebuilding mapping project suggest that in practice peacebuilding is both a lens and a sector. However, our hope with this discussion paper is to encourage clarity about peacebuilding as a program sector and to distinguishing that from the other ways in which “peace” language is used within MCC. MCC is in a unique position in relation to the broader peacebuilding field. MCC was arguably “doing peace” before the peacebuilding field was a more technical academic discipline and field of study. However, as the field has continued to grow and change and mature and become more formalized, MCC has not always kept up with developments in the field. By using “peace” to cover “everything that MCC does,” we would suggest that MCC has not always been as rigorous as it could and should be in using sector-specific best practices—including the best practices of the emerging peacebuilding field—to shape its work. Being clearer about the sector-specific best practices of this peacebuilding field, while also acknowledging and affirming that work in other program sectors such as food security, education, and health are carried out as part of a theological vision of the peaceable Kingdom, of humanity and the rest of creation reconciled with God, will, we hope, strengthen MCC’s work across all program sectors, including the peacebuilding sector. ■



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