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Las versiones castellanas de las ponencias y noticias provenientes del Congreso 2008 se pueden encontrar a:

Les versions en langue française des présentations et des nouvelles provenant du Congrès se trouvent à:

http://www.waccglobal.info/

In the next issue
‘Media reform’ is the theme of the 1/2009 issue of Media Development, which compares recent developments in the North with the differing needs of the South.
Congress 2008, held in Cape Town, South Africa, 6-10 October, began with African drumming from Burundi, a country where drums are traditionally sacred. Players use instruments made from hollowed tree trunks covered with animal skins.

As well as the main drum, called Inkiranya, there are Amashako drums which provide a continuous beat, and Ibibikiso drums, which follow the rhythm established by the Inkiranya. The drums were a fitting and vibrant start to an opening ceremony celebrating Africa’s diversity.

Musimbi Kanyoro, WACC President, welcomed participants and guests. They included Anthony Liebenberg, pastor of the Life Church where Congress plenary sessions took place; Helen Zille, mayor of Cape Town; anti-apartheid witnesses Florence de Villiers, Helen Kotze, Zubeida Jaffer and Diana Ferrus; and guest of honour Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu.

In her address, Musimbi Kanyoro quoted Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa, whose prison cell on Robben Island participants would later visit. In his autobiography, Mandela wrote:

‘No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.’

Musimbi Kanyoro affirmed this sentiment as underlying the Congress theme, ‘Communication is peace’:

‘Genuine communication, the kind that sees your neighbour as your keeper and you as your neighbour’s keeper, is the kind of communication that expresses mutual concern for each other, for our shared world and its people. The kind of communication that creates peace.’

Cloud of Witnesses
A highlight of the opening ceremony, reflecting Congress 2008’s presence in South Africa, was recognition of the ‘cloud of witnesses’ who struggled against apartheid. WACC asked Horst Kleinschmidt, himself a veteran of the struggle, to write the text of a booklet which was distributed to participants.1 It recounts the stories of eight women and men who are representative of the thousands of ordinary people who suffered under the oppression:

‘Many did not live to see the day that freedom came in 1994. But they, along with those who did, still stand as symbols for the defence of the universal values of equality and freedom in this era of reconstruction when post-apartheid society is being built. Their witness in our darkest hours, and their wisdom and guidance today, form the building stones on the road to constitutional democracy.’

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, the Albert Schweitzer Prize for Humanitarianism in 1986, and the Gandhi Peace Prize in 2007, spoke of communication as a fundamental right.

Archbishop Tutu praised WACC’s involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle, notably its support for The Voice newspaper, Johannesburg, and Grassroots newspaper, Cape Town (one of whose journalists, Zubeida Jaffer, was present in the cloud of witnesses).

Tutu emphasized the contemporary relevance of the Congress sub-theme ‘Building viable communities’, particularly in the context of South
Africa. He said:

‘We are still facing up to the challenge of forging viable communities, not only where all South Africans can accept each other without regard to the colour of their skin, but also a community in which refugees, the outsiders in our land, can feel safe and welcome.’

In anticipation of Congress 2008, WACC published the book *Communication Peace: Entertaining Angels Unawares.*, It includes several contributions by the late Fr Michael Traber, who believed that:

‘Solving problems by peaceful means is tantamount to employing all means and modes of communication... There is literally only one way of overcoming violence: communication. The new culture of peace is, therefore, a culture of communication.’

That was the spirit of Congress 2008, which celebrated diversity, creativity, spirituality, and a shared belief that the ultimate aim of communication is peace.

**Notes**

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (above) addressing participants at the opening ceremony of Congress 2008. (Both photos: Erick Coll.)
Opening Address

WACC President Dr Musimbi Kanyoro greeted participants and guests, welcoming them to the first WACC Congress to take place in Africa.

It is significant that we are meeting here in Cape Town and in the Republic of South Africa. This is a country where consistent advocacy for justice yielded results which give hope to an organisation such as WACC.

Our conference enables us to celebrate unity and diversity. What other place could contextualise that than the RSA? We are here to celebrate the unity of the human spirit and its many creative endeavours. We are celebrating the diversity of the world’s people and their many different cultures, faiths and talents.

The theme of our Congress is ‘Communication is peace: Building viable communities’. The need to speak about peace today may seem self-evident; and equating communication with peace a paradox. But, as former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela – whose life and achievements we also celebrate today – wrote in his autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom*:

‘No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.’

That is what we mean by ‘Communication is peace’. Genuine communication, the kind that sees your neighbour as your keeper and you as your neighbour’s keeper, is the kind of communication that expresses mutual concern for each other, for our shared world and its people. The kind of communication that creates peace.’

So for WACC, as its *Christian Principles of Communication* proclaim, communication becomes a basic human right that defines people’s common humanity, strengthens cultures, enables participation, creates community, and challenges tyranny and oppression.

That is the way to create viable communities – communities that are free and capable of articulating their needs and determining their own futures: politically, economically, socially and culturally.

Enabling human dignity for all

This year, the whole world is celebrating 60 years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was inaugurated. We, too, in the communication world contribute to the growth and the expanded vision of this charter whose objective is enabling human dignity for all.

Addressing the U.S. Congress in 2006, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia – the first democratically elected female head of state in Africa and a beacon of hope for Africa and, especially, for Africa’s women – recently spoke of the expectations of her people:

‘They have the right to a government that is honest and that respects the sanctity of human life. They need and they deserve an economic environment in which their efforts can succeed. They need infrastructure and they need security. Above all, they need peace.’

This is the dignity that the Universal Declaration advocates. When there is peace, people can go about their work of loving and caring for humanity and all of creation.

There are three dimensions to creating and sustaining this kind of peace. People need economic development that is ecologically sustainable and accessible by the poor. For this to be possible, social conditions must be stable. That means having well-functioning forms of governance, respect for human rights, inclusive social and cultural development, and actions that deter exploitation and corruption.

And this where communication plays a fundamental role. It is about ensuring the right to communication, the right to information and the right to freedom of expression in languages...
that communicate to us.

It is about ensuring equitable access to the new technologies of information and communication that structure our modern world – without all these fundamental rights, we cannot build peaceful and viable communities.

Our continent, Africa, today is advancing. Some of our lands and people are today flourishing. Yet we also grieve with the many that seem to be locked out of any of these possibilities. Meeting on the African continent requires both celebration of who we are and lamentation for the lack of dignity that so many on our continent seem to be destined to.

We must ask difficult questions and make commitments that lead to change. Change in our personal behaviour as well as in our collective responsibility to Africa and its people. We have planned for this conference to hear testimonies, to visit and see and to come out of Africa with expanded knowledge on the calling to peace that communication asks of each and every one of us.

For the last eight years, with the support of WACC Africa and all of our global WACC, I have had the privilege of serving as President of the World Association for Christian Communication. This sharing of global leadership, men and women, people of different continents and cultures and people of diverse opinions is the reality of the unity and diversity that this organisation stands for. WACC is a dynamic organisation that takes sides and that stands up for communication rights!

It is my joy, pleasure and pride to welcome you all to my continent Africa and to WACC’s Congress 2008! Thank WACC Africa for inviting us. Thank you South Africa and Cape Town for hosting us. And most of all, Thank you, Our God, for getting us here safely.

With these words, I entrust this meeting into God’s care and in our collective responsibility to each other, to nurture and care until we leave this place as new people committed to communication for peace.
I thank you for the honour you have done me by inviting me to address this opening ceremony of the World Association for Christian Communication’s Congress.

Your theme is ‘Communication is Peace – Building Viable Communities.’ Here in South Africa, we have had a long and difficult process of working for peace, despite all the obstacles put in our way to speak truth to the evils of racial discrimination, which divided people and communities from one another solely on the grounds of their race.

We still face the challenge of building viable communities, not only where all South Africans accept one another without regard to the colour of their skins, but also in which refugees, the aliens in our land, are made to feel welcome and secure.

Before I say anything more about our experience here at the southern tip of the continent from which, the scientists tell us, all humankind originated, please let me pay tribute to the long involvement that the Association and its partners have had with those of us who worked for justice and liberation.

When I accepted the post of General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches in 1978, I inherited a long tradition of support from WACC and its funders for our communication related activities. These included Ecunews, one of the first Christian news services in Africa; The Voice newspaper, which was known as the ‘voice of the voiceless’ until it was banned by the South African government; and the Inter-Church Media Programme, whose first Director, Rev. Bernard Spong is among those being honoured today.

More recently, you have supported organisations such as Molo Songololo, which works for the rights of children; Bush Radio; the Media and Gender Institute; and Salty Print here in Cape Town.

We honour you for your many and continuing connections to South Africa.

Over its history, the World Association for Christian Communication has sought to defend, expand and entrench people’s right to communicate. Among your initiatives, some going back as far as 1969, has been the right of refugees to communicate, the special need for women to have access to the media, support for the New World Information Communication Order and the Campaign for Communication Rights in the Information Society.

I commend you for your latest initiative in taking the first steps towards the establishment of a Global Centre for Communication Rights.

Running through all of these has been a passion for truth, justice and reconciliation. At your last Global Congress in Holland in 2001, your theme was ‘Communication: from Confrontation to Reconciliation’ and among the speakers was Dr Charles Villa-Vicencio, who served as Director of Research for the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, of which I was Chairperson.

The Commission was established by an Act of Parliament because our leaders believed that, from our divided, violent and unjust past, all our people needed to hear personal and communal stories of suffering and heroism; of hurt and triumph; and of the need for confession, forgiveness and healing.

From the start, we in the Commission understood the vitally important role that open, full and honest communication through every medium at our disposal could play. Although the TRC was a secular body, most of its members were Christians or persons of other historic faiths who believed that communication is a fundamental human right, given by God.

Our sacred writings tell us that, when Creation began, God was in dialogue with God’s handiwork. In the book of Genesis, we read that God spoke, and pronounced the cosmos good. The writer of the letter to the Hebrew Christians notes that ‘In times past, God spoke to our forebears in many and varied ways through the prophets. But in this final age, God has spoken to us in the Son.’

This reflects the affirmation of the gospel
writer John that: ‘In the beginning the Word already was. The Word was in God's presence, and what God was, the Word was.’

So we set out to expose and record and communicate the inhumanity we inflicted on one another in the name of political ideology and notions of racial superiority which sadly, some sought to justify on biblical grounds.

The TRC process was not universally accepted in our country, and for many people, not least those of us who served on the Commission and it's various organs, the unfolding stories of the deepest human trauma were profoundly disturbing.

But in the end, for all its shortcomings, the TRC process was vital for the healing of our land and our attempts to redress the injustices of the past. By no means can we claim to have reached our goal. The injustices of the past still haunt us, and trap many of our people in ignorance, poverty, disease and hopelessness. The struggle for justice, dignity and peace will always demand our commitment, for as long as our communities remain divided, unviable and wracked by violence.

But we are called to be peacemakers. Not peace lovers. Not peace keepers, though those may sometimes be the only viable options open to us. Yet, our task remains to make peace.

My hope is that, from whichever part of this glorious creation of God you come, after you have wrestled in this lovely city with the tasks of promoting peace and settling on strategies for building viable communities, you will return home and allow God’s Spirit to bring to full bloom the seeds of peace and justice, hope and integrity, that will be sown here in the next few days.
Communication rights belong to everyone

Doreen Spence

transi…Greetings. It is customary to acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of South Africa whose land we are sharing. I also want to thank WACC President, Dr Musimbi Kanyoro and WACC for all their support and granting me this honour today.

In terms of communication rights, I will address this from my life long work with Indigenous Peoples around the globe. I have noticed we have many similarities, and feel now is the time for us to concentrate on the similarities we share, and less on the differences.

As with all rights, communication rights are given to us by the Creator of all things. My grandparents were my greatest teachers of the Creation Stories, which constantly remind me, of my rightful place in the Cycle of Life.

They often reiterated that we are co-Creators… an extension of all that is. We are not above anyone else, nor are we less than the tiniest life form, such as our brothers and sisters the ants, who work collectively for the betterment of the whole. We could learn a lot from them. I was taught that everything is alive and that every living entity is to be respected.

There is an ancient Native Proverb that says, ‘Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors; we borrow it from our Children.’ Therefore our commitment to the land is based on the principles of sustained life, sustained development, and stewardship.

Our story is a story of human beings.
Our story is a story of struggle.
Our story is a story of injustice.
Our story is a story of Peace-time Genocide.
Our history is a part of Canada’s history.

Our future is a part of Canada’s future (Boyce, 1989: 228)

Our story needs to be heard
In the early 1920’s, Duncan Campbell Scott told the Canadian House of Commons that, ‘I want to get rid of the Indian problem… our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body of politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian department’ (Boyce, 1989: 11).

A Quebec Civil Servant wrote in 1897, ‘Before a quarter of a century is gone, perhaps the savages will be no more than a memory!’ Thus the place of Indigenous Peoples in the Mosaic of Canadian history (Boyce, 1989: 11). This is what we have heard over the years. This was the old story of our indigenous peoples of Canada.

The tragic legacy of residential education began in the late nineteenth century. During the 1920s children between 7 – 15 years of age, were forcibly removed and placed in residential schools across the country. They were removed from their families by priests, Indian Agents, and police. Many of these children suffered terrible atrocities such as physical, mental, emotional and sexual abuse (Royal Commission, 1996: 337).

I too have my own personal stories. I can forgive, but I cannot erase the memories of how it felt when a priest or nun came near me. It was like a block of ice, and where their heart was, I could see a black hole. Where their face was, it was as if a veil was over them and I remember how cold they felt.

My Grandpa had a certain game we played where he would whistle. One whistle was very shrill and the other was soft and steady. When I heard the shrill whistle, this meant I had to run and hide. I often found myself in a stack of hay and would stay for a long time which seemed like forever. When he whistled long and steady, that meant I could come out from my hiding spot.

It wasn’t until I had my own children that he revealed to me this was not a game. It was in fact very serious. I discovered this was because he went to extremes trying to protect
me from being scooped. One of my last conversations with ‘Dad’ was when he said, ‘You don’t know how lucky you are that you will not have to experience what it is like to have your child ripped out of your arms not knowing when and if you would ever see them again.’ My experiences were brief compared to many.

Recovering our story
Indigenous Peoples have been communicating their story for hundreds of years and in as many ways. Our Oral History is meant to communicate aspects of our culture, to socialize others into a cultural tradition and to educate. It may also validate claims of an individual, family or tribe. Our History includes a great deal of subjective experiences which are made of facts immersed in the stories of a lifetime. It also constitutes a sense of community, how Indigenous Peoples view themselves and how they define their identity in relationship to the land.

When we address the issues of communication, I think the platform of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission is critical in advancing toward peace and harmony. Becoming fully operational on 2 June 2008, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a court-mandated committee which is the result of an agreement between residential school survivors, representatives from Aboriginal communities, churches and the Canadian Government.

‘Today marks the beginning of our five-year mandate as an independent Commission,’ said Justice LaForme. ‘We can now begin formally planning and preparing for the work ahead to learn and understand the truth of the Indian Residential Schools legacy, as well as examine the process of reconciliation’ (Statement of the
The commissioner further stated that, ‘They are committed to listening with open minds and hearts to the stories and other histories of the Indian residential schools experiences and legacy.’

New relationships based on mutual recognition and respect can be built thus furthering the promotion of reconciliation. As Rupert Ross suggests, ‘If we all absorb that truth and make it a part of our daily consciousness, perhaps we can start building a relationship centred on the most important value of all: MUTUAL RESPECT’ (Ross, 2008: 158).

Based on his own experience, Bradford Morse believes that reconciliation is achievable and that, ‘It will require a genuine commitment on the part of Non-Aboriginal governments, individual and organizations to make heart-felt amends to rectify historic injustices to the degree possible and to support true self-determination. Saying sorry is not enough’ (Morse, 2008: 233)

I became so frustrated with the local governments and dominant society being unwilling to listen or address Indigenous Issues. What was communicated in the media further marginalized the issues, was often demeaning and typically painted all Aboriginal Peoples with the same brush.

My frustrations brought me to the United Nations in Geneva Switzerland where I was one of many Indigenous Peoples from around the world who worked on the Draft Declaration for Indigenous Peoples as an NGO. The Draft Declaration falls under the sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. I was dealing specifically with Indigenous Rights and I want to draw your attention to Article 17 of the Draft Declaration which states:

‘Indigenous Peoples have the right to establish their own media, in their own languages. They also have the right to equal access to all forms of non-indigenous media. States shall take effective measures to ensure that state owned media duly reflect indigenous cultural diversity.’ (Draft Declaration, 1994-95)

Article 14 of the UN Draft Declaration speaks to our communication rights.

Under the Working Group of Indigenous Populations, we drew the attention of the United Nations to the seriousness of Indigenous issues. The Declaration was passed on 13 September 2007 only to be denounced by the Canadian Government lead by Prime Minister Harper. It was then brought before the House of Commons and was finally passed in Parliament on 8 April 2008. An Amnesty International News Release of 9 April 2008 stated, 'Indigenous Peoples, and Human Rights Groups welcomed yesterdays' decision by the Canadian Parliament to endorse the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Government of Stephen Harper has since claimed the Draft is non-applicable in Canada.’ (Amnesty International, 2008). Yet the Draft affirms that Indigenous Peoples are equal in dignity and rights to all other peoples.

Articles 16 & 17 speak to our concerns to eliminate Discrimination and Prejudice; to promote tolerance and understanding between all segments of society and of the important role media should play.

Article 14 also ensures the protection of these rights.

Article 17, Part I, acknowledges that Indigenous Peoples have the right to full and effective enjoyment of all Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms recognized in the Charter of the UN as outlined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Human Rights Law (Draft Declaration, 1994-95).

Claiming our rights
On 4 June 2008 the Chipewyan Prairie Dene First Nation (‘CPDFN’), filed legal action in the Alberta Court of Queen’s Bench against the Alberta Government alleging a breach of Alberta’s constitutional duty to consult with the First Nations regarding MEG Energy’s Phase 3 oil sands project. I watched as Chief Vern Janvier of CPDFN spoke alongside his Elders and with tears in his eyes he said:

‘Our lakes, our land and the animals and
fish we have relied on for thousands of years to support our way of life and cultural values are being destroyed by out-of-control oil sands developments. Because our constitutionally-protected rights are at risk in one of the few remaining places in our Traditional Territory where we can exercise them, we’ve asked the Courts to step in before it’s too late’ (Janvier, 2008).

Attention and debate right now in Canada seems to be focused on the apology Prime Minister Harper made to First Nations Peoples on 11 June 2008:

‘Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country, the government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on aboriginal culture, heritage and language.’ (Harper, 2008)

In the Aboriginal Communities however, the Apology has re-opened many wounds for many Elders such as Mary, who did not wish to have her last name mentioned, nor wanted to talk about her experiences. She wanted to, ‘Just forget the whole legacy… it would be like being raped all over again… no one wants to remember being made to eat your own vomit and all the abuse’ (Mary, 2008). In a personal conversation with Donald Rowan who looks after Elders, he said they unanimously agreed that, ‘Counsellors should have been made available to them, especially during the apology.’

In Treaty 7 area, local tribes gathered at the administration building on the T’suu T’ina Nation in support of each other during the speech. Although there was a lot of weeping, some felt hopeful. A Cree Grandmother shared her story of how she grew up learning that relationships were built on fear, power, anger, jealousy, greed, secrecy and the likes. She said it was, ‘Necessary to counteract these values by teaching how to begin to develop relationships based on trust, openness, respect, sharing, caring, generosity, and love.’

My own personal story in terms of the apology has been very emotional. My Mother and my Grandmother were both victims of the Residential school system and sadly, my Granny is no longer alive to hear the apology. My mother who is now 90 years of age said it doesn’t mean much as she too thought of my grandparents immediately. When I asked my mother what she thought, she replied, ‘Oh that’s good, too bad Mom and Dad were not there to hear it. Neither were many aunties and uncles.’

A cornerstone of the settlement agreement is the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Commission presents a unique opportunity to educate all Canadians on the history and consequences of the Residential School System. Many of my extended family from the non-Native community are encouraged by the Commission. Within the various Aboriginal Communities, there are still many who have mixed emotions and who feel less optimism.

Reverend Bill Phipps wrote to me recently, ‘Communication is a two way exercise.’ The Non-Aboriginal community has not been listening to, nor valuing the stories, insights, experience and knowledge offered by First Nations people. Despite all the words, there has been very little actual communication. Non-Aboriginals need to learn to listen. The hope is that, with widespread and positive perception of the Government’s official Apology, and the work of the TRC, there is now a unique opportunity for genuine communication. Therefore the right to be heard is essential. ‘This is a moment in our history that offers the possibility of honest and hopeful communication’ (Phipps, 2008)

I concur with Reverend Phipps most inspiring remarks.

Justice that restores rights
It is incumbent upon us to pursue a justice that restores rights. Each individual must ensure no one has their basic human rights infringed upon. Every one of us deserves equity as given to us by our Creator. We must pursue and promote peace and harmony actively. Dominant society must engage with and promote Indigenous peoples and their issues.
The Draft Declaration is a document of inclusion and is intended to provide a legitimate framework that extends basic human rights to Indigenous People, as people.

The United Nations does not see the Aboriginal people in terms of race, creed, colour or religion, but sees and includes them as people.

By not accepting the UN Draft Declaration, Stephen Harper as leader of the current Conservative government, is making a conscious decision to consider Aboriginal people as non-people and to deny them basic human rights.

The 1st June 2008 marked the beginning of a 5-year mandate. One of the important challenges facing the Commission is engaging the broader community in the process. Anyone who has been affected by the Residential Schools will have an opportunity to share their experiences.

Reconciliation will not be achievable without the full and willing participation of church members, community members, humanitarian groups and leaders from both dominant society and the Aboriginal community. All groups need to be involved and need to work together. Both the victims and the perpetrators must pursue the endeavour of harmony and world peace together.

One of the challenges for everyone involved in this transformation, is to overcome the myth that, ‘Aboriginal people are inferior’ and reconstitute that mentality, with the truth about our cultural richness, diversity and history.

In Bill Phipps book, Cause for Hope; Humanity at the Crossroads he writes:

‘Sustainability refers not merely to conservation of resources, renewable energy development, and anti-pollution laws. To be sustainable societies need to build social capacity by investing in their young citizens, harnessing the productive power of a contented heart. The loving potential of every young child is a potent source for good in the world’ (Phipps, 2007: 209).

‘The healing of Creation will not be accomplished by judicial application of technology alone, but by a commitment that must be as intense as any religious faith. Our personal commitment to Spiritual Growth will lead us to ecologically responsible behaviour, because it will make clear inter-relatedness of all beings. In fact caring for Creation is a commitment for which the religions of the world provide the essential teachings’ (Phipps, 2007: 211).

In this quote, Phipps reconfirms what Indigenous Peoples have been saying for decades:

‘Faced with unprecedented global environmental and social crisis, there is a need to restore the primacy spiritual values of communal and personal growth; and to rediscover the simple truth... that there is no separateness and therefore there can be no selfishness, and that compassion for all is the heart of understanding’ (Phipps, 2007: 211).

Just as Chief Seattle wrote in his letter to the American Government in 1854:

‘This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.’

It is time to weave a new strand in our story. There is a need to enhance communication... a need to reconnect to the Natural Order... to reconnect with each other...to allow the Indigenous Voice to be heard. We are all Keepers of the Earth and it is time we built bridges... bridges to cover the gaps among all nations.

A wise Elder once said when we looked into the future, what we did see were the children coming from the Four Directions. A Red Child came from the South, Yellow from the East, Black from the West, and White from the North. The children joined hands in Circle and viewed the Mirror of Life. Each saw Great Spirit, there was no colour, animosity, judgment, or blame...just the Creator.
Indigenous Peoples have the right to be heard in the same way that everyone who has a legal right to Freedom of Speech, (the right to a voice) does. We Aboriginal people have a right to be heard and listened to by dominant society. This right to be heard must be respected because a vital half of communication is listening. Thankyou... Kinanaskomitin!

References
Ross, Rupert (2008). ‘From Truth to Reconciliation Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools’. Prepared by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation
Statement of the Commissioners of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission concerning the apology to be made by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on June 11, 2008 (Press Release) Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation.

Born of Cree ancestry in Northern Alberta, Doreen Spence has represented her people and the values by which they live in an effective and exemplary manner for the past thirty-five years. Drawing on her own experiences as an Indigenous woman as well as from those peoples across the world. The majority of her time is dedicated to performing volunteer work in Native and Non-Native communities with a consistent emphasis on Aboriginal issues and concerns. Doreen’s main goal is to build an understanding between all Nations.

Imagine media that promotes gender justice

Joanne Sandler

The title of my presentation is 'Imagine media that promotes gender justice'. We have to imagine it because it needs to proliferate at all levels: in the mainstream media, in the blogosphere, in alternative media. It needs to exist because gender justice is critical in its own right, central to the achievement of justice in general and inter-dependent with the achievement of social and economic justice.

It is important, also, because the path to gender equality and women’s empowerment – a project that gained steam with the first world conference on women in 1975 and continues on a fairly bumpy road until today – is uneven. One could reasonably argue – and this is the irony of work on gender equality right now – that there is much to celebrate with data showing good progress in many areas. One example from work on women’s political participation illustrates how – depending on the country and the particular dimension you’re looking at — the glass could be called either half-empty or half-full.

Many herald progress being made on women’s political participation. The percentage of women in national parliaments is an indicator for the gender equality goal of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and one that is fairly easy to track. Globally, women now comprise 18% of parliamentarians at national level, an increase of 8% since 1998, compared to an increase of just one per cent in each of the decades prior. The progress in Africa is notable. Rwanda is now the only country in the world that has more women in parliament than men. Also, the number of women elected in Angola has nearly tripled since the last polls in 1992, rising from 29 to 81, or 36% of the 220 seats at the National Assembly. This puts Angola, along with South Africa and Mozambique, among the Southern African countries with the highest number of women elected to Parliament.

So this is all good news. But there is another side: Even, in Rwanda – which has had the highest proportion of female politicians in the world for a number of years now - only 13% of politicians featured in press interviews are women. And, taking the developing world as a whole, even if we sustain the present rate of increase, women’s political representation will not reach the ‘parity zone’ of between 40 and 60% until 2045.

The media has huge and largely untapped power to promote and protect gender justice. We know because we’ve seen it.

An example: Many of you have probably heard the story of Mukhtar Mai in Pakistan who was gang-raped on the orders of a council of tribal elders from her village of Meerwala. Mai herself was not charged with any wrongdoing, but a rumour had spread through the village that her 14-year-old brother had been seen in public with a girl from a rival tribe. When Mai heard that the rival clan was going to put her brother on trial she rushed before the self-appointed councillors to plead for mercy on his behalf. The elders heard her plea. They spared Mai’s brother and ordered that she should be raped, explaining that the rape would shame her family and thus restore the offended tribe’s honour. Four volunteers carried out the sentence in the presence of a cheering mob.

Mai’s attackers had assumed she would be too ashamed to reveal what had happened, but with the assistance of her friends and the imam, she got word out to the local and international media. The media attention shamed the civil authorities into action. The tribal elders and the rapists were brought to trial and sentenced to life in prison. Mai, who has since received international honours, used her compensation money to build the first of two schools in her village and now campaigns for women’s rights around the world. The resolution of her case and national and the international attention it received in the media contributed to the passage in 2006 of amendments to a 1976 rape
law in Pakistan. These included eliminating the death penalty for extramarital sex and easing a clause on making rape victims produce four witnesses to prove the case.

Without media attention, Mai could have died, either by her own hand or that of others. Instead, she was named Glamour Magazine’s Woman of the Year in 2005. That is the power of the media: to save lives and to change them.

But the media is also a perpetrator of gender Injustice. We’ve seen this in many political races around the world when women compete for high level positions. The current U.S. Presidential contest and primary process have juxtaposed racial and gender justice – one commentator noted that it has been a contest in which race is gendered and gender is raced (Patricia Williams). It also is raising important issues of economic justice and religious freedom.

The issue of gender injustice in the media is very amply illustrated in this video, produced by the Women’s Media Center (WMC) in the United States. WMC is a media watchdog group founded by Gloria Steinem, Carol Jenkins and others in 2005. The Center, with more than 15 million supporters, spoke out against gender discrimination in the reporting by US journalists on Hillary Clinton’s campaign. They secured an on-air apology from Chris Matthews, one of the journalists featured in this tape, and assurances from network executives that steps were being taken to address the situation. But the situation persisted, which is why WMC released this video, ‘Sexism Sells but We’re Not Buying It’, and launched an online petition campaign to encourage women’s human rights defenders to speak out against the continuing sexism in the media.

The concept of gender justice is complex, but we certainly know gender injustice when we see it. Around the world, the distortion by media of women’s voice and women’s lives is increasingly being recognized, but the response has been inadequate. This is an issue of accountability. UNIFEM just issued its biannual publication, Progress of the World’s Women, which focuses on gender and accountability.
and asks the question: *Who Answers to Women*. We identify two dimensions of accountability from a gender justice perspective:

**Answerability** – that is, the ability of women and men to call for answers for the policies, programmes and resources that power-holders make available to promote and protect women’s rights.

**Corrective action** – that is, power-holders, once confronted with the need for answers, must take corrective action to ensure redress.

In relation to gender justice and the media, the media’s answerability and willingness to take corrective action depends to a large extent on the push that women’s rights defenders provide, the extent to which men and women together use their power of choice to show a preference for media that promotes gender justice, and the generation of high quality content for social justice media produced by women’s human rights defenders.

My presentation today takes into account wide-ranging media, including print, broadcast and rapidly changing electronic media. So, when it comes to the issue of accountability or answerability, we understand that this is far flung and wide ranging. Many of you may have had the experience that UNIFEM had several years ago. One of the domain names that we had registered for UNIFEM’s websites was taken over by pornographers. So, if you searched unifem.net, you would be snagged into a seemingly never-ending loop of pornography. It took five months and frustrating negotiation with UN lawyers, the U.S. mission, the Russian government – where the take-over company was registered, although the individual operating the agency was working from California. There was, at the end of the day, no one accountable and we had to retrieve the UNIFEM name using informal channels rather than any accessible process of accountability.

In this complex environment – and acknowledging the huge amount of work being undertaken by South African groups like Gender Links and their Gender Justice Barometer– my presentation will focus how women are using the radical potential of the media to contribute to progress towards gender justice. One of the key assets that women are bringing – along with other social justice groups – is a purposeful use of the media to achieve broader social justice and gender justice aims, to challenge discriminatory gender norms, and make visible solutions that lead to change. It will look at two changes in particular: using information and media to stimulate greater accountability for sexual violence in conflict situations via the UN Security Council; and using media and media campaigns to encourage men to take responsibility and action for ending violence against women.

My first example deals with sexual violence in conflict. Over the past years, many manifestations of violence against women are receiving more attention, including in the media. Too often this is sensationalized, showing women as victims rather than as agents of change which – in the face of horrifying odds – they often are. And, while there may be more coverage, there is not necessarily more action or adequate funds to meaningfully address this hidden pandemic which many have referred to as ‘the missing MDG’ or, at least, ‘the missing MDG target’.

A billboard from Liberia demonstrates that political will can make a big difference in ending a culture of impunity. In 2006, in one of her earliest acts as Africa’s first democratically elected female head of state, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf ushered in the country’s historic anti-rape legislation to send a powerful message that crimes of sexual violence committed during and after the war would not be tolerated. Rape remains a pandemic in Liberia, but the President along with many of her male and female ministers are unwavering in their commitment to address it.

That sexual violence in conflict is now receiving more attention is due to those who have worked for years to put it on the agenda and who deserve special mention. On Thursday, you will be hearing from Ruth Ochieng, whose organization – ISIS-WICCE – has produced seminal documentaries and
undertakes cutting edge work at community level on this issue.

Groups like ISIS WICCE and many others have helped us to focus on the numbers, which themselves should galvanize us to action. 20,000 – 50,000 women were raped during war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the early 1990s. 50,000 – 64,000 internally displaced women in Sierra Leone were sexually attacked by combatants. An average of 40 women are raped every day in South Kivu, DRC. Yet, the phrase ‘no more and never again’ does not seem to have resonance when it comes to sexual violence.

This continues to happen despite the commitment of the highest Security institution in the world – the UN Security Council – through Security Council resolution 1325 on women peace and security. It continues to happen, in part, because of inadequate accountability on the part of those who can make a difference.

It is revealing to compare accountability mechanisms for two Security Council resolutions passed in 2000: resolution 1612 on children and armed conflict, with resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The Children’s resolution includes monitoring and reporting on violations; the women’s resolution only monitors UN agency actions. The Children’s resolution involves the Secretary-General in answerability, with reports on Member States violations; the women’s resolution has no answerability mechanism.

The Children’s resolution reviews progress through a working group of the Security Council chaired by a Permanent Member and bi-monthly meetings; the women’s resolution has an annual and voluntary ‘commemoration’ of the resolution.

On the ground, the Children’s resolution has country-level task forces that monitor and press for compliance; UN organizations involvement in compliance with the women’s resolution is ad hoc, depending on available expertise.

I show these differences to make the point that, when it comes to the rights of women and girls, there are often distinct differences in what institutions see as their responsibility. Recognizing these gaps, there has been – over the past several years – a growing interest in the Security Council agreeing to a follow up resolution to 1325 with more accountability built in. This led to Security Council resolution 1820 on preventing sexual violence in conflict in June of 2008.

Information and media played a key role in moving Security Council members to agreement on Resolution 1820. Articles in leading newspapers about the atrocities that women faced were instrumental. Women’s groups around the world were instrumental. Leading governments lobbied for it.

UNIFEM’s contribution to this broad-based strategy was to uncover and bring to the attention of Security Council members the practical approaches to dealing with this issue, believing that one of the obstacles was that even where there is political will, there is also a lack of knowledge about concrete steps to be taken.

We worked with UN Action against Sexual Violence – a coalition of 12 UN organizations and departments – to focus on the potential role that military peacekeepers could play in increasing women’s security and preventing sexual violence. Whereas most discussions about peacekeepers and sexual violence have focused on them as perpetrators, we took another approach. We produced an inventory of what peacekeepers are doing to actually protect women, even in an ad hoc fashion. As we discovered, too often peacekeepers do not have an explicit mandate to protect women and thus their ability to do so is weakened.

The inventory looked, first, at where women were most vulnerable. Research as far back as 1999 in refugee camps in Kenya showed that 90 per cent of reported rapes of women took place when women and girls travel into the desert, bush or forest for food, fuel or water. These rapes have become so commonplace that they are referred to as ‘firewood’ rapes. The inventory showed that, recognizing this, some of the peacekeepers in DRC, for instance, began accompanying women, using their vehicle headlights to shine light on the paths, honk their horns, and take other measures to create safe passage. But, in the absence of orders and resources, these actions were generally reactive, short-term and ad hoc. For instance, the African Mission in Sudan had started to do this
in 2005, but stopped because of lack of resources.

The production of an inventory of what peacekeepers were doing in an ad hoc way – and then bringing this to the attention of high-level decision makers and military commanders at a Wilton Park Conference in London with the Governments of the U.K. and Canada in May 2008 – was an important input to getting the Security Council to develop stronger accountability mechanisms for addressing sexual violence in conflict.

Another component that contributed to the eventual outcome was the independent documentary called ‘The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo’, which won the 2008 Sundance Special Jury Prize in the Documentary Category. Lisa Jackson, a freelance independent filmmaker, produced this searing look at Congolese women who survived gang rape and mutilation only to find themselves bearing the shame of their family’s rejection. It was produced in association with HBO, and broadcast to HBO’s 35 million subscribers.

While Lisa Jackson did not have a Security Council resolution in mind when she produced the film, strategic use of the documentary played an important role. For example, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations saw the film and said publically that it inspired him to introduce resolution 1820 in the UN Security Council. The film is an excellent example of how media – in conjunction with other focused advocacy strategies — has the potential to lead to concrete political action.

Beyond that, the documentary is also used as an educational tool for women survivors of rape in the DRC - as this next clip will show. Lisa Jackson, the filmmaker, was committed to bringing the film back to the women to help them engage in dialogue and healing about the gross violations of their rights.

This role of media in accelerating progress toward greater accountability for gender justice – in this instance, in relation to Sexual Violence – is a good example of purposeful media. The result is that the Security Council now recognizes sexual violence as a security issue which then justifies a security response. The Council now has a clear mandate to intervene, including through sanctions and empowering field staff. Requesting a comprehensive report from the Secretary-General on implementation and strategies for improving information flow to the Council, means better data to inform better responses.

Once UN peacekeepers have a mandate and the resources to protect women collecting fuel, firewood and water, thousands, if not tens of thousands of lives can be saved and their dignity preserved. And the notion of national, international and human security has been broadened significantly.

My next example is by Breakthrough, an international human rights organization. This year, Breakthrough launched its third multimedia campaign—’Bell Bajao’ (which in Hindi means ‘ring the bell’) — a call to both men and women in India to intervene to stop domestic violence. UNIFEM and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women that UNIFEM manages on behalf of the UN system are both supporters of Breakthrough’s work.

Here, again, we see purposeful media that proposes actions that viewers can take. India passed an important law on domestic violence law (2005), but like so many laws, implementation is not proceeding adequately. That’s why Breakthrough is also partnering with the Indian government, who are taking a leadership role in this campaign and thereby also increasing state accountability for taking action to address domestic violence.

The campaign was designed pro bono by one of India’s leading advertising agency and its brand ambassador is movie star Boman Irani. It is being distributed across major Indian TV and radio channels and through powerful collaborations with media partners like The Viewspaper. It includes an interactive website for the audience to post comments and questions.

The Group Creative head of Olgivy and Mather – the pro bono advertising agency – highlighted the campaign’s central focus: ‘Domestic Violence is a subject where the man is always seen as the culprit. We wanted men to be our partners supporting the cause...we wanted a strong call to action. A call to action that makes people say ... I can do (something).
Ring the Bell fit that brief perfectly.’

Some of the elements that make this a strong campaign include: a) the partnerships – which created a top notch product with high production values and wide distribution; b) a positive message about taking action in the community, that appeals to men and provides information on services rather than portraying women as victims.

My final example is the Internet-based ‘Say No’ Campaign that was launched by UNIFEM’s Goodwill Ambassador, Nicole Kidman, in November 2007 and its contribution to the global campaign on ending violence against women launched by the UN Secretary-General in February 2008. ‘Say No’ asks citizens and leaders to spend less than a minute clicking their mouses to express their commitment to end violence against women. We’ve also supplemented the internet campaign with high level signing ceremonies and postcards (which are being distributed around the room to all conference participants). It prompts citizen action and links power-holders to the issue.

So far, more than 67 political leaders from 35 countries– including the President and his entire cabinet in Senegal, heads of state from Tanzania to Brazil, Ministers of Development Cooperation from Belgium and Denmark, and mayors in Japan and the United States have signed on to ‘Say No’. In addition, senior religious leaders of different faiths from Religions for Peace, a multi-religious coalition, signed onto the campaign on 25 September. Dr. William F. Vendley, the Secretary General of Religions for Peace, noted that ‘People of faith around the world believe that it is a moral responsibility to end violence against women.’

At the launch of his campaign in February 2008, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon committed the UN to challenge men to stand up with him to end violence. He said, ‘Violence against women and girls makes its hideous imprint on every continent, country and culture. It is time to focus on the concrete actions that all of us can and must take to prevent and eliminate this scourge... It is time to break through the walls of silence, and make legal norms a reality in women’s lives.’

UNIFEM will deliver more than a million ‘Say No’ signatures to the UN Secretary-General in support of his global campaign on the International Day to End Violence against Women, November 25th. Before you leave here, I hope that each of you will sign on and that, also, you will spread this far and wide to your constituencies so that we can deliver many more millions of signatures of outrage and hope. (www.saynotoviolence.org)

These few examples are just that: examples. They do not represent fundamental institutional transformation in the media, which is what we need if we are to have a media that actively promotes gender justice. And there are four areas of work ahead of us that I think are crucial and receiving too little attention. WACC and its members and constituencies can be powerful leaders in taking steps forward.

1) The first goes back to accountability: Commercially-owned media understands its accountability in the context of shareholders and profit; state-owned and public media has not been much better on gender justice. So, how do we understand and strengthen their accountability?

Progress of the World’s Women makes the point that there are two pathways that women are using to demand greater accountability from power-holders: voice and choice. That is using the power of organizing and monitoring and their power as consumers or voters. WACC has made good progress with the global media monitoring project, and the Women’s Media Centre is doing that in the U.S. elections process. There are many others. But we need to strengthen media monitoring to build media literacy so that both men and women are demanding media that promotes – rather than erodes – gender justice and that they have the capacity to call for corrective action when the opposite is taking place.

2) We need to produce gender and social justice content with high production values. Too often, the media that social justice groups produce cannot compete with the production quality that mainstream media offers. That was Breakthrough’s goal; use popular culture, partnerships with groups like MTV and Olgivy and Mather, to produce content that looked as good as any other. That’s what Soul City does
and what Puntos de Encuentro in Nicaragua does. But these remain too far and few. There needs to be a huge increase in skills, resources and partnerships so that the gender justice media gets produced and can compete in the marketplace.

3) We need to link media with action and solutions. We need to go beyond broad-based awareness raising and offer people opportunities to make a difference. The new media gives us that opportunity. ‘Say No’ asks people to click; Bell Bajao asks people to ring a bell; information and media gave Security Council members the concrete things that peacekeepers could do to actually make a difference. This is purposeful media that uses the full power of the media to inform, connect, change minds and act to achieve gender and social justice.

4. Partnerships, partnerships, partnerships – We cannot do this alone. Women cannot do this alone. Faith-based groups cannot do this alone. Men cannot do this alone. Even the state cannot do this alone. If communication is peace, then partnerships are the pathway to peace. Otherwise, as the pastor from Cameroon said, we remain in pieces.

I want to close with two quotes: First, you can’t be what you can’t see (Marion Wright Edelman). If we are not using the media to challenge gender discrimination and gender norms that limit both men and women from exercising their rights and securing justice then we are missing the opportunity to use the power of the media, especially in the 21st century when its reach has expanded exponentially. We have to use the media to question the assumption that sexual violence is an inevitable consequence of war. We have to use the media to question why are those who made war the ones who are invited to negotiate the peace, while those who have an interest in peace are prevented from having a voice. We can’t imagine gender justice without media and communications to help us see it.

And, finally, a Native American adage: She or he who tells the story rules the world. It is important and uplifting to see or hear media that shows us dialogue across lines of conflict to advance gender justice. But it is not enough just to have a growing a number of good examples of social justice media. We have to work on transforming the media itself and democratizing ownership and leadership. Only then will stories that promote and protect gender justice regularly make it on to the nightly news.

WACC is doing its best to change the status quo. The people in this room are doing your best to change it. UNIFEM looks forward to strengthening our partnership with you so that we can move from imagining a media that promotes gender justice to actually seeing it.

As Deputy Executive Director-Program, Joanne Sandler guides the efforts of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in implementing programmes in support of women’s empowerment and rights worldwide. She has worked with international organizations and women’s groups for 25 years, with a focus on organizational development, strategic planning and economic justice. This presentation at Congress 2008 was developed by Joanne Sandler and Jennifer Cooper, UNIFEM.
The award-winning film Zulu Love Letter (still above) was screened at Congress in the presence of its director Ramadan Suleman (photo below: Erick Coll). Suleman discussed the film and the current situation in South Africa with the audience.

Film synopsis: Johannesburg is in a state of euphoria two years after the first democratic elections. Here Thandeka, a young black journalist, lives in fear of her country’s past. She’s so troubled that she can’t work, and her relationship with Mangi, her 13-year-old profoundly deaf daughter, goes from bad to worse. Then, one day Me’Tau, an elderly woman, arrives at the newspaper. Ten years earlier, Thandeka witnessed the murder of Me’Tau’s daughter, Dineo, by the secret police. Me’Tau wants Thandeka to find the murderers and Dineo’s body so that the girl can be buried in accordance with tradition. Both women are unaware that the killers are lurking nearby. What Me’Tau doesn’t know is that Thandeka has already paid for having dared stand up to the apartheid system run by the whites. Mangi secretly prepares a Zulu love letter, four embroidered images representing solitude, loss, hope, and love, as a final gesture towards her mother so that she won’t give up the fight.
Stories of women survivors of violent conflict

Ruth Ojambo Ochieng

The concept of power is complex and it is difficult to come up with a consensus meaning that addresses different perceptions. Many scholars, researchers and development actors have defined the term from a masculine and feminine perspective, and rightly so since power is centred on issues of relationship and interaction. However, how this power is communicated and related to individuals and groups determines their response.¹

Srilatha Batliwala (1995) defines power as ‘the degree of control over material, human, intellectual and financial resources exercised by different sections of society.’ The control of these resources becomes a source of individual and social power. The extent of power of an individual or group is correlated to how many different kinds of resources they can access and control. He further indicates that different degrees of power are sustained and perpetuated through social divisions such as gender, age, caste, class, ethnicity, race, and continental divides, and through institutions such as the family, religion, education, culture media, the law, etc.

This analysis explains the urge to monopolise power over others, which are defining characteristic of the masculine persona, where attention and obedience are demanded of millions of others by those in power. In recent times, masculine power structures have used militarism and militarization to re-enforce their power of dominance, coercion and conquering to destroy their so-called rivals. This has resulted in individuals, communities and societies experiencing divisions, greed, hate and conflict.

On the other hand, feminine power is analysed as that power that bridges the seen and unseen worlds (Jenny Ruddy, 2006). Ruddy urges that it gives the true source of happiness and feeling and that it is the positive way of directing power to transform a situation. This was well explained by the Mexican women leaders (Jass, September 2006), who describe feminist power as a creative way of sustaining livelihood and mobilising for peaceful communities through dialogue and relationship building.

‘We are struggling for the heart and soul of community – community building on a commitment to the common good and cooperation... upheld by solid bonds of human relationships that respects diversity and human rights, justice woven with multiple threads of power and people.’

Feminist power believes in what Dr Martin Luther King Jr referred to as the basic concept of power: ‘The ability to achieve a purpose and the strength required to bring about social, political and economic change.’

Ferlic, K (2008)² helps us to understand feminist power not to mean female, but that both male and female have an inclination towards feminine power, except that the female has a better understanding and ability consciously to use it than the male does, due to their feminine roles, e.g. nurturing life.

Power and transformation of lives
This presentation focuses on some of the women survivors’ stories around the world, and how masculine power has destroyed their bodies. It also explains how female human rights defenders have used their feminine power and other creative ways as tools for social change and to deconstruct masculine power, thereby contributing to the healing of the marginalised and also participating in peace-building.³ It also brings out the feminine power of the survivors and the methods adopted in transforming their own lives and those of their communities to make life worth living.

Feminist power is directed by creativity and instinct and not by policies, ideologies and
structures; feminine power is natural and does not wait for international agreements and framework to take action. It is the power that acts instantly when injustice occurs. It is about the restoration of hope and trust, and co-existence.

One such example of using power for transformation of lives was the Isis-WICCE interventions among the survivors of the armed conflict in northern Uganda. The organisation implemented the ideas of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (particularly article 8), way back before the resolution was even put in place. In 1998 the organisation strategically used feminine creative power to address the needs and concerns of women survivors of the armed conflict in Northern Uganda.4

Isis-WICCE did not wait for the government of Uganda (as it struggled with understanding the ideology of the LRM and gauge whether it was a genuine cause to engage in resolving the conflict), and put in place the Peace Recovery Development Plan (PRDP) to address the needs of survivors of the conflict. Neither did the organisation put its efforts into persuading the international community to ignore the crisis in the name of ‘respecting the sovereignty of the State’.

The organisation’s actions were driven by its values of fairness, justice and equality to address the pains of those who had been affected by the masculine power struggles of two warring factions (Government of Uganda and Lord’s Resistance Army).5

The trained women likewise utilised non violent methods (persuasive communication), to replicate the skills and knowledge acquired, and formed community based organisations that became homes for thousands of women and girl war survivors. It is in these homes that women and girls continue to be supported to access health services and life skills. Today these homes remain important focal points where women survivors have rebuilt their confidence and self-esteem and have subsequently used their feminine power to support themselves and others in their communities.6

Whereas it is a known fact that after violent conflict there is always a negative impact on the bodily integrity of the survivors, especially women, whose sexuality is targeted, it is always a shock to see that those who hold power (with deeply rooted patriarchal tendencies), marginalise the concerns of sexual and reproductive health in post-conflict reconstruction processes. This has prompted feminists to utilise their feminine power to search for alternatives.

Their efforts, however, continue to be thwarted by the ideology of structuring such needs according to mainstream planning. Many donor partners argue that health is a huge responsibility that cannot be handled by women’s organisations, and therefore cannot risk giving their resources to a ‘trial and error’ approach. This kind of attitude and perception has left thousands to die in conditions that addressed in time would have been prevented.

However, renewed passion and commitment has continued to inspire feminist organisations to use their power to focus on the desire of their hearts and not to be overshadowed by the powers of those whose central focus has limited emphasis on addressing the direct needs of the vulnerable and marginalised. To their surprise women organisations like Isis – WICCE have on several occasions outsmarted these perceptions by creatively building strategic coalitions to make emergency medical interventions to save the lives of many who otherwise would be no more.7

Even where they have not been invited to, feminist activists have engaged to communicate messages that have guided peace processes that have subsequently brought about democratic governances in many war affected countries.8 But even after such successes, their efforts remain unrecognised, enabling masculine power to perpetuate its impunity.

Awakening experiences
Ferlic, K. (2008) brings to the debate of power another perspective of feminine power. He argues that feminine power is good at awakening that masculine power which seems not to have a deep feeling of life. This analysis can be applied to some of the stories women have told of their actions to awaken masculine power to recognition that women’s rights are human rights. There is the story of Angelina
Kyomuhendo, ‘Mother cuts off defiler’s penis’\textsuperscript{9} which was ably analysed by a well known feminist (Bisi Adeleye, 2008), to justify why Angelina did what she did.

Angelina Kyomugisha from Rugyerera village in Kashari County, Mbarara district, Uganda, was weeding her banana farm, when she heard her 10-year old daughter cry out. The cries persisted, and she went over to have a look, only to find a 40-year old Geoffrey Mugarura ‘defiling’ her little girl. Angelina took this horrifying scene in, and proceeded to do what every mother in the world ought to do if they find themselves in her situation – she pounced on Geoffrey and promptly cut off his penis. Just like that. Then she flung it as far as she could into the bush.

Geoffrey howled, till neighbors appeared to find out what the fuss was all about. They then proceeded to help search for his severed penis, till one of them noticed a dog running off with something in its mouth. They threw a stick at the dog till it dropped what was left of its ‘snack’. The helpful neighbours then rushed Geoffrey to the hospital for treatment. One of the doctors who treated Geoffrey was able to confirm that they would refashion what was left of his penis so that he could at least urinate with it. This is all because of the anger this feminist had she adds, ‘as for any other business, well, the dog had taken care of that.’ To the dismay of many feminists, the men who came to the deal with the problem (the conflict Geoffrey has cause), were more concerned with the abuser’s condition than the abused!

Bisi asked a question if what Angelina did was politically correct, and her answer was no. She was however quick to say that the ongoing campaign of women will not wait, Angelina has sent out a message, or has awakened the masculine powers that violate women’s rights, to stop it and that women must be protected. Angelina’s awakening call demands the implementation of the great laws that have been enacted to protect and empower women, and have been shelved as flowers in the offices of the different actors. These include: the African protocol on women’s rights and the Solemn Declaration on gender equality in Africa. She is calling on the powers that be to implement

Security Council Resolution 1325 and allow women to excise their power for the good of humankind.

Bisi concludes her analysis with a caution to those using the masculine power to oppress others that the verdict will be unanimous if they do not get the message that the bodies of women and girls are not as accessible and disposable as toilet paper, and that all perpetrators should be prepared to learn the hard way. Geoffrey Mugarura had defiled a number of young girls in his community and nothing had been done. Bisi’s question is put to all promoters of a peaceful world, what would you do if you were in the situation of Angelina and Bisi!

Bisi’s reflection is shared by many feminists. Lema Boweh is yet another passionate activist on women’s human rights. Lema from Liberia learnt about a man in her neighborhood who came back home and found that his wife had used his $50 Liberian (equivalent of 50 pence) without permission. He took the wife and beat her until he broke her arm. Lema came to know about it and sent someone to the man’s home to request the man to go to her home

\textsuperscript{9} Kyomuhendo, ‘Mother cuts off defiler’s penis’ was ably analysed by a well known feminist (Bisi Adeleye, 2008), to justify why Angelina did what she did.
and collect the $50 the wife had used. To her surprise the man appeared, probably demonstrating his masculine power of showing that every thing must go his way.

Lema calmly told him that it was not necessary to punish his wife for $50 but always allow peaceful dialogue in such situations. She then extended her hand to give him the $50. He too extended his hand to pick up the money. It was at that time that Lema hit him several times; fell down and she continued to hit him hard. He could not gather up the money but ran for his life. Lema warned him never to do it again and that she was watching him. He was awakened to reality and never took revenge. The anger and pain exhibited by these two feminists could be the same anger that befell Jesus Christ when he turned over all the tables of those who violated the doctrine of ‘His Father’s House’.

Experience has also shown that masculine power rotates around control and amassing wealth and other negative aspects such as fundamentalism (Making change happen, 2006). David Ellerman (Capacity, 2008: 16), brings yet another aspect of power, the lack of truth-telling. He argues that truth and power (I add masculine power), don’t mix, and his analysis highlights aspects of ego and distortion of knowledge. It is such attitudes and perceptions that continue to tear apart the social fabric of societies, dislocating communities and ravaging the notion of the common good and human solidarity.

Despite all efforts to end this cycle of oppression, dominance, corruption and violence, masculine power has used the communication avenues at its disposal to distort information and deny the atrocities committed against the vulnerable. However, feminists have jumped on the opportunity that new technologies have provided to relay the truth on behalf of the voiceless, and break the silence and expose the violations committed against them as narrated in a poem by Mshairi a Swahili poet (2008), through blogging.  

‘Their Bodies Are A Battle Ground’

We hear a woman raped every 30 minutes
Many more were assaulted inside the first 2
days of premeditated brutality of the elephants’ skirmish
Their bodies are the frontline where foes are belittled
And age-old grudges viciously settled meanwhile rallies sermonize
Peacemakers negotiate and deal-makers mediate
They play the blame game
Who instigated what who killed whom excuse me!
While I spit and yet do not speak of the trauma
And the terror and shun the soundless screams
of the untold, others who in mute silence suffer
They talk about democracy about ethnocracy autocracy
And just about any craze you can think of
Male violence shrouded in words while powerless women, little girls, boys & men are abused!
What do they know about sacrilege!
How much do they care about the shame and humiliation?
What about the total destruction of the body mind and soul?
How many little girls did you rape today Baba?
We know bodies may be healed but spirit bruises
Soul lacerations are indelible quotidian
And never ever leave your side
Their bodies are a battlefield
Whose destruction a conscious act of ethnic cleansing
In some place we bear the price for one rape is a goat
How many goats for gang rapes or for sodomised little boys
We know this isn’t about gratification nor passion
And we are aware of the imperative revenge
Domination, control, opportunism, thuggery
It doesn’t really matter
As the sacrifice has been made
The earth’s tasted their blood, their tears soak the ground
Mission accomplished they ask what they should do
As they pray for divine reckoning and vengeance of cosmic magnitude they live in constant sorrow and in dread of the hatred
Spewing men with Rungus (Huge sticks), for fists & serrated panga
Eyes do they not feel pain when you hurt them?
Do they not bleed when you defile them?
Their bodies are a battle ground,
Their violation a weapon of war
Their bodies are a combat zone
Their degradation a weapon of mass destruction.

Survivors have continued to use the technology to tell the world about the injustices committed against them. A widow in Uganda, in the remote village in Kitgum, used a friend’s mobile to tell her story about an important leader who had raped her of her husband’s land in the name of culture.

But Phillo a Kenyan feminist writer recently said ‘you cannot undo a woman even when you rape her she is not undone, even when you rip them of their property they are not done…. That is why she pops up as a peace-maker, who has to struggle to stop the millions of cycles of violent conflict in the world’, and reclaim their space and rights. This is because feminist power is influenced more by feelings than what is in the mind as the case seems to be with masculine power.

Ann Njogu’s story demonstrates her inner feeling and how it drove her to do what she did. As a woman human rights defender in Kenya, she could not hold back her feelings about justice and good governance after seeing her country Kenya in a crisis. She got up to communicate her feeling through a peaceful demonstration to fight the injustice, calling for reconciliation and peaceful means of governance in Kenya. She also called for an end to corruption.

This did not go down well with some of those in power, given her message of corruption, a vice in the governance system. Instead of supporting her good cause for the good of all, they violently attacked her, questioning who she wanted to prove herself to be … ‘You are not Tom Mboya or Jim Karuiki’ - other feminist minded leaders who once called for accountability and good governance in her country. She was humiliated roughed up and sexually harassed.

It is such havoc and dismay that made feminist leaders such as Mwalimu Julius Nyerere to ask ‘What new social movements will bring our values back… our spiritual connection flourishing?’ It is such cries that give feminists today the energy to continue the struggle amidst the pain and agony they face. One of them recently said while narrating his story of activism; ‘my work is spiritual… it is deep and it is part of me.’

Spirituality and power
The greatest advocate of love, justice, fairness and mutual relationship in our history was Jesus Christ who used non-violent power to put his message across. He recognized the potential of women in his spiritual advocacy journey. If his values are the ones peacekeepers and negotiators emulate in reconciliation processes, then where has mankind gone wrong in the peace negotiations, what strategies do they use that cannot uphold these peace pacts? What stops them seeing the need to use such doctrines as those highlighted above? What stops them including feminists in sharing the peace table and in the mitigation of violence conflict?

The Uganda feminists, in their annual reflection meeting (Hope Chigudu, 2007), tried to analyze the spiritual (not religious) strategies Jesus Christ used to build a movement, a movement that continues to grow and flourish, that has committed followers to keep the doctrine alive.

Jesus used the principle of effective communication to his message of love peace and reconciliation. For example, he clearly communicated his vision and mission what he set to do and where to go. This was his driving force. How many of our organizations and states cling to their vision and mission and manifestos respectively, and not to the direction of resource allocations and ego? Jesus established a clear identity. He knew what he wanted the world to be.

That is why He was inclusive and believed in equality. That was why women were part of his journey. He had clarity of His constituency – the poor and the marginalized – but He also
wined and dined with the most powerful. He was compassionate; he judged no one even the so called woman prostitute was part of His constituency, and He respected diversity. How many of us are the cause of divisions we see in households, communities and worldwide?

He was bold and dared to push through barriers to reclaim his space. Many of us call ourselves development actors but when it comes to demonstrating it we are the first to hide our heads like ostriches do! Jesus built trust among His constituency, he walked the talk and excised integrity. How many of our leaders today have the integrity of leadership? Jesus’ power was led by love. He carried out his work with love, passion and commitment to those who loved him and those who hated Him.

As a leader, He had a succession plan. Today in Africa and beyond, leaders (at organizational and political levels) have failed to mentor successors and build their skills. Our friends, even some donor partners, seem to underestimate the power of building knowledge and reflection, and focus on what is tangible to justify their indicators. This has left the majority of the thinkers, planners and communicators of our communities with limited knowledge and information. As a result, the power that is excised worldwide has remained in perpetual confusion with no appropriate knowledge to reverse the violent conflicts, with no space to engage in meaningful peace language.

Conclusion
We, as promoters of feminist power that call for peaceful wellbeing, and dream about bringing happiness and transformation into the lives of the majority of the population, we need to be refocused and create strategies like those above. This will move us from the comfort zones called mainstreaming where we have developed complacency and have thrown away the power of communicating to reclaim our space and change the status quo. It is important for us to develop alternative spaces, to air different views and experiences. As leaders in our organizations and actors in various communities we must allow open debates on issue of concern to humankind in order to do away with negative conflicts and embrace peace for all.

I will end with a reflection from another renowned African feminist (Muthoni Wanyeki, 2008). During the African feminist Forum she voiced the following statements and questions: patriarchy has demobilized us, it has overwhelmed us and has divided us... how do we challenge a handful of these people, why is it that they are able to get their values (of greed, hate, fear, dominance, conquest and destruction), and push their issues to be our issues, and put us in a situation where conflict and inequality flourish?

Why is it that we who are the majority seem not to make a difference, why is it that the powers we hand over to our leaders seem not to stand for the weak and poor, but instead embrace those policies that have put us in the same cycle of marginalization, conflict and feminized poverty?

Why is it that even after pushing colonialists out of our continent we still cannot build democracies that bring happiness for all? Why have we stopped thinking for ourselves and left it to others to think for us? Why have we killed our power to question, mobilize and act?

I also put these questions to participants in this Congress: Why? Why? Why? Strength lies in our numbers! We must act now or never!

Notes
1. Srilatha Bhatiwal (1995). There is a continuous process of resistance and challenge by the less powerful and marginalised sections of society, resulting in various degrees of change in the structures of power. When these challenges become strong and extensive enough, they can result in the total transformation of a power structure.
3. Chilean women spoke out against former Dictator Augusto Pinochet; Indonesian women matched for peace as they protested parliament to investigate President Abdurrahman Wahid for alleged corruption; Japanese women demanded the withdrawal of U.S marines from Japan; Russian women marched for peace and demanded an end to killing the innocent.
4. After documentation of the human rights violations of women in the region, Isis-WICCE mobilized resources and experts to address the health complications that were inflicted on women and girls. It also facilitated women leaders of the affected region to have a space to share experiences and strategize together and create a plan of action for a long term strategy for the com-
mon good of their communities. Today these women have formed community-based organizations that still play critical roles in post conflict reconstruction.

5. Isis – WICCE carried out emergency intervention in the affected communities to save the lives of many who would not have otherwise survived.

6. Kitgum Women Peace Initiative has carried out a number of peace missions and activities that have seen many returning abducted girls feel worthy again. Teso women Peace Activists have continued to mobilise women up to village level into peace committees and animators who have become the peace keepers of women at village level.

7. Isis – WICCE has carried our five emergency interventions to save the lives of thousands of war survivors in Uganda.

8. Liberian women used numerous non-violent methods to communicate peace messages that brought men to negotiate the peace we see in Liberia today. The Uganda Women’s Peace Coalition likewise used communication technologies to position women’s voices at the Juba peace table; Mozambique activists denied their spouses sex until they negotiated peace.


10. As she narrated the violence that was unleashed on the poor and marginalized in the name of power and control http://www.mshairi.com/blog

11. www.creawkenya.org


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Gugulethu and Robben Island

Visit to Gugulethu

Gugulethu is a township 15 km from Cape Town. The name is a contraction of igugulethu, which is Xhosa for ‘our pride’. Gugulethu was established in the 1960s owing to the overcrowding of Langa, which was the only black residential area in Cape Town at that time.

The township bears the scars of the apartheid era. On the morning of 3 March 1986, South Africa’s security forces killed seven young black men (later to become known as the Gugulethu Seven) from the African National Congress’s armed wing. All seven were shot in the head and suffered numerous other gunshot wounds.

When South Africa was liberated, the police officers involved were granted amnesty by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Many residents of Gugulethu disputed the decision.

When a granite memorial was erected in 2005, more than 5,000 people gathered for the unveiling. The memorial has seven blocks bearing the images and details of Mandla Mxinwa, Jabulani Miya, Themba Molefi, Christopher Piet, Zola Swelani, Zabonkwe Konile and Zandisile Mjobo.

Today, Gugulethu is a thriving community, where Congress participants had the chance to gain a deeper understanding of South Africa’s history and current situation. Pastor Bonisile Mdyesha welcomed them to Gugulethu Presbyterian Church and members of the community shared memories of the anti-apartheid struggle.

Visit to Robben Island

From Gugulethu, Congress participants journeyed to Robben Island, some seven kilometres off the coast of Cape Town. It was here that former South African President and Nobel Laureate Nelson Mandela, alongside many other political prisoners, spent decades.

Under the apartheid regime, Robben Island became a maximum security prison. Between
1961 and 1991, over 3,000 men were incarcerated there.

In the early 1980s, many prisoners engaged in more active demands for rights, and a 1981 hunger strike reinforced their case and led to some minor improvements in conditions. In 1999 the island was made a World Heritage Site. Congress participants were given a tour of the island by guides who were formerly prisoners.

Gugulethu Township (above) covers an extensive area of homes, shops and facilities. (Photo: Erick Coll). The Presbyterian Church (left), where Congress participants talked with women and men from the community, is protected by barbed-wire. (Photo: George Conklin). Prisoners on Robben Island were closely confined in cell blocks (below) or, as in the case of Nelson Mandela, in single cells. (Photo: Erick Coll).
Peace education and new technologies

Marcelo Irineu Rezende Guimarães

Although the communication media display the many faces of violence, the fact is that we are living in a period of great interest, creativity and effort in the struggle for peace. Throughout the world, led by small groups and large institutions, initiatives of all kinds are multiplying. Let’s remind ourselves, first, of those that struggle against the arms race: the movement to abolish nuclear weapons, the campaigns against land-mines and light weapons, the coalition to end child soldiering, the efforts to reduce and eliminate chemical and biological weapons, the disarmament campaigns, and finally, those that oppose the might of the arms industry and the scandalous expenditure of US$30,000 per second on weapons.

Then, let’s remind ourselves of those conscientious objectors who, individually or in groups, many of them in prisons, struggle against conscription into military service and cry to the world: no man, no woman, not one cent for war! Let’s not forget the teachers who, in schools and outside them, promote education for peace, such as the decade for a culture of peace and non-violence, the world campaign to include peace education in the school curriculum, the campaign against war toys, and training for young people in peace and non-violent conflict resolution. Let’s bear in mind, also, those who work for the resolution of the many conflict situations in the world and show solidarity for the people of Iraq, Timor, Darfur, Chiapas, Colombia, the Middle East, etc.

Finally, the infinity of movements that promote justice: those for human rights, in defence of the environment, for equal rights for women, in favour of children’s rights, for the rights of indigenous people, for the end of foreign debt, against every form of discrimination, for an international tribunal, etc.

In this way, peace can be seen as a process in action and a great ongoing movement, much more than as a goal to be achieved. It is a liberation movement led by women, ethnic minorities, groups that suffered human rights violations, the working class and the poor of the world, which aims to involve more people, confronting the structures of violence with the structures of peace.1 Change will come about with recognition of the current peace processes taking place in all societies and with a deep awareness of the real potential to solve conflicts in a non-violent way and to avoid war.

If we often have the impression that violence is increasing unilaterally, it is also true that we are living in a unique moment in the history of humanity, in which we can discern a number of signs that point to the emergence of peace processes. The Norwegian-American sociologist, Elise Boulding, in her book Peace Cultures: The hidden side of history, while acknowledging that the process of war cannot easily be changed, concedes that changes will come about with the acknowledgement of the current peace processes taking place in all societies and with a deep awareness of the real possibility of success in resolving conflict and avoiding war.

For her, the peace culture has been ‘a hidden culture, kept alive in the cracks of a violent society’.2 What Boulding wants to point to is the emergence of ideas, social processes, tools and institutional mechanisms that make our times a decisive point of transition.

In fact, we should agree with Boulding that a new peace order is being built. Understood doubly as structure and interaction, peace culture is seen as a process in action much more than as goal to be achieved. All of this makes up what the Portuguese sociologist, Boaventura de Souza Santos, describes as ‘paradigmatic transition’. According to this author, we are watching the culmination of a process, in which the paradigm of modernity, the dominant paradigm up to now, ceases being able to renew itself, enters a final crisis and, ‘among the ruins hidden behind the facades, signs can be foreseen, although vague, of the urgent need for a
new paradigm’. In this tension between the dominant paradigm and the emerging paradigm, Boaventura refers to a cartographic metaphor, pointing out the importance of ‘social maps’, that is, the representations and spaces that create and make the paradigmatic transition possible.

At the same time, this invention of a new, emancipatory commonsense is based on a constellation of knowledge aimed at solidarity, and has to be complemented by the invention of individual and collective subjectivities, capable and willing to make their social practices depend on the same constellation of knowledge. These two components – the social maps and their travelers – are defined as a radical need and the only way to delineate a trajectory from the dominant paradigm to the emerging paradigm.

In this context, education for peace presents itself, today, as one of the social maps that affirms the emerging paradigm of non-violence and peace at the same time as it shows travelers how to use them. After almost 80 years, education for peace is showing considerable development, constituting itself into a special direction for international teaching research and a genuine scientific discipline, with a group of defined practices, its own bibliographical references, and a defined theoretical and methodological outline. Various qualifications are attributed to peace education, such as educational need, a global educational task, and an important component of educational programs as well as an unquestionable requirement of our times.

However, pointing out the relevance of peace education does not mean thematizing a teaching idiom or a task to accomplish. The English educator, Patricia White, contends that education for peace is not made up of a group of ‘peripheral activities for which we should, tirelessly, look for ad hoc justifications’, but occupies ‘a central place in the education of citizens of a democratic community’. Education for peace has been an important tool in materialising a culture of peace, emerging in the dialogue of the international community, not just as a new area of research or relevant field, but as an expression of the idea of goodness, in which the very question of the meaning of humanity and the aim of education are at stake.

Education for peace is emerging exactly at a time when humanity is threatened with its own extinction. If war could, a while ago, be interpreted as a factor in the biological selection of the species, today, such an interpretation is totally impossible because of the arms industry. The destructive potential of military action threatens humanity’s existence as a whole, and the same is true of the effects of industrial technology. Never before has humanity felt so committed to finding a global solution that goes beyond ethical particularities.

In fact, we are living at a time of the universal expansion of technical and scientific civilization. Global culture has helped perceive the needs of the world, at the same time that the development of communication technologies made possible the integration and interdependence of members of the planet. The concept of global citizenship has evolved, to the point that the conflict in Timor is seen as something that happens on the neighbouring block. Several experiences and associated structures have emerged: networks, webs, interconnections. This ‘single civilization’ has confronted all people, races and cultures, without considering their traditions, giving human actions a universal repercussion.

In this context, we can question the relationship and contribution of new technologies to the development and consolidation of peace education. How can we relate education for peace to these technologies, which are characterized by making communication content more agile, by means of digitalizing and networking communications for reception, transmission and distribution of information? In other words, what is the significance of a digital world in creating and sustaining a world of peace?

The fundamental issue: Let’s reach an agreement!

In 1795, when publishing his small book entitled Toward Eternal Peace, the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, presented his understanding of peace as an alliance and pact, which are the origin of a series of modern
organisations and institutions such as the European Community, the United Nations, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Kant, unlike Rousseau and very close to Hobbes, understands that peace is not natural and is not dependent on the goodwill or morals of citizens and their governments, but needs to be established and instituted, by substituting law for violence. For the philosopher of Königsberg, ‘the rational idea of a universal, peaceful community... made up of all people of the earth who can establish effective relationships between them, is not something philanthropic, but a legal principle.’

The issue is, in the context in which we live, how to institute and establish peace, constituting this universal peaceful community. Maybe the reflections of another German thinker, the philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1929- ), can contribute to an answer. Habermas’ concern is not so much knowledge or acquisition of knowledge, but the way in which subjects capable of language and action make use of knowledge. It is communicative action, in which participants orient themselves toward reciprocal understanding and not toward their own success. In this way, the argument game acquires force and energy, where language is able to generate understanding.

Habermas defines two basic principles for reaching agreements: the so called S and U principles. For principle S - for speech - only norms that might deserve the agreement of all involved in practical speech can appreciate the validity of S, establishing therefore ‘a cooperative concurrence for better arguments’. For principle U - for universal - a norm is only valid when the presumed consequences and the secondary effects for specific interests and the value orientations of each one, can be accepted without coercion by everyone together.

The communication should not be upset by unexpected external effects, nor by the coercion that results from the communication structure. All interested parties should have the same opportunities to argue and to make and refute arguments. People cannot interact or communicate discursively except in the framework of a non-repressive social order that guarantees every concerned person the chance of giving their agreement spontaneously.

Communicative action brings a new dimension to the Kantian understanding of peace as agreement. There will only be peace if humanity agrees to live in peace. It is necessary, therefore, to bring about a humanitarian consensus for peace, as happened, for instance, with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Humanity was not born with this notion, and it was put together through an intense and conflictive social process until a consensus was reached by means of the documents produced. In the same way, peace, as collective construct, will not come by decree of those in power, not even as a consequence of the audacity of pacifist militants, rather it will be the fruit of a discussed, debated, negotiated consensus between people.

As Habermas affirmed peremptorily in an interview in 1994: ‘We don’t have a choice: if we don’t want to fall now into tribal wars of the atomic type, we have to reach agreements on rules of equal and fair coexistence.’

A paradigmatic example of operational consensus is what was accomplished by the International Campaign to Ban Land Mines. Organized in 1990, involving more than 1400 entities, after seven years of work it obtained in December 1997 the signature of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. From the date it became effective, on 1 March 1999, the convention obtained significant results, such as a reduction in the number of producing countries from 52 to 14, and in the number of annual victims from 25,000 to 15,000.

Today, about 147 countries have signed up, while seven that had already signed it are getting ready to ratify it. There are still important challenges, such as the non-adherence of the United States and Russia. But the greatest achievement of this campaign was to organize a broad and inclusive debate on the problem of land mines. According to Jody Williams, former campaign coordinator, the historical process that created the treaty against land mines demonstrated that the exercise of full debate can bring formidable consequences for humani-
ty, with the result that consensus is a ‘new form of international power’.  

If, because of the new arrangement of global society and the proximity created by the global market, communication, trade, and technology, ‘no one can pretend not to bump into anyone else’, it is impossible to deny the potential for conflict this imposes. It is not by hiding conflict or by simply prohibiting TV networks from showing violent scenes that we find ways to build peace cultures. On the other hand, one cannot forbid words taking the shape of restraining violence with the resources of violence itself.

Therefore, in this context, language becomes the place par excellence to work for peace. It is for this kind of social relationship, and not for individual concepts about good or for the relationships between values, that education for peace finds an appropriate space to develop and without language, beyond the sphere of argument, it cannot move forward.

The development of communicative competence
By establishing communicative competence – the capacity to speak and to act – as one of the requirements for communicative action, Habermas opens up one more horizon for peace education, understood now as a space in which it can develop in a society that, as it colonizes the world of life, takes away from its members that which characterizes them: their capacity to speak and to act. If ideologies achieve their aim of impeding public discussion of topics, people’s difficulty in making plain their positions and discussing a consensus also constitutes an obstacle that education and education for peace cannot ignore.

Hannah Arendt’s thinking can offer some important aspects on which to base a methodology of peace education in which to learn how
to handle words that favour peace. For Hannah Arendt, the use of the word, like an action, makes human beings political creatures and creates the possibility for human beings to distinguish themselves from each other and to manifesting themselves to each other: they are so indispensable that people can live without labour or work, but cannot live without speech and action. In action and in speech, human beings reveal their personal and individual identities and find a place in the world.

To say a word constitutes, therefore, an action, not just because almost all political actions are really accomplished through words, but also because ‘the action of finding the appropriate words for the right moment, regardless of the information or communication they convey, constitutes an action.’12 This way, the word is more than a means of expression; it acquires a political connotation as an expression of community life. It is in the juxtaposition between family space and polis, public sphere and private sphere, that Hannah Arendt situates the question of violence.

Violence, by force or order, is characteristic of home and family life, where the man of the house reigned with uncontested powers, while public space, the polis, was the space of shared existence and, therefore, where words were used, where argument and persuasion were used. All political actions, as long as they stay away from the sphere of violence, are accomplished through words. Therefore, violence itself is defined as acting without arguing and as the empire of silence, so that ‘only pure violence is mute.’13

In the same way of thinking, the American psychologist, Rollo May, affirms that one cannot speak with an enemy, because if conversation is possible, that person stops being an enemy. Understanding language as ‘an empathetic link between persons, a shared structure, an ability to identify with another’,14 May turns to the symbolic dimension of language, in its etymological sense, as that which joins (ballein) together (syn), while its antonym is diabolical, that is, something that disintegrates, alienates, and breaks relationships.

Emmanuel Lévinas (1906-95), also understands word as exterior to violence, in a form of exchange way – what he calls barter – in which we simultaneously try to get to know the other while making ourselves known. If, as Lévinas says, ‘language is the act of a rational who renounces violence to enter into a relationship with the other’,15 its exercise is the coming about of peace.

Education for peace can truly oppose violence if, and only if, it uses discourse and action, understood as realities that interact reciprocally and create new dialogue and action. In Hannah Arendt’s exemplary thinking: ‘Power is only put into effect while word and action are not divorced, when words are not empty and actions are not brutal, when words are not used to veil intentions but to reveal realities, and actions are not used to violate and to destroy, but to create relationships and new realities.’16 An education that does not put into effect dialogue and action, where the subjects are not protagonists, that is, holders of the word and autonomous in their actions, is an education that perpetuates and reiterates violence inside and outside itself.

Although we live in the so called communication era, it is also true that people have lost their ability to communicate. If peace cannot exist without a deliberative process, there will not be a communicative process without the development of communicative competence. It is necessary to contribute to the development of communicative competence, that is, the capacity to speak one’s word, to communicate and communicate oneself.

The method of educating for peace: peace is the path
In this process of educating for peace, method acquires great relevance. If there is no path for peace and peace is the path, and even if in education there is no guaranteeing the results, more than ever a methodological measure between ends and means can at least constitute a reference point. I would like to elaborate on three essential methodological elements in the process of educating for peace.

The creation of a pacific community. Apart from private and individualistic burdens associated with peace, it is essentially an intersubjective notion as regards the way we establish – or
cease establishing – relationships with other people. Being more than the sum of individuals isolated in their peace, a peace culture develops and is created precisely in the interaction and play among its subjects. Peace, as affirmed by French philosopher Lévinas, is not the peace of cemeteries, the end of combat for lack of combatants, but a relationship that goes from me to another. More than the sum of peaceful individuals, peace is exactly the result of the very interaction of persons and groups in obtaining consensus and agreement.

Education for peace is not inspired by the idea of a universal and self-sufficient subject (individual and social) – and for that reason a competitive one – but in a rationality that is built cooperatively on dialogue, communication, and exchange among individuals and societies in historical contexts. This happens, in the first place, because the senses are not created individually, but through interrelational play. More than a process restricted to the formation of peaceful subjects, education for peace presents itself in an inter-subjective way, as an insertion in a pacific community. And the truly decisive issue will be the constitution and the maintenance of that pacific community, which is simultaneously self-educating and educating for peace, both in the internal dynamics of building reciprocal relationships and in the act of joining with other communities and groups that are equally involved in the struggle for peace.

A fundamental aspect of this thinking is dialogue, understood not just as a conversation, but as the dialogue of who we are as people. Dialogue not as something that is imposed on human beings, but as a constituent dimension. Dialogue, as a way of existence, is the overcoming of the isolation of the individual and the affirmation of otherness, as it always supposes, at least, two people in interaction. The shape that structures dialogue is not one-after-the-other, but one-with-the-other.

Participating in a dialogue restores us to ourselves, at the same time as we reveal ourselves without dominance and open ourselves up without self-denial, open to receiving the word that comes to us from others. In this respect, dialogue is close to the experience of encounter and friendship, and its chief obstacle is intolerance. Intolerance is what impedes others from participating in the dialogue. Tolerance consists of attempting to overcome conflicts of interpretation – that is, in recognising truth’s pluralism and in being non-dogmatic.

The discovery of the plurality of cultures is the discovery of otherness and of us as one among others. There is, in fact, a deficit in our western civilization in what it means to understand and to dialogue, constituting a genuine lack of communicative ability. Despite all of humanity’s technical and scientific progress, we have not learned sufficiently how to live together. At the same time, humanity demonstrates its incapacity for dialogue gives greater room for monologue in human behaviour.

The way interpersonal relationships are treated occupies a prominent place in education for peace and is one of its pillars. On the one hand, because it is an objective with its own values: developing the capacity to dialogue. On the other, it is a means or instrument on which education for peace is based in order to achieve harmonious coexistence. If we do not learn to understand others, and establish solidarity and partnership relationships with them, we cannot accomplish humanity’s essential tasks – neither its minor ones, nor its larger ones. As happens in education, interpersonal relationships should not just be consonant with the proposed objectives, but are themselves an apprenticeship that is indispensable to any educational process that is based on human relationships.

Education for peace starts building harmonious relationships between the members of the education community. The dynamics that authentic dialogue establishes prepare participants in the peace education process for continuing in their pacifist tasks. The community itself, in the dynamic of dialogue and understanding, points to a broader understanding of what is wanted for humanity and becomes, at the same time, an icon, a rehearsal, and a reference point for peace.

At the same time, the pacifist community’s participants need to feel they are integral parts of a network or larger web. The community’s dynamics will be enriched if they are accompa-
nied by dynamics of participation at the most diverse levels, by means of which these groups get in touch with different actors in the pacifist movement and begin a process that links this group and this community to a larger community – inserting themselves in the dynamics of a peace culture and the pacifist movement and extending the community’s dynamic of tolerance. A peace culture, more than ever, is established through extensive networking.

By establishing the community as a reference point for the process of peace education, what is fundamental is made explicit: education for peace is a collective, community, inter-subjective happening. There is no education for peace without a community that constitutes itself as the closes horizon of the educational process itself and, at the same time, as mediator between the peace movement and the peace culture.

*The importance of using words.* The word is the means by which we insert ourselves into the world and participate in it. Therefore, supreme violence is the exclusion of the possibility of speaking or communicating, and, at the same time, where the word is denied, violence emerges. And many of the demonstrations that we label as violent are, in essence, ways of speaking, so that one of the strongest elements in preventing violence is having access to speech, to the word.

At the same time, language has the characteristic of uniting us with one another and of creating an empathetic bond between people. It is said that is impossible to speak with an enemy, because when we do he ceases to be an enemy and becomes a speaker! We recognize others when we converse with them, so that the essence of the word is welcome, well-wishing, and hospitality.

On the one hand, it is necessary to criticize the culture of violence, in the search to establish a consensus on how violence is produced and expressed by different agents in society, creating a system to monitor and control these mechanisms. We need to understand each other with regard to violence: understanding its mechanisms opens up new horizons in the process of deconstructing the forces of communication that sustain it. It even means creating a process of clarification since there seems to exist in us and in our society the cultural germs of misunderstanding. It is necessary to put them on the table, to reveal them and make them transparent.

This cultural self-critique is a way of opposing the fascination and seduction that violence and war exercise on us – the American theologian Walter Wink speaks about the ‘myth of redeeming violence’, referring to this belief in the possibility of war and violence solving problems.

On the other hand, it is necessary to project alternatives and possibilities, concentrating on the details and character of the peace agenda and project. It is, above all, an exercise of Utopian imagination, allowing a free look at violence and war, no longer as the last word on reality, a sort of sentence to which all are condemned. It is necessary to encourage people and groups to defend this project, to give peace more definite outlines, to contemplate what how a peace economy, the right to peace, and the politics of peace will be, and confront the many dimensions of human life with pacific proposals. Individuals need to dream, to give value to their visions and the vision of others regardless of whether they are personal concerns, local community concerns, or the concerns of the whole planet.

According to David Hicks (1993), complementing them and adapting them from their English to their Latin-American context, we can identify ten arguments that are relevant to peace education understood as the exercise of communicative action:

a) **Conflict**: discussion of several contemporary conflict situations, personal and even global, as well as of attempts made to solve them.

b) **Peace**: analysis of several peace concepts and of people and groups’ working actively on behalf of peace.

c) **Violence and war**: understanding facts of violence, causes, manifestations and mechanisms, as much in individuals, groups as on the global plan.

d) **Disarmament**: knowledge of the arms process and of the issues surrounding the reduction of armaments and the search for new
means of defence.
e) Justice and human rights: debating the application and mechanisms for implementing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
f) Power: analysis of the methods used by people and groups to recover control over their own lives.
g) Gender: link between gender issues and production of violence and building/maintenance of peace.
h) Race and culture: investigation of cultural plurality and of the mechanisms that affect discrimination.
i) Environment: discussion of the main environmental issues and their implications.
j) Future: understanding the alternatives for a fairer and less violent world and of mechanisms for bringing it about.

The experience of non-violent actions. In today’s societies, we can see a process of deterioration in public, political, and community actions: acting together is replaced by a collective or juxtaposition of isolated individuals and the creative actions of the new are changed into a collection of predetermined activities that are closer to repetition than the condition for birth and creativity that go with action. There’s an illusion of action, but no real action. It’s a matter, therefore, in the search for peace cultures, of creating spaces that enable community experience, argument and public dialogue, with all of its benefits, challenges, and difficulties. To offer what the German philosopher, Jürgen Habermas called ‘the spectacle of communicative freedoms’.19

In trying to construct peace, this spectacle of communicative freedoms needs to reach three levels or dimensions. First, that of interpersonal relationships. Because direct violence exists, direct peace is necessary, that is, daily actions that reach people, that break down barriers, that create peace experiences here and now. A second level touches the structural dimension. It is necessary to create organizations, cultural behaviour, and public politics that facilitate peace practices and function as practical obstacles to violence.

Finally, it is necessary to reach the heart of a culture, that is, into the development and relationship models that govern relations and structures, transforming them into centres of interest, values, judgment, and criteria, etc. Basically, initiation into the vast world of pacifism and non-violence, especially learning its three ways of transformation: non-cooperation, non-violent intervention and publicity for peace struggles.

Non-cooperation is a technical term that does not correspond to the opposite of cooperation, but rather to a form of obtaining consensus and agreement by removing contradictory support and adhesion to something. As a way of resolving conflicts, it withdraws forms and degrees of customary cooperation with a person, activity, institution, or regime with which there is a conflict, or it prevents new ways of helping, thus producing a breakdown in daily work. For Gandhi, what gave power to the British empire in India — more than the English’s capacity for domination — was the acquiescence of the Indians: ‘It is not the British rifles but our cooperation that is responsible for our subjection... the government doesn’t have any power beyond voluntary cooperation and the people’s strength. The power that they exercise is given to them by our people. Without our support, a hundred thousand Europeans could not have a seventh of our villages.’20

Gandhi used non-cooperation as an instrument to discuss and to debate with the British powers that refused to reach an agreement or to have relevant discussions on the issue of India’s independence. The salt march took place in 1930 and had thousands of demonstrators who bluntly disobeyed the prohibition of salt’s manufacture. Its consequence was an encounter between Gandhi and the British Viceroy in India, in which the Pact of New Delhi was agreed and signed on March 5, 1931. It was considered a benchmark in the establishment of civil freedoms. This way, citizens’ mobilization through non-cooperative action allowed them to coerce those that had the power of decision and allowed for debate and the subsequent consensus.

Non-cooperation can take place on three levels: social, economical, and political. An example of social non-cooperation happened in
Holland on the occasion of the Nazi invasion. A theatre director, pressured by the political police to declare that the curtain would only rise after all Jews had left the room, glanced up to see all the Jews and non-Jews present leave the theatre! An example of economic non-cooperation was the movement of blacks in Montgomery, Alabama, in the United States. In 1956, for 382 days blacks refused to take the bus. They obtained a revocation of the discriminatory laws that forced blacks to give up their seats to whites.

Regarding political non-cooperation, we can recall the resistance against the Nazi occupation of Denmark: when German officials entered a store or restaurant, all became silent immediately or left, because of orders to arrest all Jews. In 1943, the whole Danish population collaborated in opposing the Nazi plan: out of 7,000 Jews Danish Jews only 500 were detained.

Non-violent intervention, as the title implies, tries to intervene in some situations, although in non-violent ways. There are usually about five categories or methods of non-violent intervention: psychological, physical, social, economic, and political. One example of psychological intervention is the fast, used by Gandhi to stop the rivalries between Hindus and Muslims. Unfortunately, they continued and provoked the separation of India and Pakistan that exists until today and has now become the conflict in Kashmir.

Regarding physical intervention, one recalls the anti-segregationists of Martin Luther King, who used to occupy the means of transport during their movement in 1955-56, preventing the whites from taking their place. An example of a protest prayer to get the Brahman priests to stop prohibiting untouchables from passing in front of the temple was used by Gandhi in Vykhom. His gesture of weaving his own clothes, in opposition of the established order of only buying English woven cotton, can be cited as an outstanding case of economic intervention.

A third path is that of mobilizing and provoking people’s commitment, thus contributing to the building and formation of public opinion for peace. There are several means to use: formal declarations, communications with a larger audience, representations of groups, symbolic public ceremonies, pressure on individuals, plays and music, walks, homage to the dead, public assemblies, and acts of leaving and resignation.

However, it is important to highlight two publicity instruments: demonstrations and campaigns. Demonstrations can serve to express a position – to be against or in favour of something – or express a feeling, or, still further, to simply inform. In the context of cultural monopolies, this action of informing is full of meaning, as we have seen in cases such as Kosovo or Palestine when the international community did not know much of what was going on, or the feelings and positions of the involved parties and activist groups in favour of peace.

Campaigns, however, are structured around certain ends, such as, for instance, the Campaign for the International Penal Court, aimed at strengthening public opinion. The objective here is to work towards creating a certain consensus on pertinent issues that affect a group, country, or all of humanity.

**New technologies in peace education**
From these methodological elements, we can point to some of the conditions in which new technologies can contribute to a process of peace education. This does not mean placing peace education and new technologies on opposite paths, but rather seeking points of contact. We have tried to move away from a simplistic approach, in favour or against, to base our argument on criteria. From the content articulated above, we can enumerate these as follows.

**Capacity to contribute to a consensus for peace.** In general, new technologies are associated with interactivity and changing communication model in which information is transmitted unilaterally, to multidirectional models, where communication has several starting and arrival points. Of the conditions indicated by Habermas for achieving consensus, new technologies are the ones with greater possibilities of making visible the principle of bring about wide debate. It is clear that beyond the issue of digital inclusion, there is the democratization of
access. It is necessary also to question its capacity to organize denser debates on fundamental questions that pertain to increasing peace and non-violence.

**Capacity to shape communicative competence.** The fundamental question in the current context is to establish a consensus for peace, and such a consensus cannot be established without competent, communicative people. Without doubt, new technologies represent the emergence of new communicative abilities and new forms of expression, from e-mail to blogs, and the sharing of videos. But the question remains whether the people can truly communicate and express their own original words. It is this expression of their words that allows them to create peace on a daily basis, beyond international agreements (although without ignoring them, of course).

**Capacity to create communities.** If peace is not just the sum of people at peace, but the ‘between’ of this relationship, the ability to create peaceful communities that support this process is decisive. New technologies develop and make possible communication networks. There’s no doubt that these networks are an intersubjective experience, capable of bringing people together around common themes and interests. The question here is whether these networks can provide opportunities for creating stronger community experience and deeper human exchanges. Or if these new technologies just give an illusion of communication, instead of real communication.

**Capacity to create opportunities for people to have their say.** New technologies bring opportunities for newer methods of collection, transmission, and distribution of information, broadening people’s possibilities to have their say. They will contribute to the progress of the peace process as long as they create opportunities for: a) the emergence of themes linked to a culture of peace; b) criticizing the culture of violence (and we have to ponder whether these new technologies also create new forms of violence, or at least popularize it by broadcasting them); c) express the dream and utopia of peace.

**Capacity to train for action.** People wish for and want peace, wish to and want to participate in peace processes. But often they find themselves without the methodological reference points to do so. To help people make peace function – the how-to – be it by, for example, offering tools for organizing protests or signing petitions, be it through action or by joining a certain cause, each is an efficient instrument in the march toward peace and non-violence.

In any case, it’s important to keep in mind that there isn’t a relationship of cause and effect between peace education and the reign of justice on earth. Educational work is always limited and fragile, but it is always essential. If education is not the only condition for peace, it is an indispensable condition, as formulated by members of the Global Campaign for Peace Education: there is no peace without peace education.

With all its ambiguities and potential, education for peace based on new technologies is one more chance, a beautiful chance, to ‘act toward the establishment of peace’ and to ‘bring an end to terrible war’.

References
4. Ibid. p. 249.
Marcelo Irineu Rezende Guimarães holds a doctorate in education and is a member of the Brazilian NGO Educators for Peace, the Centre for Peace Studies and of the editorial board of the Journal of Peace Education. He is the author of Educação para a paz: sentidos e desafios (Education for peace: Directions and challenges), Cidadãos do presente: crianças e jovens na luta pela paz (Citizens of the present: Children and adolescents in the struggle for peace), Um novo mundo é possível (A new world is possible), and Aprender a educar para a paz (Learning to educate for peace). He is a Benedictine monk and Prior of the Monastery of the Anunciation of the Lord, Goiás, Brazil.

I possible to capture the moment, the following hints at the depth and wisdom inherent in Bob Haverluck’s daily take on a particular topic. The first day was devoted to communication rights in the guise of John the Baptist, who ‘spoke strongly because he didn’t just speak for self or out of self’. He ‘took in locusts (curse, plague), honey (promise, blessing), and he dressed in unclean skin.’ John also ‘took in the wild, spoke the wild love of God.’

Wild bees hived in the mouth of John
Left sweet upon his teeth
Left stingers on his tongue
Wild bees hived in the mouth of John

Media and gender justice
Let us be reminded of Sister Aunt Mary Magdalene. Remember on that night dark morning, days after the State’s legal murder of Jesus, Mary goes alone to the tomb of Jesus. And finds it empty. And after the disciples come and see and flee again, Mary stands. Mary stays. Mary stood... weeping. As she wept, she bent. Bent and saw angels. As she cried, cried out her sorrows through weeping eyes, through tear-washed eyes, through seeing tears, she saw the Christly Jesus, the risen rising Christ, like the morning sun itself.

Remember Jesus crying at the gate of Jerusalem, that tall town, tall in arrogance, tall in violence. Jesus wept over it, wept, by Christ, ‘O Jerusalem... if only you recognised the things...
that make for peace.’ First Jesus cries out the sadness. Then, remembering this, he cries out against the cause of the sadness... the injustice.

In the wisdom of weeping, grieving, undressing grievances; crying out becomes crying out against and crying out for. So let us be reminded of Sister Mary Magdalene, for whom ‘Woe is me!’ became ‘Wow! are we.’ ‘Wow! is me.’

*With wounded eyes*
Mary Magdalene weeps
Cries out and lets in Christ
Flowering forth Easter

**Power, conflict and peace**
God’s at work in the companions God gives us in our struggle. God’s at work when a desperate group of men and women smash through the roof of a house... and lower a sick friend down into the Christly dark, where Jesus, busy teaching... seeing them in the light, laughs healingly at their wild love, wild hope.

God’s at work when a wicked dwarf, Zaccheus, becomes tall as a tree, and Jesus joins him for a beer – and tea.

God’s at work crying in the cries of blind Bartemeus, told to ‘Sit down!’ ‘Shut up!’ But he shouts for a healing justice. God’s at work.

God’s at work when the saucy woman with bottled perfume breaks into the gloom of the holy talk talkers houses. Breaks in and makes sweet music on Jesus tired dancing feet.

God’s at work, when mother Mary sings a song of hope and high revolt. Sings of God rais-
ing up the little, the least, the lost and raising up kings, princesses and princes, up to sit at the feet of the poor.

Mother Mary sings, a sweet song, a street song, of God bending low. So, I imagine in today’s drawing Mary keeping her song in her heart only until she can write it on the city walls. Graffiti for the needy!

My soul sings to God who trips the mighty, Topples kings, breakers of the sparrow’s wing.
O dance little body to God bending low, To little earth lifted up... mercy

New information and communication technologies
As journalists/communicators of the poor prince of peace, you seek to broadcast the whispers of the downcast, and to say the unsaid... and the needing to be spoken. In so doing, you are joined to the Christly Jesus, who was often an offence, a troublesome problem because he chose the lowly way, to be among the downcast and downtrodden.

Perhaps more than anyone he offends his very followers, his would-be defenders. They want a dignified king – at least an honoured rabbi, an upright man of respect, in whose shadow they will gain respect. They do not want one who bends and kneels before the least, the poorest of the earth.

In Hebrew Scripture, the word for the poor is anawin, meaning ‘those caused, forced into poverty’. Remember Jesus dwelling place in the days before his arrest and execution. He lived – where? – in Bethany. Beth-Anawin – the House of the Poor, the township on the edge of the wealth of the Holy City. But anawin means not only poor. It means ‘dirty’, ‘filthy’.

Remember St. Paul’s words to the ‘Super-Christians’ in Corinth, the ‘Super-Apostles’. To these Super-Christians, braggarts and religious bullies, he says, they ride high and holy, clean and respectable at the front of the parade – but he and would-be-followers-of-the crucified-Christ are at the end, the bottom, the ass-end, and they are the ‘scatos’, the Greek word for excrement, shit. The eschatological business is a scatological business.

So I give you the drawing, given to me, of Jesus kissing a pig. ‘Jesus kisses the unclean and the ruling orders are outraged.’

You will not find it written exactly like that in Scripture. Yet we do find that, again and again, Jesus does kiss pigs. ‘Earth to earth, heaven to earth, earth to heaven.’

I hope he kisses pigs – because, if not, me and my often piggy-self have no Redeemer – nor does a creation often forced into poverty and dust.

I hope, when I come down the road from the pig-pens where I work and dwell, that the Prince of Peace, pieces, is waiting for me and comes running down the road to embrace me, to raise me up... and you... and all creation.

A blessed unrest to us all!

Painter, poet and political cartoonist, Bob Haverluck has been designing and leading workshops on peacemaking and social issues since the early seventies. A former artist-in-residence at the University of Winnipeg, Canada, and United Church minister, Bob makes the political and theological subjects of his art accessible to a wide audience through humour and irony captured in his cartoon-like drawings and poetry. His religious cartoons have been widely published in Harpers magazine (U.S.A.), the New Statesman (United Kingdom) and Kristet Forum (Sweden).
Jesus киселъ унчан, and the ruling orders are outraged.
Congress 2008: Where to from here?

Kristine Greenaway

The fourth global communication conference sponsored by WACC delivered on its promise to serve as a platform for some of the world’s most effective communicators to share their vision of what communicators must do in the 21st century to create the conditions which lead to sustainable peace in communities worldwide. Yet, in the end, the real value of an event like Congress 2008 is measured not by what happens during the event, but rather by what happens afterwards.

Previous global conferences sponsored by WACC have led to valuable and enduring communication initiatives such as the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). Often these ideas have come out of workshop discussions or informal exchanges – creative moments sparked by what is in the air following a keynote presentation, a workshop exercise or a movie screening. They are the ‘what if’ or ‘why not’ moments that lead to a collaborative project that is remembered long after the conference where it was born has been relegated to the electronic archives of the organization that sponsored it.

It is those moments that partly justify the expense and time of mounting an international conference in the 21st century. The spontaneity and excitement of a corridor discussion that builds on the input and promptings of a skilled workshop leader cannot be replicated in virtual meeting spaces. It takes the backdrop of award-winning photos, the echoes of a provocative film-maker’s remarks, the tears of a Rwandan genocide survivor or the courageous testimony of a person living with HIV in a Cape Town township to create the environment in which such ideas are born and partnerships formed. So where can we look for what happened at Congress that might lead to the next exciting WACC initiative?

Cloud of Witnesses

Congress 2008 began with the celebration of communicators who had the courage to use their skills to expose the abuses of the apartheid system. The stories, newsletters, photos, speeches, and poetry they produced contributed to the defeat of the apartheid regime, the release of Nelson Mandela and the foundation of the new South Africa.

A booklet produced by WACC with the support of The United Church of Canada to tell the stories of eight people who represent the many members of the ‘Cloud of Witnesses’ (Hebrews 12:1) who dared ‘speak truth to power’, has been carried home by participants from over 70 countries. In each of those countries, there are people whose stories of confronting repressive regimes, unjust laws and abuse can serve as inspiration to today’s communicators.

The WACC booklet may become a model for telling their stories. It can also be used with youth groups, journalism students and in internship programmes to inspire a new generation of communicators to witness to the evil around them and bring hope for change.

Learning Streams

Four groups of participants worked in intensive daily ‘learning streams’ led by internationally recognized subject specialists to enhance their ability to respond to the Congress theme when they return home. Participants who successfully completed the programme will receive a certificate for continuing education credit endorsed by four educational institutions with international standing. This career development opportunity will enhance the participants’ effectiveness in their work place and create a ripple effect of learning as they share their new skills and insights with colleagues. Ongoing networking and collaboration on joint projects with
others from the learning stream will contribute to the advancement of practices in the subject area.

Pradip Thomas (India) Associate Professor at the School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Queensland in Australia focused on Communication Rights in a learning stream that introduced participants to the concept of communication rights and looked at strategies for effective communication rights advocacy and was linked to the keynote presentation by aboriginal rights advocate, Doreen Spence, a Cree from Canada.

Nebojsa Radic (Hungary) led a learning stream focused on Media and Gender Justice, a theme echoed in keynote presentations by Joanne Sandler of UNIFEM and Ruth Ojiambo-Ochieng of Isis-WICCE. The workshop series allowed participants to explore what to do with statements such as Ojiambo-

Ochieng’s call for communicators to ensure that stories of women’s power to survive violence, negotiate peace and re-build broken social relationships are present in the media as models for building viable communities.

Jake Lynch (Australia) is an internationally acclaimed proponent of Peace Journalism, an approach to reporting on conflicts which seeks to include multiple perspectives on the causes of a conflict and to inform rather than inflame news audiences. Lynch, along with Robert Hackett and Birgitta Schroeder of Canada, focused on how to devise and implement media interventions that contribute to efforts for peace-building and reconciliation.

Jörg Becker (Germany) a professor and consultant on new information and communication technologies, focused on how electronic media create the potential for greater understanding through direct communication and the creation of broad-based worldwide social movements for peace.

Writing for Peace
The Writing for Peace workshop was offered to professional journalists who want to write for international news agencies. Participants worked with the editors of Ecumenical News International (ENI) using an intensive skills development training model based on individual mentoring. Journalists were given daily story assignments to cover Congress and received individual attention from an editor who guided each story through the process from assignment to publication online.

The editors, Peter Kenny and Stephen Brown, report being highly satisfied with the results of the workshops. Their objective was to enhance the skills of existing freelance writers and to increase the pool of available journalists, especially from Africa. They not only met that objective, but also posted 12 articles from Cape Town which were distributed for worldwide pick-up via ENI subscribers including the BBC, EPD (the German Protestant news service) and Radio Suisse Romande.

Explorations
Over the five-day conference, more than 45 exploration sessions were offered by Congress
participants on their subject area of expertise. The diversity of choices on offer reflected the multiple perspectives and depth of experience of WACC’s global network of members and affiliates.

Patrick Matbob of Papua New Guinea (PNG), in an exploration on media and peacebuilding in PNG, offered examples of how media in his country have shown they are prepared to promote peace and contribute to conflict resolution by engaging in advocacy journalism. It includes initiating campaigns on social issues such as the right of women to receive equal treatment in PNG’s patriarchal society. He reports some journalists are uncomfortable with this approach, saying it compromises objectivity. But Matbob told the group that an editor who is prominent in the movement responds to critics by saying journalists have the responsibility ‘to take action and not simply report from the sidelines.’

The workshop on HIV and AIDS, offered jointly by Canadian Lutheran World Relief and the Lutheran World Federation, attracted participants who brought with them their Congress experiences of hearing the testimony from a young woman about what it is like to live with HIV in a Cape Town township and of being led in daily Prayers and Bible Study sessions by Rev Phumzile Zondi-Mabizela, who lives with HIV and is an international advocate for de-stigmatizing people who are HIV+.

And an unusual and popular exploration took place with past WACC president, Albert van den Heuvel, Ineke de Feijter and WACC Honorary Life Membership recipient, Cees Hamelink. It drew on the work of Dutch painter Rembrandt to illustrate the need to shift from the ‘hard’ face of violent communication to the ‘soft’ face of integrative communication.

Regional Perspectives
Immediately following each keynote presentation, representatives from different regions were invited to respond by connecting the keynote theme to local realities. In their comments, the respondents offered a number of ideas for action. Together, these responses provide a rich
source of programmatic ideas for WACC and its regional networks in the coming years.

The responses by Karin Achtelstetter (Europe) and Dennis Smith (Latin America) to the presentation on Media and Gender Justice by UNIFEM’s Joanne Sandler offer a sample of the rich exchanges prompted by each keynote address. (Visit www.waccglobal.info for other regional comments.)

Presbyterian lay leader, Dennis Smith, who is based in Guatemala, picked up on Sandler’s call for partnership in initiatives to create what she calls ‘purposeful media’ that lead people to action. Smith agreed with Sandler, but noted that this is too big a task for media and gender justice advocates in Latin America to take on alone.

Citing the recent success of a movement in Guatemala to stop an ad campaign featuring images of dead women modelling high-fashion shoes, Smith said it was clear that the ad company involved did not understand why the ads were so offensive to people living in a country with one of the world’s highest murder rates of women.

This signals, says Smith, the need for ongoing dialogue with ad agencies and of developing training modules on gender sensitivity for advertising and marketing faculties. Such initiatives would only be possible in partnership with global agencies such as UNIFEM which have the resources and contacts to multiply the impact of small groups of people, each working in their own context, on a global phenomenon.

In public recognition of their contributions to the life and work of WACC, honorary life membership was conferred on (from left to right) Dr Cees Hamelink (Netherlands), Dr Margaret Gallagher (Ireland), and the Rt Rev Horace Etemesi Shitandi. Honorary Life Membership of WACC is awarded to people whose work is characterised by commitment, integrity and steadfastness. (Photo: George Conklin.)
Karin Achtelstetter, drawing on the experience of women communicators in European churches, addressed the issue of the disempowering representation of women in church media and their marginalized roles in communication offices.

In her call to action, Achtelstetter told Congress participants that women in the churches of Europe should make alliances with secular women and women of other faiths. Specifically, she requested that WACC Global and WACC Europe start a global and regional women’s mentoring programme.

**What is in the air after Congress 2008?**

Achtelstetter’s call for a mentoring programme for women communicators led to a resolution calling for such an initiative endorsed by people from all regions at the end of Congress. This and other resolutions serve as indicators of themes of interest to the community of communicators gathered in Cape Town.

They included a call for the Middle East to be a focus of communication for WACC members and affiliates. As one participant noted, in the 1980s nobody believed the apartheid system in South Africa could be overthrown. But it was and this now gives hope for a similar miracle in the Middle East if world attention is focused on the need for peace in the way communicators focused attention on the need to overthrow the apartheid regime.

Another resolution, presented by a representative of WACC’s Asia region, drew attention to the situation in the Indian state of Orissa, where increasing violence between Christians and Hindus is fanned by inflammatory rumour and rhetoric.

In the declaration titled ‘Communicating people’s stories builds peace’ which was
endorsed by participants at the conclusion of Congress 2008, WACC joined with the World Council of Churches and others in calling for 2011-20 to be designated by the United Nations as the ‘Decade of Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace.’ The Declaration notes the ‘vital need to include communication for all as on of the Decade’s most urgent aims.’

How will we know if Congress 2008 has led to change?

An on-site evaluation on the last day of Congress offered a preliminary assessment of the value of the Congress experience. An analysis of a sample of the responses which was presented to the Board at its meeting immediately following Congress, showed that 32 of 33 respondents in the sample rated the overall Congress experience either ‘Excellent’ or ‘Very Good’ with one respondent rating it ‘good’ on a five-step scale from ‘Excellent’ to ‘Poor’.

In addition, during the first quarter of 2009, WACC will conduct an impact evaluation by mailing a four-question survey to Congress participants and leaders. Nine participants have been chosen for individual follow-up by phone. Their stories will become part of the record of Congress through inclusion in reports to donors who supported Congress and by referral to WACC Board members for their consideration in evaluating WACC’s programmatic initiatives, including Congress.

Ultimately though, participants will know if Congress has been effective if it affects the work they do, the projects they undertake, the reading they choose and their effectiveness as a communicator for peace in whatever place they are called to witness.

Being Developed

WACC is producing an educational DVD on ‘peace communication’ which is designed to be a dynamic, interactive distillation of key learnings and questions shared during Congress 2008. Produced in partnership with The United Church of Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada, the resource will be available in 2009 and can be ordered at that time via the WACC website.

Resources on Peace Communication

Resources related to the theme ‘Communication is peace: Building viable communities’ can be found on the WACC website www.waccglobal.org. The site features news stories, keynote speeches, the Congress 2008 Declaration, and the curricula from the Learning Streams.

Check the site as well for rare and exclusive resources such as the video of poet Diana Ferrus, one of the South African anti-apartheid communicators honoured in the Congress 2008 opening ceremony, which concludes with her poem ‘Peace Song’, a heart-wrenching prayer for love in the midst of war.

Other valuable resources on the site include an article with information about where to find free software tools for the creation of everything from audio files to blogs. The advice is found in the article ‘Creating Multimedia with Free Software’ by Canadian Video resources can be found at http://www.youtube.com/user/WACCglobal; photos at http://www.flickr.com/photos/wacccongress2008 and print at http://www.waccglobal.info.

These resources are intended for the use of communicators, peace communication advocates, educators, faith-based groups and students of communication and human rights worldwide. They can be used freely if attributed to the author, photographer or producer and to the WACC.
Communication for Peace Award

Amy Goodman (photo right) of DemocracyNow! was given WACC’s Communication for Peace Award 2008. Unable to attend Congress, she filmed an interview in New York with WACC General Secretary Randy Naylor. Details of her work can be found at www.democracynow.org

INTERVIEWER: Amy Goodman, we’re fascinated by the work which you have accomplished in your life. What is it about war? You’re certainly recognized as a journalist that has covered a lot of war activities and presented those to us. What is it that motivates you to cover that?

AMY: I see the media as a great force for peace in the world. Unfortunately, it has been misused; it has been abused; it has been manipulated. We need a media that builds bridges, doesn’t advocate for the bombing of bridges. We need a media that is a forum for people to speak for themselves, or we tell their stories until they can tell their own. That is a media that builds understanding between communities, a media that, when someone is blacklisted, their voice can be heard; when someone is imprisoned, their story can be told; when someone is sick, we can talk about the circumstances of their sickness and they can express how they feel.

The power of radio and television is that people can control their own images, their own stories. Unless you get what we have in the United States – which is on all of the networks – the small circle of pundits who know so little about so much, explaining the world to us and getting it so wrong. That has to be challenged. That is an abuse of the air waves, and the air waves are a national treasure.

INTERVIEWER: Can you give us a story of what you’ve covered that is an illustration for you of how peace is possible?

AMY: I mean, just broadening the discussion. In the United States, the discussion is determined by the spectrum of opinion between the Democrats and the Republicans, and often, that’s nil: there is no difference. For example – not to say they don’t represent different points of view on certain issues – in the lead-up to the invasion, the four nightly newscasts were studied: NBC Evening News, ABC Evening News, CBS Evening News and the Public Broadcasting Evening Newscast. In the month before the invasion of Iraq in March 2003 in that two-week period in February when Colin Powell gave his push for war at the UN – he was U.S. Secretary of State; it was February 5th, 2003 – there were 393 interviews done around war on the four major nightly networks. 393 interviews ... only three were with anti-war leaders.

That is no longer a mainstream media; that’s an extreme media, beating the drums for war. Because those who are opposed to war, those who are opposed to torture are not a fringe
minority, they are not a silent majority, but they are the silenced majority, silenced by the corporate media ... which is why we have to take it back.

INTERVIEWER: Three voices in support of peace. That’s a lonely number when you compare it with 390 that are supporting war. What motivates you to be part of that minority?

AMY: I don’t think it is a minority. For the corporate media, those voices are in the tiny minority, but in this country, it really is the majority. And I think it’s very important – especially for people in other parts of the world – to see a different image of America projected than what is projected through that corporate lens. That’s what’s so critical. I mean, the power of the individual voice, pure, just being heard on television or radio ... I think of a little boy named Kevin who was Iranian. His story is probably very well known in Canada, hardly known in the United States. We live in a globalized world, yet we are so isolated when it comes to getting information. Right? His family had applied for political asylum in Canada – an Iranian family – but they were denied, and they were sent back to Iran and the parents were imprisoned.

And then they tried to get into Canada again, flying over the United States. And there was some circumstance on the plane ... someone had a heart attack, and they ended up landing in Puerto Rico to download this person. And because they didn’t have visas for the United States – they were never planning to come here – they ended up being put in a detention camp in Texas. Here was this family with this little boy, and we were able to get through – on DemocracyNow! – through the prison to the dad to talk to him about what was the situation. And then I asked to speak to Kevin. And, he was nine years old, and he came on the phone, and I asked him what his feelings were. And he said he wanted to be free; he wanted to go home, to Canada; he wanted to go to school.

And I think those simple sentences just reverberated around the world. In the United States, the people who listened to and watched DemocracyNow! got to experience this little boy – the essence of him – what it meant to be free. But in Canada, the audiotape, the video was picked up, and it was headlines in Canada, it was played all over. Ultimately, the Canadian government allowed the family to come back to Canada. And I think the purity of that voice ... uninhibited, unfettered, un-embedded ... opened the door for that. And that’s what media should be. Media should be liberating.

That is the power of an independent media. I recently was covering the Democratic and Republican Conventions, in Denver and then in St. Paul, Minnesota, the Republicans. And on the first day of the Republican Convention, I was on the floor of the Convention, interviewing the delegates from the hottest state – that’s Alaska! And then I was heading over to the Minnesota delegation, and I got a call from one of our producers that two of our other producers – Sharif Abdel Kouddous and Nicole – were being arrested in downtown St. Paul when they were trying to videotape protests. So, I raced with my cameramen through the streets of St. Paul to where they were. It was a big parking lot, and the riot police were lined up. They had totally contained whatever the situation had been before.

A lot of people were arrested behind the line, and I went up to them. I had my credentials around my neck, and I told the police I wanted to speak to the commanding officer [that] I was an accredited journalist, they were accredited, and we needed our producers released. And they ripped me through the line, and then they handcuffed me – the rigid plastic handcuffs that dig into your wrists – they twisted my arms behind my back, threw me up against the wall, then made me sit on the ground. I kept saying, ‘We are journalists. You don’t want to do this. You have to free us.’

And then I demanded to see our reporters because I heard that they were hurt as well as arrested. I saw Sharif across the parking lot, and he was standing there, arms behind his back, handcuffed, his credentials dangling from his neck. They finally brought me over to him. We were both standing there. Again, I was proclaiming loudly that we were journalists. You could see the credentials around our neck. And
so, the Secret Service came over and ripped the credentials from around my neck, took them off of Sharif, and then I was put into the Police Wagon. And there Nicole was, with her credentials around her neck. Now, the videotape of my arrest was shown close to a million ... was viewed close to a million times on U-Tube; it's astounding ... during the Republican National Convention, the most-watched U-Tube video.

It was amazing – just a few seconds – but the effect that had. And then the videotape that Nicole took of her own violent arrest. She hadn't gone to do that; she had gone to videotape what was happening on the streets. But, as the riot police came at her and she kept her camera up, showing her credentials, the police are yelling, 'Face on the ground! Face on the ground!' This is about 30 seconds! And she is saying, 'Press! Press!' And they take her down between the cars; they've got their boot or knee on her back, her face is in the ground, they're pulling on her leg so it bloodies her face. What's the first thing they do? They pull the battery from her camera. But, it is chilling to hear her scream as she goes down. Now, if a woman is taken down – or any person – between two parked cars by two men, you'd hope a police officer would be there to arrest the assailants. Unfortunately, it was the police who were the assailants, and they were arresting their victim.

When you attack, when you ban, when you arrest journalists, you're closing the eyes and ears of a democratic society. You are endangering a democratic society. There's a reason why our profession, journalism, is the only one explicitly protected by the U.S. Constitution: we're supposed to be the check and balance on power. And when that's threatened, we're all threatened. They arrested the victims; they arrested Sharif and Nicole. But, it is chilling to hear her scream as she goes down. Now, if a woman is taken down – or any person – between two parked cars by two men, you'd hope a police officer would be there to arrest the assailants. Unfortunately, it was the police who were the assailants, and they were arresting their victim.

And we weren't the only journalists. Over 40 journalists were arrested in the Republican National Convention week in St. Paul. In fact, over 800 people were arrested. The next day, I went off to the Police Press Conference. The police chief of St. Paul, John Harrington, was holding forth. And I asked him what has he instructed the police department, the police, to do about journalists? How does he expect us to operate in this environment. And he said, ‘We could embed with a mobile field force, the police mobile field force’.

Now, I mean, when you think about how profound this point is, how problematic this is ... I think embedding process has brought us to an all-time low, that reporters embedding in the front lines of troops in Iraq that is bringing you only one perspective ... when you're being fed by them, protected by them, you're sleeping with them ... you get one perspective. What about embedding in Iraqi communities and Iraqi hospitals and the peace movement around the world? But now, this extremely problematic form of witness is being used as a model for the cities of this country to embed with the police forces of our country. That has to be challenged. We have to remain independent.

‘DemocracyNow!’ is a daily, grassroots, global, un-embedded, independent, international investigative news hour. Our motto is to be ‘the exception to the rulers’. And that should not just be our motto; it should be the motto of all the media. We need a media that covers power, not covers for power. We need a media that is the Fourth Estate, not for the state. And we need a media that covers the movements that create static and make history.

INTERVIEWER: And therefore, we need a media that creates peace.

AMY: I think the media is a tremendous force for peace. Because, when you can hear and watch someone speaking for themselves, you can bridge divides between communities. You don't have to agree with what you hear or watch, but you hear where someone is coming from. You can identify at least ... you can understand why they think the way they do. And that is a force for peace.
Closing Address: Celebrating WACC

Randy Naylor

Congress is over. We traveled far to get to Cape Town and we have traveled far throughout this week. We will soon travel far to return home. When we reach our homes people will ask us questions: Did you enjoy your trip? How was the weather? How was the food? Were the people friendly? Your boss will probably add: Did you learn anything? Almost everyone will ask: Would you go back again?

While you might return to Cape Town, someday, you will not be able to return to Congress 2008. It is a journey completed. So, perhaps, as you pack your suitcase tonight, in addition to packing your clothes and souvenirs, you might carefully pack Congress 2008.

Our hope is that Congress 2008 will be part of your continuing journey, part of your continuing life story. For it is not so much what we did this week, but what you will do next week, and the week after that, and for the rest of your lives that will determine whether or not this week was worthwhile.

I read recently that the first record of war was written in 2,700 BC. That is nearly five thousand years ago! We know that war is one of the favourite topics of news journalists even today. So if we have had 5,000 years experience of writing stories about war, maybe it is time we began to focus on writing about peace. Congress 2008 is dedicated to storytelling that advocates for, supports the development of, and will accept nothing less than peace in this world.

When asked to turn stones into bread, Jesus quoted Deuteronomy and said: ‘It takes more than bread to stay alive. It takes a steady stream of words from God’s mouth.’ We are people of the Word and as such we are called to become part of that steady stream of words from God’s mouth. And time and time again we read in our scriptures that the purpose of that word is peace – peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you, said the man we celebrate and sing about as wonderful counselor, the Lord God almighty, the Prince of Peace.

War has had enough airtime. War has had enough time to serve as the easy solution to the world’s problems. It is time we gave peace a chance. If we know our Bible we know that the faithful writers and editors and interpreters of scripture are not talking about an easy peace, but a peace that requires struggle, a peace that insists on justice, a peace that builds viable communities where all are welcome, all are fed, all are loved, all are respected, all are allowed to develop and blossom as a person and community of God. As Archbishop Tutu reminded us, all does mean all.

War demands sacrifice and our churches are often filled with tributes to those who made the great sacrifice in defence of their country. If we emphasize such attributes of war alone, however, we miss the central message of the Christian faith. We are not a people saved because of our sacrifices; we are a people made whole by grace, by resurrection. We are a resurrection people.

Richard Holloway in his book *Doubts and Loves: What is Left of Christianity*, reminds us that resurrection is ‘the refusal to be imprisoned any longer by history and its long hatreds; it is the determination to take the first step out of the tomb.’ That idea was present when we visited Robben Island and a former prisoner described the terrible conditions under which prisoners lived and the dehumanizing treatment they received.

He went on to tell us that their elders taught them that they must not hate their jailers if they hoped to live in peace and as new people when at some point in the future the system of oppression would be defeated and their liberty restored. We see, then, what it means to live as a resurrection person. Robben Island is a stun-
ning example of how people can choose courage over fear, love over hatred, peace over violence, and life over death.

We can choose to live as a people of the resurrection now, not someday. To refuse to accept the world as we find it, to transform our work into living art that points the way to peace, is what we are meant to do as resurrection people.

So for this past week we have focused on communication rights; on media and gender justice; on power conflicts; and on new communication and information technologies – all, all with our vision clearly fixed on the promise of peace.

We have seen in documentaries and films, we have heard in stories, we have witness in lives transformed, that communication is possible, that peace is possible and that communica-
tion is peace. That is not a circular argument, it is something which, in the face of reality might even be considered foolhardy, we simply, bravely, affirm as our conviction: Communication is Peace.

Over and over again this week we have received testimonies from individuals and communities. Common to all these testimonies is the one theme, that these are stories of resurrection people, these are ‘life people’ who again and again have struggled in the face of death of all kinds – indignity, stigmatization, hunger, violence, rape, despair, and physical death itself – yet they have simply rejected that death, for theirs is a project of life.

We are a people of the Word, and biblically that Word is always an active word, one which speaks, weeps, challenges, confronts, heals, restores, cries out in anger, sings out in hope. As we see in the parables of Jesus, the Word is not for the past, nor for the future, the Word is firmly planted in the present, taking root in people’s lives and transforming those lives even now. This is the world of WACC – to believe in the power of the Word so strongly that we are prepared to be instruments of the Word that lives so that society might be transformed.

We should not expect to be recognized for our work. The truth is, when communicators do their job well, no one is aware of who created the work, nor how the work itself was achieved. They only recognize and respond to the message. We ignore the technicians who make microphones work and videos run on time; we ignore the skills of writers and editors; we miss the technological skill behind a photo or painting or cartoon that touches our lives.

We only become aware of them when the technology, whatever it may be, fails them! It is the message that touches lives, it is the content and the integrity with which that content is delivered that offers the promise of life. It is the Word made flesh through our keyboards, pencils, pastels, lenses, tapes, discs, and memory-sticks that holds the promise of transformed lives.

As people of faith, dedicating ourselves to the challenges of communication, we need to be as expert as possible in managing the contemporary skills and tools of our craft; but as peo-
ple of faith we know that it is the message that
counts, it is the message that inspires, it is the
message that changes lives.

We have a long history in WACC of under-
standing communication as a faithful means to
bring about social change, and we will continue
to do that. Despite the demands of our day to
produce measurable outcomes and definable
goals, ultimately we will not be judged by our
success in this work, we will be judged by our
faithfulness in this work, for we are not called
to be successful, we are called to be faithful.

Obviously communication is central to our
work, it is our mandate, it is our passion. Over
the next few years we will continue to pursue
such themes as peace, gender and media justice,
poverty, guided increasingly by our understand-
ing of and commitment to communication
rights. We will do so in the midst of uncertain-
ty – certainly we will struggle to have sufficient
adequate funding for our work – but I am
equally convinced that we will do so in a world
that is increasingly in need of, and indeed
anticipating, the kind of vision that we have
heard repeated in the stories of this week: a
vision that restores life.

We will develop new policies and pro-
grammes because of this Congress. You will
make new radio programmes and video pro-
ductions, and author new articles and books,
undertake new research and new efforts in
communication for development. WACC will
walk that path alongside you.

It is not unusual for our children to ask us
immediately upon our return home: What did
you bring us? I pray that when I next see my
grandchildren they will know that not only did
I bring them a T-shirt, but that I brought them
once again my unconditional love.

More than that, and in common with all of
you, I pray that someday they will recognize
that the greatest gift I brought into their lives
was my commitment to a world where they
and their children and their grandchildren
might live with a deep love for one another,
with respect for all creation, and in a world
that understands and lives the promise of
peace.

Journey well my friends. You are not alone.
You live in God’s world. ■

DECLARATION
DECLARACIÓN
DÉCLARATION

Communicating people’s stories builds peace
The World Association for Christian
Communication’s congress ‘Communication is
Peace: Building Viable Communities’ attracted
some 300 communication and media profes-
sionals from 73 countries. It took place 6 to 10
October 2008 in Cape Town, South Africa, a
country that is still wrestling with the conse-
quences of apartheid. Participants, both reli-
gious and secular, worked on ways to build
peaceful societies based on justice and human
dignity.

Enabling people to tell their stories and
advocating for those stories to be heard are
vital ways to overcome injustice and inequality.
A courageous woman living in the township of
Gugulethu told participants, ‘I am HIV posi-
tive.’ A former political prisoner on Robben
Island spoke of the importance of collective
memory and reconciliation. Such stories inspire
and motivate change, but telling the stories can
be difficult and dangerous.

Communication can help overcome all
forms of inequality and injustice that give rise
to conflict and violence. Such communication
for conflict transformation and building a cul-
ture of peace involves dialogue for mutual
understanding. In many parts of the world,
such as the Middle East, communicating is lit-
early a life and death issue.

There can be no peace without justice and
no real development without peace. Building
and maintaining peace in its broadest sense
requires inclusive, participatory communica-
tion. For this reason, promoting and protecting
communication rights for all are crucial to
building cultures of peace and advancing peo-
ple-centred sustainable development.

Communicators everywhere need to pro-
mote and respect pluralism, cultural diversity
and gender equality as the foundations of a culture of peace in which the voices of the marginalised and vulnerable must be heard.

Many people of faith are committed to building peaceful and viable communities, while aware that many conflicts have religious origins and dimensions. Therefore, participants added their voices to the World Council of Churches and others calling for 2011-2020 to be designated by the United Nations as the ‘Decade of Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace.’ In doing so, participants recognised the vital need to include communication for all as one of the Decade’s most urgent aims.

‘Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.’

Statement of participants at Congress 2008 organised by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC). 10 October 2008, Cape Town, South Africa

necesitan, en todas partes, promover y respetar el pluralismo, la diversidad cultural y la equidad de género, como los fundamentos de una cultura de paz en la cual las voces de las y los marginalizados y vulnerables deben ser oídas.

Muchas personas de fe tienen el compromiso de construir comunidades pacíficas y viables, aunque tienen conciencia que muchos conflictos tienen dimensiones y orígenes religiosos. Por consiguiente, los y las participantes sumaron sus voces a las del Consejo Mundial de Iglesias y otros pidiendo que las Naciones Unidas designen la década del 2011 al 2020 como la Década del Diálogo Interreligioso y la Cooperación para la paz. Al hacer esto, los y las participantes reconocen la necesidad vital de incluir a la comunicación para todos y todas como una de las metas más urgentes de la Década.

‘Bienaventurados los hacedores de la paz: pues serán llamados hijos de Dios.’

Declaración de los y las participantes al Congreso 2008 organizado por la Asociación Mundial para la Comunicación Cristiana (WACC). 10 de octubre de 2008, Ciudad del Cabo, Sudáfrica.

Raconter l’histoire des gens pour bâtir la paix
Le Congrès de l’Association mondiale pour la communication chrétienne, qui avait pour thème « La communication, c’est la paix : bâtir des communautés durables », a attiré plus de 300 professionnels des médias et de la communication, en provenance de 73 pays. Il s’est déroulé du 6 au 10 octobre, dans la ville du Cap, en Afrique du Sud, un pays encore aux prises avec les conséquences de l’apartheid. Les participants, à la fois religieux et laïques, ont travaillé sur des méthodes pour bâtir des sociétés pacifiques basées sur la justice et la dignité humaine.

Pour surmonter la justice et les inégalités, l’une des méthodes fondamentales est de permettre aux gens de raconter leur histoire et de s’assurer qu’elle soit entendue. Une habitante courageuse du township de Gugulethu a annoncé aux participants qu’elle était séropositive. Un ancien prisonnier politique de Roben Island a parlé de l’importance de la mémoire collective et de la réconciliation. Ces histoires sont une source d’inspiration qui provoque des changements, mais il est parfois difficile et dangereux de raconter son histoire.

La communication peut aider à surmonter toutes les formes d’inégalités et d’injustices qui génèrent conflits et violence. Si l’on souhaite transformer les conflits et bâtir une culture de paix, il faut établir un dialogue favorisant la compréhension mutuelle. Dans de nombreuses régions du monde, comme au Moyen-Orient, la communication est véritablement une question de vie ou de mort.

Il ne peut y avoir de paix sans justice, ni de véritable développement sans paix. Pour bâtir et maintenir la paix dans son sens le plus large, il faut une communication inclusive et participative. C’est la raison pour laquelle il est essentiel de promouvoir et de protéger les droits à la communication pour tous si l’on veut bâtir des cultures de paix et favoriser un développement durable axé sur la personne.

Les communicateurs du monde entier doivent promouvoir et respecter le pluralisme, la diversité culturelle et l’égalité des sexes comme les fondements d’une culture de paix dans laquelle les voix des marginaux et des personnes vulnérables doivent être entendues.

Même s’ils savent que de nombreux conflits ont une origine ou une dimension religieuse, beaucoup de croyants se sont engagés à bâtir des communautés pacifiques et durables. Les participants ont donc apporté leurs voix au Conseil oecuménique des Églises et à ceux qui réclament que la décennie 2011-2020 soit désignée par les Nations Unies comme la « Décennie de la coopération et du dialogue interreligieux ». Ce faisant, les participants ont reconnu le besoin fondamental d’inclure la communication pour tous comme l’un des objectifs les plus urgents de la Décennie.

« Heureux les pacifiques, car ils seront appelés enfants de Dieu ».

Déclaration des participants au Congrès 2008, organisé par l’Association mondiale pour la communication chrétienne (WACC). Le Cap, Afrique du Sud, 10 octobre 2008
ON THE PAGE...


Investigative journalist Amy Goodman (USA) is known for her focus on telling the untold stories, those which ‘corporate media’ as she calls them, will not cover. In promoting an interview with Goodman on its programme ‘Making Contact’, the National Public Radio said, ‘There are countless stories around the world that could have the potential of shaping public opinion on key issues if those stories were just given access to the airwaves and the establishment press. One journalist who has consistently brought the untold stories to a national audience is Amy Goodman, host of Pacifica Radio’s daily program ‘Democracy Now!’

Goodman covers war, human rights abuses and politics with a focus on telling the stories that ‘big media’ (major television networks, most large-market newspapers and privately-owned radio stations) don’t tell. She wants the public to have access to the information they need in order to make informed decisions when faced with political choices and believes that more and more often, information is being withheld from the public. She sees the range of opinions, key data, and news stories becoming more restricted. Corporate media, she believes, are so controlled by political and financial constraints that, increasingly, vital information only reaches the public through independent media such as ‘Democracy Now!’ and outlets such as blogs, websites, newsletters, community radio or local voices.

It would be easy to be overwhelmed with the statistics Goodman cites in her interviews, radio programme, and books about how few media outlets give balanced information on the war in Iraq, poverty, racial profiling and rights abuses in the USA. But Goodman refuses to let us be overwhelmed. Instead, with her latest book, co-authored with her brother David, she has sought examples of how information can become public despite attempts by officials to silence, discredit or diffuse criticism and uncomfortable facts. Amy and David believe that actions speak loudly and can break through barriers of officially-imposed silence. Appropriately then, Standing Up to the Madness: Ordinary Heroes in Extraordinary Times, is about individuals or small groups of people who have spoken loudly through courageous and personally-risky acts of resistance in the face of attempts to silence them.

Goodman’s persistent advocacy for the right to communicate has made her a high-profile journalist and earned her prestigious journalism awards including the Robert F. Kennedy Prize for International Reporting. Yet, she is an independent journalist, determined not to become enmeshed in big media broadcasting and publishing which she believes so often stifles or distorts stories of dissent in the USA. Instead, she brings those untold stories to the public through her daily radio programme, ‘Democracy Now!’ on the Pacifica Radio Network; a weekly column ‘Breaking the Sound Barriers’ for King Features Syndicate; and books. To date, Amy Goodman and her brother David Goodman, have published three New York Times best-sellers.

Listening to Goodman on the radio is a bit like listening to a hybrid of the high-voltage popular television celebrity programme ‘Entertainment Tonight’ and the intelligence of the ‘McNeil Lehrer Hour’, a television news and current affairs programme known for its insightful, well-researched commentary which ran on the Public Broadcast Service (PBS) in the USA from 1983 - 1995.

The latest book by Amy and David Goodman has all the freshness and urgency of the ‘Democracy Now!’ radio broadcasts. This is both a strength and a weakness in Standing Up...
to the Madness: Ordinary Heroes in Extraordinary Times. On the one hand, the style is engaging. The Goodmans are gifted story tellers and bring each person they interview to life, making the challenge each faces, vivid and urgent. The drama of how each confronts their situation and overcomes it reads like the plot for a feature film.

On the other hand, the Goodmans write like Americans (of the USA variety). All the superlatives common to US public discourse are there. Every issue, problem or solution they describe is the ‘best, biggest, greatest, worst’. This addiction to hyperbole is both a stylistic problem and one which reduces the credibility of the Goodmans’ arguments at times. It is also revealing of a problem in the collective psyche of the USA. Everything is absolute. On the political scene, this leaves little room for nuance, hesitation or uncertainty and virtually no place for multiple perspectives.

In decrying what happens when this narrow ‘if-you’re-not-with-us-you’re-against-us’ attitude, the Goodmans themselves sometimes fall victim to the same tendency. Yet, clearly if you are to grab the attention of the US public today, you must deal in superlatives. Hyperbole sells in the USA. The Goodmans have an important message to get out. This may be what it takes.

The book is true to its title. The Goodmans have gathered stories of ordinary people doing extraordinary things and have grouped them into four groups of what could be called ‘case stories’, each thematically linked: confronting abusive regulations; saving science from censorship; students confronting unfair systems; and soldiers resisting wars they believe are unjustified.

Each section begins with the story of a ‘turning point’, a moment in history where an individual took a stand, drew attention to injustice and changed the course of history. These are iconic events such as the story of Rosa Parks, the African American seamstress, who refused to give up her seat in a segregated bus in Montgomery at the end of a long work day. Her action sparked a year-long boycott by African-Americans of public transit in that city which crippled white businesses. Eventually, the US Supreme Court ruled that running segregated buses was unconstitutional. Goodman writes, ‘Parks’ action was the spark that ignited the American Civil Rights Movement.’

Parks was prepared for that moment of defiance on the bus by her involvement in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). But corporate media, say the Goodmans, published stories at the time of her death in 2005 which said that she ‘was just too tired to give up her seat.’ How corporate media misrepresent the depth and breadth of the forces of dissent in the US is central theme of the book. There are many, many people standing up to the mad decisions and policies of politicians and business people in the USA today. But their stories are not being heard. The Goodmans’ book is about making sure they will be.

The stories grouped under each theme tell of the extent to which authorities will go to silence voices of dissent or to marginalize people who point to injustice in their community or unethical practices in their profession.

In New Orleans, a former Black Panther Party leader (a group of African-American political activists from the 1960s) is organizing people to rebuild the city’s low-income neighbourhoods that are being ignored by civil and federal authorities whose attention is focused on restoring tourist areas rather than building homes for the African-Americans who lost all they had when Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005.

In Connecticut, a small group of librarians refused to co-operate with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and would not be intimidated when they were then placed under a ‘gag order’ (denied the right to speak). They had been asked to hand over records of what library patrons were reading. When the librarians said no, they were told by the FBI agents that if they even revealed the fact they had been asked to hand over the records, they could be jailed for five years. This was done under the auspices of the Patriot Act which allows for infringing and curtailing of the rights ensured by the American Constitution in the First Amendment which guarantees freedom of speech and of the press. The Amendment
includes the provision for restricting this right for reasons of protecting the national interest and, in post-911 USA, this provision has been invoked frequently to block access to information.

The librarians eventually won a partial victory and the gag order was lifted but not until the Senate had voted to extend the Patriot Act beyond its initial end date - a decision justified in part by the claim that no substantial USA Patriot Act civil liberties violations had been recorded. No wonder. Those who were claiming their rights had been infringed had been gagged. Now, however, the librarians are speaking out loudly and wherever invited about how their civil rights were denied under the terms of the Patriot Act.

The Goodmans write in the introduction to their book that ‘taken together, these stories reveal a new alignment of power. Rather than dividing us, the Bush administration has united the people against all those who would trample hard-won liberties in pursuit of their own power and profit.’ To that point, their argument is sustainable, in light of the stories gathered in the book. But when they go on to say that ‘these activists are role models for others concerned about the fate of the world’, they reveal a cultural blind spot. Indeed, what makes their book less than universal is its relentless, yet one suspects, unintentional, ‘American tone’ (‘American’ meaning the citizens of the USA) and the authors’ belief in the power of an individual to make a difference.

This belief in individualism is a residue of the early days of white settlement in the USA where rugged loners, such as cowboys, determined their own fate and that of others around them. The myth of the heroic individual persists as a powerful image into 21st century USA. To some extent, this is a model which also resonates for people in other western-style democracies, though there is no other country which has as fully embraced the notion of the ‘solo agent of transformation’ as the USA. But this notion is one which is virtually incomprehensible in many other political and cultural settings in the world beyond western Europe and North America.

The story which begins and ends the Goodmans’ book tells of a group of German students and professors at the University of Munich in 1942, known as the White Rose, who confronted Nazi oppression by publishing and distributing in secret a series of leaflets revealing what the Nazis were doing. The Goodmans say of the group, ‘They wanted to ensure Germans could never say that they didn’t know what was happening in their name.’ Three devout Christians, two students and a professor, were captured distributing the leaflets, tried and beheaded. Their crime? They belonged to a group which had written ‘We will not be silent. We are your guilty conscience. The White Rose will not leave you in peace.’

The people chronicled in the Goodmans’ book will not be quiet either. They insist on making sure that Americans in the USA know what is being done in their name. It is a huge challenge. But the opening quote attributed to Mahatma Gandhi reflects the Goodmans’ spirit. ‘First they ignore you. Then they laugh at you. Next they fight you. Then you win.’

Reviewed by Kristine Greenaway
Communication rights and the ever more urgent need to construct a culture of peace are central to a vision of a world in which universal human values displace the accumulated weight of history’s tyrannies.


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CAD20 including packaging and postage

‘Communication is similar to the nervous system of the human body. It is maintained by a multitude of signals originating from all parts of the body. If the nervous system or the immune system breaks down, the well being of the entire body is in jeopardy. Similarly, no modern democracy can exist, let alone flourish, without a certain level of information and participation. It is thus the very body politic that depends on the right to communicate.’

Michael Traber