

EDITORIAL

The relationship between conflict and natural resources from the perspective of peace research and conflict transformation

Rafael Grasa

President of the International Catalan Institute for Peace



From the point of view of peace research and conflict transformation, the relationship between violent conflict and the environment has been a frequent issue for many years. In fact, very often we hear speak of “environmental conflict” in at least two different ways. The first way is to refer to conflict related with an environmental agenda (dumping grounds, natural resources, administration of water, waste management, climate change, etc.), in other words, social conflict, often arising from incompatibilities or antagonism of a distributive nature, which affect environmental assets or issues. The second way, in which the issue has appeared in more recent times, is the use of the expression to refer to recent conflicts of an environmental nature, which require specific tools for their analysis and intervention,

as is the case with biopiracy or, within the context of this current issue of the magazine, conflict associated with extractive industries.

Currently, the dominating position, the mainstream if you like, is the former: environmental conflicts are a specific type of social conflict to which the same tools for analysis and intervention must be applied (administration, resolution and transformation) as with other conflicts. It is true to say that these conflicts have certain specifications, which affect the motivations and interests of the stakeholders involved, the reasons for incompatibility and the behavior of the stakeholders throughout the process of the conflict.

Some have even gone so far as to refer to them as socio-environmental conflicts, given that the social and environmental causes and explanations are always inseparably linked and commonplace in developed societies. A recent development which allows a better understanding of the cases which are presented to us at the magazine is that of collaboration between experts in conflict transformation and those who are extremely familiar with specific socio-environmental conflict. The following findings, tool-kits and analysis guidelines based on clear assumptions can be summarized in the four points below:

1. Conflict should always be interpreted as a dynamic situation.
2. Socio-environmental conflict, given the overlapping social and environmental stakeholders, accelerate and exasperate its dynamic nature, increasing the potential for polarization and confrontation, a fact that almost always means there is a perception of grievance, injustice, of an unresolved distributive problem hanging over some of the stakeholders at odds.
3. “Intractable” socio-environmental conflict, in other words, those resistant to administration and resolution, often exasperate this dynamism and polarization; despite conflict evolution, the confronted parties constantly feel a sense that the antagonism is total, unsolvable and permanent.
4. The reason being, the framework of stereotyped vision of the conflict, which ultimately condition the way that the issues on the agenda are perceived, their eventual fair and acceptable solution, if we are to seek a solution, demands reframing our understanding of the situation, calling for a change in how we perceive the predicament. Alternatively, any mutually agreeable solution becomes an unviable option.

A good example of this approach is precisely that concerning one of the most prevalent sources of socio-environmental conflict in recent years, which furnishes a significant number of violent examples for analysis. We are referring here to natural resource extractive industries. The expansion of extractive industries to countries in the southern hemisphere has given rise to a myriad of socio-environmental conflicts. In Africa, for example, we can find conflict associated with contamination, as in the case with those analysed herein derived from the extraction of oil in the Niger Delta or the contamination, even though to a lesser degree, resulting from mining in Tanzania. Nevertheless, we can also find conflict associated with degradation of vital natural supplies which give rise to forced migration of peoples, such as the case in Botswana, Ghana, Namibia and Tanzania. In Asia, we discover conflict in several areas where extractive activities are taking place, such as Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines or Thailand, and even, transnational armed conflict as is the case in India and resulting from gold mining.

In the case of Latin America, conflict has also become more frequent in areas where extractive activities are in operation resulting in confrontation between local communities and the state or the companies engaging in extraction, as a result of land use, contamination or distribution of income derived from the exploitation of resources. Therefore, it would be well worth reflecting on how to analyse, prevent and manage the conflict settings resulting from the extraction, administration and use of natural resources.

We can draw on the situation in Latin America to define several considerations regarding the causes and some lessons learned. The proliferation of socio-environmental conflict in Latin America can be explained by four associated causes. Firstly, due to the consolidation of an export model affecting the primary sector and which has generated a new cycle of geographic expansion of extractive projects, forging new frontiers for extraction. To serve as an example, in Peru, 65 blocks, or areas rich in oil and gas, cover more than 70% of the country's Amazonian territory. Many of these so-called blocks are located in areas belonging to indigenous peoples or considered protected zones. In Bolivia, due to the country's potential wealth of oil and gas resources, 55% of the territory has been earmarked for exploration and eventual exploitation by the state-owned company. Secondly, extractive activity is no longer seen as a source of employment in the region, especially in the case of new extractive projects, which hire very little local labour. Witnessing the short-term income dry up has strengthened the feeling of the importance of environmental degradation. In other words, the conflicts have gone from being confrontations over labour issues to becoming focused on environmental concerns. Thirdly, distribution problems are becoming more important and exasperating polarisation, to such a degree that disagreement over the distribution and use of income resulting from extractive activity are pitting the companies involved against central government, local administrations and departments and ultimately local communities and landowners. And fourthly, many of these conflicts are escalating and increase in complexity as a result of weak governance, such as the violence involved when projects get underway, corruption, lack of transparency and even noncompliance with agreements in force.

All of this, based on numerous examples allows us to draw several conclusions. Firstly, conflicts have to be prevented. This requires reinforcing the mechanisms for planning and strengthening rural development and implementing policy aimed at fostering participation in the decision making process. Secondly, the only way to manage conflicts, controlling an escalation to violence while at the same time allowing for the possibility of researching resolutions which enable stakeholders to transform the conflict, is to provide support for negotiation processes and transparent dialogue. And thirdly, the experience of recent years has shown that fortunately, there are positive examples of how stakeholders have managed to transform conflict while at the same time, transforming extractive activity.

In other words, it is vital to maintain structural social problems at the forefront of the debate, such as chronic inequality and marginalisation which create a breeding ground for the proliferation of conflictive and polarized situations in the context of extractive industry expansion. Social aspects exasperate the impact of the environmental dimensions.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	1	INTERVIEW	13
IN DEPTH	3	PLATFORM	15
INTRODUCTION	3	Peace and constitutions	15
CENTRAL ARTICLES	4	Syria: Nonviolence in war time	16
Great Lakes Region: Conflicts for resources	4	RECOMMENDATIONS	18
The environmental and social impact of shell's operations in nigeria	5	NEWS	20
The price of wealth. The Chevron Texaco Case	6	ICIP News	20
Water, an obstacle to peace in Palestine?	8	International News	21
Exploration and extraction of natural resources endangers indigenous peoples	9		
Violence and environmental conflicts, the tragedy of Chocó	10		
FINDING OUT MORE	11		

IN DEPTH

INTRODUCTION

Conflicts for Resources

International Catalan Institute for Peace

INTERNATIONAL
CATALAN
INSTITUTE

FOR PEACE

This Peace in Progress issue is dedicated to the relation between natural resources and the violent conflicts that these can generate. When we think of the consequences of the wars we tend to mainly think in terms of human beings. There is no doubt that these are the most relevant casualties. But the selection of articles of this number show the importance of other awful consequences (social, environmental, cultural... etc). The readings allow us to deepen into the different aspects in which violent conflicts and natural resources relate.

Jordi Noè, member of AlterNativa Intercanvi amb Pobles Indígenes, writes "Exploration and extraction of natural resources endangers indigenous peoples" and he explains how the extractive companies and the governments often perform in ways that destroy an important part of the etnocultural diversity of the planet.

Moreover we have decided to approach these problems on a case to case basis. That's why we have two articles on Africa, two on Latin America and another one on the Middle East. Jordi Palou, Conflict Mediator and Lawyer at the International Criminal Court, and Antoni Pigrau, Professor of Public International Law and Director of the CEDAT, present examples of the doom of natural resources for some territories like Great Lakes region and Nigeria, their articles are titled "Great Lakes Region: Conflicts for resources" and "The environmental and social impact of shell's operations in Nigeria". Ferran Izquierdo, International Relations Lecturer at UAB, proposes us to examine the Israel-Palestine conflict from the water perspective with his article titled "Water. An obstacle for the peace in Palestine?". Edwin Novoa Álvarez, lawyer and teacher of the National University of Colombia, writes "Violence and environmental conflicts, the tragedy of the Chocó," about the case of Colombia. The attorney of the Unión de afectados por Texaco, Pablo Fajardo writes the article "The price of the wealth", which is focused in the consequences of the performance of this company in Ecuador.

A part of these central articles, on this issue you can read the interview to Joan Martínez-Alier, professor of the UAB, pioneer on political ecology thought and founder and director of the academic magazine "Ecología Política".

To end the central part of the magazine we maintain the section "Finding out More" with a good bunch of resources, of internet as well as from other sources, to deepen into the knowledge of conflicts for resources.

Finally in the Platform section we can enjoy two current and valuable reflections. Christophe Barbey, lawyer and peace worker, writes "Peace and Constitutions", in it he explains the way peace can be included in the constitutional texts. He emphasizes that such inclusion can have several social, educational, political consequences... The other article, written by Blanca Camps, political scientist specialized in Middle East and North Africa, titles "Syria: Nonviolence in times of war" and helps a greater visibility of nonviolent movements of resistance in Syria, as well as complaining that such invisibility does not help to the transformation of the conflict, nor it helps to allow a full view of the current situation in the country.

ICIP would like to thank all authors for their contributions to this edition of Per la Pau / Peace in Progress.

CENTRAL ARTICLES

Great Lakes Region: Conflicts for resources

Jordi Palou i Loverdos

Conflict Mediator and Lawyer at the International Criminal Court



Many international experts explain the armed conflicts in the Great Lakes region as conflicts of a tribal nature between ethnicities that loathe each other, with little or accidental external or international intervention. On in-depth examination of these violent conflicts, old human passions may be observed under new forms of war and exploitation. It is no coincidence that eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo – which has been scene of one of the most tragic military conflicts of recent decades – is one of the of the planet's richest areas in terms of valuable natural resources: minerals of vital strategic importance, such as coltan, diamonds, copper, cobalt, gold, tin, zinc, manganese and timber, to name but a few.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 a strategy was drawn up to take control of the most important resources of eastern Zaire using a variety of instruments, including military ones. In achieving these goals it was deemed more appropriate not to do through direct involvement: it was preferable to undertake this in stages, step-by-step. Rwanda was first. As a direct result of the events of 1994 in that country (known as “the” Genocide, when tutsi, hutu and twa community members were violently eliminated), many people abandoned their homes and land for camps for internally displaced persons and more than a million Rwandans – mainly from the Hutu ethnicity – fled their country and established themselves in refugee camps, the great majority of which were in the country then known as Zaire (currently the Democratic Republic of Congo) and other countries bordering Rwanda. The great majority of the refugee camps in Zaire were in the eastern part of the country, many of them in areas that rich with mineral deposits.

Although from that time until the present day – without exception – the Rwandan regime has expressed its concern about the security of its border with the then Zaire, objectively the reality is that control over this strategic area and its valuable mineral resources has proved to be at the heart of two wars that have left a huge number of victims. While some of these have been Rwandans, the majority have been Congolese. The wars have also involved various state actors from Central Africa and their armies, as well as key non-state actors, some military and logistical, some involved in the extraction, transportation and distribution of valuable natural resources. In the years 1996 and 1997, the RPA/FPR (Armée Patriotique Rwandaise/Front Patriotique Rwandais, from now on Rwanda Patriotic Army) proceeded to systematically attack the Hutu refugee camps in the east of the then Zaire, killing hundreds of thousands of Rwandans and Congolese, and organized the pillage of mineral resources such as diamonds, coltan and gold, amongst other things. It set up a complex web of operations, directed by the ‘Congo Desk’, the Directorate of Military Intelligence, the External Security Office (military-intelligence services deployed outside Rwanda), and Rwandan companies aided by multinationals and Western powers, continuing these activities in a second military invasion from 1998 onwards. Massacres and pillage in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo have continued until the present day.

United Nations Secretary-General nominated Panels of Experts and these prepared several conclusive reports showing in detail that it was largely the APR/FPR and the Ugandan army, as well as other military groups, that were responsible for the pillage of strategic minerals during the last two wars: that of 1996-1997, and that which started in 1998 and has still yet to finish.

The first report of the United Nations Panel of Experts states that:

25. The illegal exploitation of resources by Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda took different forms, including confiscation, extraction, forced monopoly and price-fixing. Of these, the first two reached proportions that made the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo a very lucrative business.

26. Illegal exploitation by foreigners aided by the Congolese began with the first “war of liberation” in 1996. The AFDL rebels, backed by Angolan, Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers conquered eastern and south-eastern Zaire. As they were advancing, the then AFDL leader, the late Laurent-Désiré Kabila, signed contracts with a number of foreign companies. Numerous accounts and documents suggest that by 1997 a first wave of “new businessmen” speaking only English, Kinyarwanda and Kiswahili had commenced operations in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Theft of livestock, coffee beans and other resources began to be reported with frequency. By the time the August 1998 war broke out, Rwandans and Ugandans (top officers and their associates) had a strong sense of the potential of the natural resources and their locations in the eastern the Democratic Republic of the Congo. [...]

The experts reports also make it clear that Western multinationals have been responsible for the pillage and illegal exploitation of those resources. These actions have served to finance the war, as well as perpetrating the perpetration of crimes against humanity and systematic human rights violations. Some of these companies are multinationals and others operate at the national and local levels.

Several factors have caused unprecedented humanitarian crises in Central Africa, including: the handling of these wars and violent conflicts by state actors, non-state actors, the international community in general, international institutions, regional institutions, multinational corporations, along with the mercenaries, the plundering on a huge scale, and the international trafficking of various resources and people. The impact of the unstoppable and destructive boomerang that its effects constitute is still very much being felt throughout Africa and, in the context of a globalized world, is expanding beyond the continent's borders.

The environmental and social impact of Shell's operations in Nigeria

Antoni Pigrau

Member of the Governing Board of the ICIP (International Catalan Institute for Peace)



The environmental damage resulting from over fifty years of oil exploration and production in Nigeria, the leading oil producer in Africa, is devastating. The burning of gasses produced during oil production operations, the continued crude oil spillages and the deforestation have also generated an ongoing impact on the health and well-being of those living in the area. A report commissioned by the United Nations Environment Programme in 2011, qualified Ogoniland, in the Niger Delta as the most contaminated area in the world and estimated that it would take between 25 and 30 years' work, with millions in investment to replenish the regions' ecosystem.

Since 1957, Royal Dutch Shell in Nigeria has been one of the leading oil companies in terms of oil exploration and production, operating in Nigeria through its subsidiary, Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC), in collaboration with other companies from the oil sector.

During this long period, Shell has been involved in numerous lawsuits in relation to, not just the environmental consequences of its activities, but also cases resulting from its involvement in infrastructures, financing and logistic support, in events concerning repression carried out by different Nigerian governments aimed at removing opposition to the continued oil exploration and production in the region. The most serious examples of this repression took place during the 1980's and 1990's and targeted the organization led by the opposition Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). In 1994, nine of its members, among whom one was author, Ken Saro Wiwa, were arrested, hastily tried by a special military tribunal, and eventually hanged in 1995.

During this period, the affected communities, with support from organizations such as Environmental Rights Action and Friends of the Earth Nigeria, have filed hundreds of claims with Nigerian courts against Shell and other oil companies especially in relation to oil spillages. Nevertheless, in many of these cases, sentencing has been delayed and adjourned for years and the number of solid judicial sentences leading to economic compensation are few and far between. Hardly any of these address restoration of the environment. For example, in July, 2010, almost ten years after the trial got underway, the Federal Court of Nigeria sentenced Shell Nigeria to pay 100 million dollars in damages to the Ejama-Ebubu Community, and to restore the area to its original condition prior to the disaster for an oil spillage that occurred forty years earlier, in 1970 affecting 250,000 hectares.

Cases have also been brought before the courts in other countries such as Holland, where the parent company is registered. On May 9th, 2008, farmers and fishermen resident in three communities on the Niger Delta (Oruma, Goi and Ikot Ada Udo), with the support of Friends of The Earth Holland and ERA/FoE Nigeria, filed three claims against Royal Dutch Shell PLC and SDPC Nigeria with the Hague District Court. The plaintiffs requested that the court rule regarding the legal liability for damages caused to the land and environment resulting from oil spillages that took place between 2004 and 2006. The plaintiffs requested that the court order the companies to clean up the contaminated areas and water springs, to implement a plan for pipeline maintenance to ensure prevention of further leaks, and to establish compensation for the victims. In January 2013, the Hague District Court handed down a sentence. The court exonerated the parent company, as well as the subsidiary, of all liability in two of the three cases, as they considered the defendants had demonstrated the spillages were caused by underground sabotage of the pipelines and therefore, was not the result of negligence on the part of SDPC concerning its duties to provide security at its facilities. However, negligence was demonstrated in the third case, regarding the spillage at Ikot Ada Udo and the subsidiary company was sentenced to respond for the legal liability incurred. This is a milestone in transnational litigation against multinational companies for one reason. It sets the precedent for establishing the jurisdiction of a court based in the same country where the parent company is registered for trying legal liability claims for (environmental) damages caused to third parties by subsidiary companies operating in a third party country.

In addition, taking advantage of the Alien Tort Claims Act, several civil lawsuits have been filed with the United States Federal Court in relation to Shell Nigeria's breaches of International law. The most noteworthy of these cases were those involving the Wiwa and Kiobel in 1996. The former, after complex court proceedings, finally came to an end in June, 2009; when the parties reached an agreement just before the case was due to begin. The agreement contemplated the payment by the different companies in the Shell group who had been sued, for a total of 15.5 million dollars in the concept of compensation for the victims. It also established a trust in benefit of the Ogoni community, to finance different social promotion initiatives in the area. The itinerary of the second claim presented in 2002, was equally as complex and came to an end with a controversial decision by the US Supreme Court on April 17, 2013, which stated that the US courts did not have jurisdiction regarding this case.

Shell's activities in Nigeria have also given rise to claims filed with international bodies based in Africa. In these cases, the lawsuits were aimed at the Nigerian State for tolerating environmental damage and the corresponding human rights violations committed by Shell.

On the one hand, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, adopted a decision in October 2001, in which they considered that Nigeria had violated the articles of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, regarding the right to a decent environment, right of all people to control their natural resources, the right to health and the right to life, in relation to the Ogoni people, violations in which the Commission considered the involvement of the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC), in cooperation with SPDC has been demonstrated.

On the other hand, in 2009 the Nigerian NGO Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) filed a lawsuit against Nigerian authorities and several oil companies, including Shell, for human rights violations committed in the Niger Delta region, before the Court of Justice of the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS). The Court ruled that it did not have jurisdiction in relation to the companies sued and the lawsuit was reformulated in 2011 against the Nigerian authorities (President and Attorney General). On September 14, 2012, the Court sentenced Nigeria for breaching the right to a decent environment, in relation to the breach of its obligations to adopt efficient measures to protect rights recognised under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, for non-compliance with its obligations to oversee activities of companies operating within its borders.

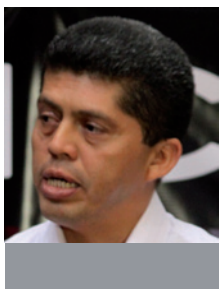
Despite the existence in Nigeria of legislation to protect the environment and the rules establishing companies liability for damages caused, victims have been able to confirm that there is a vast difference between the existence of written laws and their actual effective application. In addition, victims perceive the huge influence exercised by enormous transnational oil companies operating in Nigeria over state structures with the purpose of eluding, in the majority of cases, their responsibilities for damages inflicted. As a result of this, victims have resorted to exploring channels to access justice systems around the world, with varying degrees of success, given that extraterritorial channels for justice are few and far between and in general, difficult to access.

Nevertheless, apart from the evident limitations existing in the field of human rights protection, the principal issue here is, while the current trend prevails, in terms of the pressure exerted by demand for natural resources and energy throughout the more developed world and until there is a move towards clean energy over fossil fuels, the negative impact on the environment and peoples' and communities rights affected by extractive activities, is set to continue. Shell's track record in Nigeria is a paradigmatic example.

The price of wealth. The Chevron Texaco Case

Pablo Fajardo Mendoza

Attorney representing the Victims of Ecuadorian Amazon in the trial against Chevron Corporation



In the mid 1960's the worst environmental disaster ever caused by an oil company took place in the northern region of Ecuador. The victims; indigenous nations of people, Siekopai (Secoya), Siona, Cofan, Waorani, Teteté and Sansahuari and later on, the Shuar, Kichwa communities, as well as thousands of settlers; the aggressor; Chevron Corporation, formerly Texaco. The overall consequences include more than 30,000 people affected, hundreds of cancer related deaths, a miscarriage rate 2.5 times higher than the rest of Ecuador, two indigenous communities completely wiped out and extreme poverty in the region. These are just some of the main consequences.

Initially, the Ecuadorian Government granted a license to the Texaco company for approximately 1.5 million hectares to explore and extract oil. Nevertheless, in addition to exploration and extraction, the oil company contaminated an area of forest of over 450,000 hectares, which had been granted under license to Texaco (now, Chevron). The fragile Amazonian land suffered a brutal invasion, breaking down the delicate ecosystem balance and severely affecting local communities and subsequently, Ecuador and the rest of the planet, given the extent of the damages inflicted on one of the most biodiverse regions in the world. Its importance in producing oxygen and its role as the principal source of fresh water on the planet is an indisputable fact.

Levelling of forests, the use of heavy machinery, the arrival of oil workers, as well as the seismic activity, were just the beginning of a criminal displacement of the communities settled in the region. Moreover, these events gave rise to significant migration of animal species and the extinction of important plant families which were used by Amazonian communities living in the region as a major source to satisfy their medicinal and nutritional needs.

Social violence, racism, rape and alcoholism, became common place in what used to be a peaceful system of human co-existence where the relationship between local communities and their natural surroundings was a harmonious one. The culture shock began undermining the basis for the livelihood of these ancestral cultures, forced into joining a new structure of dependence, the majority of which was derived directly from income they received as oil industry workers.

356 wells and 22 production centres were the basis for a profitable business, marked by a cost cutting policy implemented by the oil company, thereby causing one of the largest contaminations ever recorded and which can be directly traced back to the systematic use of inadequately cheap technology not used in any other country in the world.

16 billion gallons of toxic water flowed into estuaries and rivers, still the principal source of vital water supply resources for the local population today; the premeditated dumping of 650,000 barrels of crude oil directly into the forest.

880 open pools leaking toxic waste; the installation of gooseneck systems in order to release the crude oil, together with contaminated water used in fracking, allowing these to flow into nearby rivers and estuaries. These events have had a major impact on the environment and the communities living in the region, who today are still suffering from illnesses related to the contamination.

The most serious and palpable consequence of the contamination is the health issues and their effects, Disease directly associated with chemicals used in the oil industry have developed among local communities. The region has a miscarriage rate 2.5 times greater than the national average, the rate for leukaemia in children between 0 and 4 years of age is three times the national index; there has been a 150% rise in cancer rates and a mortality rate 130% higher than other regions. Added to this, the human and collective rights violations, growing poverty levels due to the unproductive land, the death of farm animals and damage caused to the native flora and fauna.

These facts explain the reasons behind what is the largest environmental lawsuit in history. It is the largest in history in environmental terms, the magnitude of the contamination, as well as the duration of the court proceedings. It has taken over 20 years since the first lawsuit got underway in New York. In Ecuador, proceedings were established in 2003 and on February 14, 2011, the Supreme Court of Justice handed down an initial sentence.

230,000 pages of data analysed, witness statements from over 40 of the victims of Texaco's operations, 106 expert reports, 60 of which were paid for entirely by Chevron, more than 80,000 chemical test results from the soil, water and sediment samples collected, several independently drafted health impact studies prepared by foreign experts, in addition to the on-site inspection and verification by the Judge at 54 sites operated by the oil company. These were the foundations for the court's decision to sentence the oil company to make compensation to the tune of 19 billion dollars, in reparations for the damage inflicted.

The verdict was ratified in second instance by the Sitting of the Sucumbios Provincial Court, which ruled that the plaintiffs should initiate proceedings to secure payment of the reparations. However, Chevron, in a manoeuvre to protect its interests, withdrew all its assets from Ecuador. As a result, the plaintiffs have been forced to resort to international judicial proceedings. In every country where the plaintiffs instigate lawsuits to secure payment, Chevron, just as it did in Ecuador, uses a series of mechanisms including the application of economic and political pressure and even procedural malpractice, to avoid honouring payment as per the sentence. As of the date of writing, the actors have considered three sentence execution initiatives abroad. The three countries are Canada, Brazil and Argentina. Nevertheless, we are also planning further action in different regions where Chevron possesses interests, including countries in South America, Asia, Oceania and Europe. The aim of the plaintiffs is to pursue Chevron's assets until we receive payment of every last cent of the debt owed to us by Chevron.

Finally, after 20 years of judicial fight the decision of the Justice Supreme Court of Ecuador has arrived. The sentence ratifies the condemn against Chevron for environmental crime committed in Ecuadorian Amazonia. The sentence, 222 pages long, strongly confirms the condemnation.

However, in the absence of adequate legal support, the Justice Supreme Court of Ecuador sentences Chevron for bad behaviour and legal abuse. Both past sentences had ordered Chevron to make public apologies, and in case of not doing so, the economic reward of the sentence would be doubled. The excuses and the duplication of the sentence have not been done.

The abuse of the law, the moral and psychological damage caused to the victims after 20 years of trial and the use of artifices to delay a process, are not sanctioned. Hopefully soon the countries will adopt rules that punish these unsuitable behaviours for the humanity.

When facing economic power and the political influence of the transnational Chevron Corporation justice partially continues refusing affected populations.

Water, an obstacle to peace in Palestine?

Ferran Izquierdo Brichs

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona



The area around the Jordan River basin and the aquifers of the West Bank is one of the focal points of the international conflict for water resources. The reasons for the conflict can be attributed to its scarcity, the lack of alternative sources, as well as the dependence of some of the actors in the region, bearing in mind the power struggle in the basin, and due to the important role played by water in political, economic and security matters. In addition to the aforementioned factors, the dispute for water overlaps the political conflict and conquest of the region has determined the distribution of resources, whereby a sense of injustice prevails among the regions Arab actors.

The differences in water consumption are reflected in both the overall volume as well as its use for irrigation and domestic purposes. The position of Israelis and Jewish settlers in Palestinian territories is clearly superior in terms of all possible uses of water¹. Currently, the largest consumer of water (in the region of 50%) is agriculture, however, in the near future; water scarcity will be such that domestic and urban water consumption will have to take precedence of place². The Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories is the determining factor in water scarcity and inequality among Palestinians, and as a result, one conflict is interwoven with the other. This is clearly evident today in the construction of the Apartheid Wall inside The West Bank, which not only separates Palestinians from large tracts of land but also expropriates wells and important quantities of water in favour of the settlements.

The conflict for water resources in Palestine is normally presented as a significant obstacle in the negotiations to end Israeli occupation. On occasions, principally during seasonal periods of drought, water is presented as one of the fundamental interests for Israel in the Occupied Territories. Nevertheless, a careful analysis of the situation allows us to appreciate that this perspective is simplistic and that the water requirements to ensure the well-being of Israeli or Palestinian people is not directly related, nor can it be said to represent the cause of Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories.

For the purpose of this analysis, we will be using Guillem Farrés' concept of conflictual complex. From his perspective, in the majority of cases conflict analysis cannot be restricted or limited to the superficial conflict. In other words, we are almost always faced with a series of actors with multiple conflicts between them: "That is how we see what we used to consider an international conflict (or between large social groups) is actually a system comprising a set of conflicts and power relationships between a multitude of actors involved; we refer to this system as the conflictual complex. (...) We must identify the dominating conflict within the conflictual complex which, even though on occasions this is not the most visible, is the conflict by which the dynamics of all other power relationships and conflicts within the system are subject, and which has a profound affect the behaviour of the actors involved. Revealing the true structure of the conflicts involved in a conflictual complex, and identifying the predominant conflict, appears to be crucial in order to tackle the resolution of any conflictual complex."³

In order to analyse the conflict for water resources, we should therefore evidence the dominant conflict in this conflictual complex. In theory, conflicts for water respond to the need for water resources belonging to population groups in order to provide for their well-being needs (drinking water, food, hygiene, work...). Nevertheless, if the real objective of the disputed water were actually people's well-being, on this all the technical experts agree in that cooperation in the management of resources is essential to achieve maximum levels of efficiency and use⁴. Management of the entire basin and of all the sectors associated with the water resources is essential to tackling the problems of scarcity and to respond to the needs of every member of the community.

In the case of water and the Palestinian aquifers, it is especially important to bear in mind economic and social needs, given that the developmental differences and consumption between the Israeli and Palestinian people presents significant inequality in terms of their respective needs. It is much easier for Israel to give up water for irrigation given that it possesses a richer and more diversified economic structure, and therefore it can free up significant volumes of water to be allocated to other purposes. Moreover, Israel's capacity to access alternatives in terms of supply is much greater than the rest of the co-riparians.

For example, through desalination⁵, Israel already possesses the technology required and continues to make significant investment in this sector. In relative terms, the cost is much lower given the enormous difference between its GDP and that of its neighbours. In addition, access to the sea as well as to brackish water is much easier in Israel. Other possible solutions might be to redistribute water between its uses, principally from agricultural to domestic, industrial and urban consumption; importing water; redistribution between territories; improving infrastructures for both channelling as well as recycling and optimal use...

Nevertheless, what we can observe upon close analysis of the conflict for water in Israel and Palestine is that the predominant conflict is the struggle for power by Israeli elites. Water is merely an excuse to maintain the occupation, and therefore the solution to the problem of scarcity and the response to the needs of both communities in Israel and Palestine, follows the same lines as the peace process, in that there should not be any Israeli elites benefitting from maintaining this situation of permanent conflict.

1. For the distribution of resources and consumption, see: ISAAC, J. y SABBAH, W., "*The need to alleviate Palestinian fears of a dry peace*," (Bethlehem: Applied Research Institute Jerusalem, 2009).; WORLD.BANK, Assessment of Restrictions on Palestinian Water Sector Development, Report No. 47657-GZ, Middle East and North Africa Region. Sustainable Development. The World Bank, 2009.; PALESTINIAN.MINISTRY.OF.NATIONAL.ECONOMY.&ARIJ, The economic costs of the Israeli occupation for the occupied Palestinian territory, Bethlehem, West Bank, Applied Research Institute Jerusalem, 2011.; <http://www.btselem.org/water/statistics>
2. REJWAN, A., The State of Israel: National Water Efficiency Report, Planning Department of the Israeli Water Authority, 2011.
3. FARRÉS FERNÁNDEZ, G., "*Poder y análisis de conflictos internacionales: el complejo conflictual*", Revista CIDOB d'afers internacionals, 99, 2012. http://www.cidob.org/es/publicaciones/articulos/revista_cidob_d_afers_internacionals/99/poder_y_analisis_de_conflictos_internacionales_el_complejo_conflictual
4. See IZQUIERDO BRICHS, F., "*El agua como factor de hostilidad y de cooperación en el ámbito internacional*." En GUTIÉRREZ ESPADA, C. E. A., ed., El agua como factor de cooperación y de conflicto en las relaciones internacionales contemporáneas. XXII Jornadas de la Asociación Española de Profesores de Derecho Internacional y Relaciones Internacionales, Murcia 20 al 22 de septiembre de 2007, Murcia: Fundación Instituto Euromediterráneo del Agua, 2009.
5. For information regarding desalination in Israel, see DREIZIN, Y., TENNE, A. y HOFFMAN, D., "*Integrating large scale seawater desalination plants within Israel's water supply system*", Desalination, 220, num. 1, 2008.. For information regarding potential uses of desalination as a facilitating mechanism in the resolution of water conflicts, see LARSON, R., "Innovation and International Commons: The Case of Desalination Under International Law", Utah Law Review, Forthcoming, 2012.

Exploration and extraction of natural resources endangers indigenous peoples

Jordi Noè

Member of AlterNativa Intercanvi amb Pobles Indígenes



In October, 2003 the UNESCO passed the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage which considered the importance of this kind of heritage as a beacon of cultural diversity and a guarantee for sustainable development. In September, 2007 the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted, recognising the rights of indigenous peoples and communities to safeguard and protect their religious and cultural sites, to demonstrate, showcase, celebrate and revitalize their cultural and spiritual traditions and practises.

If we understand who is protected under these agreements and rights' acknowledgement, it becomes clear that we are not weighing their importance by number of individuals or the surface area occupied, but rather the intrinsic importance of the cultural diversity these communities represent.

In July, 2013, the Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples rights presented a report stating that "The worldwide drive to extract and develop minerals and fossil fuels (oil, gas and coal), coupled with the fact that much of what remains of these natural resources is situated on the lands of indigenous peoples, results in increasing and ever more widespread effects on indigenous peoples' lives."¹ If we add to this the major infrastructural projects (hydroelectric, road networks, mega wind farms), open pit gold, copper and coltan mining,... we can begin to get some level of understanding of the immense and ever-growing level of socio-environmental conflicts playing out in indigenous territories.

And, what is behind these mega-projects and operations concerning resource extraction? Large transnational companies whose sole objective is to stock-pile and maximize profits. The transnationals negotiate with weak democracies, dominated by festering oligarchies, states which operate a singular and unquestionable model for economic growth obeying capitalist principles of accumulation. Transnationals supersede the functions of the state in rural areas where they operate; offering public services which do not exist or which were extremely deficient: access to drinking water and healthcare services, emergency transport, donations to local council budgets... That is how they co-opt local authorities and destroy the social fabric and existing social networks, even going so far as to create new and friendlier organizations².

There are way too many examples of how the destruction and contamination of the environment and the natural surroundings has a devastating impact on the way of life, as well as social and cultural reproduction of indigenous peoples. 40 years of oil development in the Paztaza River basin in Peru have resulted in the area being declared an environmental emergency zone, where the Quitxues, Achuar, Shapra and Kandozi tribes live. Guatemala is witnessing the worst period of criminalization, persecution and militarization since the Peace Agreements. The brutal deforestation in Borneo endangers the Kayan, Kenyah and Penan peoples; the alarming situation of the pygmies in the area rich in minerals around Lake Kivu in the Democratic Republic of The Congo. All of the aforementioned cases and many other similar cases are endangering the spiritual practises, social organization, and survival of these communities' world-view. This world-view is interwoven with their natural surroundings, not only in terms of a physical place, but also as a spiritual place. The reference to places where beings live, which merely because they are not visible to the human eye, does not mean they are less real, forms part of their world-view and serves as a tool for interpreting everyday events and governing community life.

In this sense, let us put to one side for a moment the evidence and denounced harmful effects to the environment and health resulting from the exploration and extraction of natural resources. Instead, let us focus on the singular element which makes us part of a community and a natural setting where we live and reproduce our lives and social relationships. We are of course talking about intangible cultural heritage, a reflection of the cultural and social identity of any peoples. And it is this rich and diverse cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, in the majority of cases closely linked to the land and the territory as if it were one and the same indivisible concept, a concept which the exploration and extraction of natural resources is waging irreparable destruction on.

Even so, we should avoid the naivety of thinking that indigenous peoples turn their backs on modern comforts, technological progress and material goods. Nevertheless, they are faced with an unbridled economic growth model, where natural and energy resources are essential, where belonging to the 1% of the rich is as difficult as not ending up belonging to the remaining 99% poor. Experience shows them that they would be better off remaining as they are, if that's possible, and to face the extractivist projects which appear god-like in that they only bestow promises and calamity. And, in these cases the practise of some Amazonian peoples works extremely well in that, if a God to whom sacrifices have been made is not acquiescent to them, they kill the god and start worshipping another; the previous one was no good! And in this chain of events and realities we find continental political strategies arising from indigenous peoples that strengthen, reencounter and reinvent the essence of the harmonious relationship between these communities with nature and the land, implementing projects involving companies and states that chose, not to live with more, but to live well. So simple yet so obvious.

1. *Report from the Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples rights presented during the 24th period of sessions of the Human Rights Council. A/HRC/24/41*, July 1, 2013. Study on Extractive industries and indigenous peoples.

2. An example can be found in the report: CAMPANARIO BAQUÉ, Y. and GARCÍA HIERRO, P.: The case of the Spanish company Repsol. CODPI, 2013 which can be consulted at www.codpi.org

Violence and environmental conflicts, the tragedy of Chocó

Edwin Novoa Alvarez

Lawyer and Masters in Environment and Development and member of the Collective and Environmental Rights Research Group (GIDCA as per the Spanish acronym) in the Faculty of Law, Political and Social Sciences at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia



The consequences of the armed conflict in Columbia have left millions of victims from wide range of human rights' violations, an issue that even though it is certainly central, has displaced the debate concerning the relationship between violence and environmental conflicts.

The Colombian pacific coast, and in particular, the Chocó department, is one of the most strategic and biodiverse ecosystems on the planet and the region is home to tropical rain forest and extensive watersheds historically inhabited by Afro-Columbian communities, as well as being the cradle of several indigenous peoples, ancestral inhabitants of the tropical rain forest.

For the ethnic groups who live here, the territory is equally, if not more important than life itself, given that it constitutes the setting in which all their rights merge as collective legal subjects, in other words, the right to a cultural identity, the right to autonomy (their own authorities and rules), the right to prior consultation and the right to their environmental and cultural heritage.

In this regard, Colombian law has established a high standard of formal protection over these lands, instigated under the 1991 Colombian Constitution and Law 70 of 1993 as well as Law 160 of 1994, which granted the title over the Chocó Department territories to the ethnic groups under the model of collective ownership.

Despite the formal nature of the protection of their rights, the reality on the ground in the territories is one of a complete lack of knowledge regarding rights and ethnic groups' lack of control over their ancestral lands.

The megadiversity associated with such a vast reservoir of natural resources, added to the geostrategic location of Chocó (the only Department with access to Atlantic and Pacific oceans), transform the area into a prize for the conflict and extraction of natural resources and, in this regard, the different armed actors who, over the past three decades, have imposed a violent regime in order to control the territory (it is used as a corridor for trafficking arms and drugs), displacing ethnic communities and obtaining control over its natural resources.

The biogeographical Chocó is a difficult area to access, so much so that for many generations it served as a refuge for Afro-Columbian communities fleeing slavery in search of refuge, one of the principal reasons why the presence of the Colombian state has been so discreet historically, making it the perfect setting for the activities of guerrilla and paramilitary groups, among others.

During the 1980's, guerrilla groups entered several of the watersheds in Chocó, where they found an excellent refuge due to the difficult conditions to access the area, actors who lived in relative peace with the ethnic groups. However, since the

1990's (principally since 1997 with the formation of the United Self-defense Forces of Columbia) paramilitary groups began making incursions into the area igniting major armed confrontations, massacres, massive displacement and in general, every class of human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL) violations.

The strategy of territorial control implemented by paramilitary organizations (besides the armed strategy) involves imposing development models by force in the dispossessed regions (stolen from ethnic groups) which are at loggerheads with the traditional methods. In the northern region of Chocó (Riosucio, Darién, Acandí, Unguía), this involved the mass extraction of timber from the tropical rain forest for export, later followed by the destruction of forests, savannahs and arid zones to transform vast areas of land into pasture land (potrerización in Spanish) and finally the introduction of monoculture (for example, oil palms, which in its day was even subsidized by the Government¹) and extensive livestock breeding.

In other areas of Chocó (the Andágueda, Quitó, San Juan and to a lesser degree, the Atrato Rivers) different development models were introduced based on illegal open-pit mining practices using backhoes, dredgers and processing operations on the river banks involving the use of mercury². This form of mining is completely illegal given the devastating environmental impact (contamination of rivers and soil, stripping vegetation cover, extinction of autochthonous species, among others), has been implemented over the past decade by guerrillas and criminal gangs and is currently experiencing uncontrolled growth due to the so-called Colombian mining "boom".

This complex situation was highlighted by the Constitutional Court of Columbia³, human rights and environmental organizations, as well as the very communities who find themselves displaced or confined to small sections of the territories. Notwithstanding, the State has yet to regain control over several areas of Chocó and in others where they have acquired control, they have left the door open for the possibility of mining projects approved by the environmental authorities. Given the above, the future does not look promising for ethnic communities. In addition, the region's environment is under threat.

1. Jiguamiandó and Curvaradó cases, north Chocó.
2. While ethnic communities engage in ancestral extraction of minerals such as gold, they do so on such a small scale, without chemicals or heavy machinery that these are considered sustainable practices.
3. Sentence T-025, 2004 and Court Order N° 004 and N° 005, 2009, Constitutional Court.

FINDING OUT MORE

From the wealth of information that can be found on the Internet about the relationship between conflict and natural resources we have selected some of the most relevant websites, documents, reports from NGOs, think tanks and other internationally relevant actors.

Web resources

Ejolt (Environmental Justice Organizations, Liabilities and Trade)
<http://www.ejolt.org>

Ejolt is a project included in the Seventh Programme for the Research and Technological Development (FP7) of the European Commission. It includes members of different organizations linked to environmental justice, with the objective of discovering the subjacent causes of the increases in ecological-distributive conflicts.

It is to this prerogative that a data base named "A Map of Environmental Justice", has been created, including an atlas of thematic and regional maps; the project also publishes the most recent knowledge for the analysis of the environmental impacts of the nuclear and biomass energy, the development of a basic methodology for the Organizations of Environmental Justice for the calculation of the ecological debt, or the translation from the advances and new discoveries in concrete proposals for policies.

This project is founded on four thematic pillars: the nuclear energy; conflicts caused by the extraction of gas and oil and climatic injustices; biomass and terrestrial conflicts; and conflicts related with the mining, the disruption of boats and electronic waste.

OmAL (Observatorio de multinacionales América Latina)
<http://omal.info>

The main objectives of this observatory, created in 2003 by the association Paz con Dignidad, are the documentation and systematisation of information about the impact of Spanish transnational companies in Latin America, the research into and to condemn the consequences of these multinationals' actions to raise public awareness amongst the Latin American population as well as that of Spain, and to work in partnership with European and Latin Americans social movements, promoting fair social relations.

The main reason for the creation of this observatory is that recently internationalised Spanish companies are greatly increasing their presence in South America, obtaining substantial benefits from its population but without contributing to the improvement of the social inequalities.

The observatory's web page includes several articles, including the following topics "Bolivia: Riquezas naturales e impactos de las transnacionales, Las multinacionales en Bolivia. De la desnacionalización en el proceso de cambio"; "Las empresas transnacionales frente a los derechos humanos: Historia de una asimetría normativa".

Illegal Logging

<http://www.illegal-logging.info>

Illegal logging may not be one of the causes more directly related with conflicts, but it affects them in several ways: preventing income generation for states, therefore preventing them from improving the situation of the population as soon as it is reinvested in policies; deforesting areas that are protected which are home to native communities; and the funding of autocratic regimes.

For this reason, Chatham House, otherwise known as in Royal Institute of International Affairs has created this web-page, in collaboration with the Department of International Development of the United Kingdom and the EU FLEGT Facility of the European Forest Institute. Illegal Logging (illegal wood-cutting), offers a wide range of information, on this practice, including reports and studies as well as a section with information on a vast number of countries and regions.

Global Witness

<http://www.globalwitness.org>

This NGO proved its first success when it managed to bring an end to wood-cutting in Cambodia, through which the Khmer Rouge was funded, thanks to a report and the subsequent pressure on different authorities by the NGO. It has also successfully campaigned to condemn Blood Diamonds, which have funded and continues to fund civil conflicts in parts of the Africa, in order to ensure that commercialized diamonds were not contributing to funding wars or harming Human Rights. Its work contributed to the adoption of the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme. On its website, it offers information on its current campaigns, classified by subjects and countries, as well as news and relevant reports.

Intermon Oxfam

<http://www.oxfamintermon.org/ca>

This NGO dedicated to Cooperation and Development offers a solution to the challenge of poverty. In order to achieve this, it works around five objectives: defence of economic justice; humanitarian action, impulse of citizenship and governability; promotion of basic social services; and fight for gender equity. On its website, it offers information on its campaigns in different places throughout the world on subjects such as fair trade, or conflicts that are generated by agricultural exports.

Perill de Riqueses / Danger of wealth

<http://www.perillderiqueses.org>

This is a website created by Sabadell-based entity Lliga dels Drets dels Pobles (the League for the Rights of the Peoples), which possesses years of experience on subjects related with cooperation for development and public awareness. Centered mainly on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region -Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi-, the website offers a vast range of resources, which ranges from the historical documentation on ethnic composition to reports on Human Rights, Natural Resources and proposals of action.

Global Policy Forum

<http://www.globalpolicy.org>

This entity, charged with carrying out independent scrutiny of the United Nations' work, disposes of a section on its website called The Dark Side of Natural Resources, which offers information related with different natural resources all over the planet: diamonds, oil and gas, water, wood or minerals.

Audiovisual resources

Blood Diamonds

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blood_Diamond_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blood_Diamond_(film))

This film, starring Leonardo Di Caprio and directed by Edward Zwick, portrays the war that Sierra Leone suffered. The film "The troubled diamonds", or Diamonds of blood (as the name of the film indicates), but also child soldiers, slavery, war crimes, warlords or governmental corruption that facilitates conflict.

Blood in the Mobile
<http://bloodinthemobile.org>

Coltan is an essential mineral for a product of which practically everyone in the developed world is user. Coltan is extracted from illegal mines, directed by warlords without any type of scruple, promoting a conflict that accumulates more than 5 million deaths... It would seem that it should be a priority to deal from the global institutions, as it was made with the Diamonds of Blood, but the reality is quite different. Every day thousands of exploited persons and children are forced to work in infernal conditions, many of them die when carrying out this task. However, as Frank Poulsen shows to us, the director of the documentary, the big brands like Nokia seem to have the consciousness clear, they buy these necessary mineral, the Coltan, in Malaysia, without being concerned very much where exactly it has been extracted.

INTERVIEW

Joan Martínez Alier, Professor of Economics and Economic History at the UAB Eugènia Riera

International Catalan Institute for Peace



Highly renowned academic and ecologist, for several years Joan Martínez Alier has been defending a new economic model that would enable us to live in a more just society while being more respectful with the environment. Pioneer in the field of ecological economics and politics, he is currently coordinating the European network EJOLT dedicated to analysis of environmental conflicts. In this interview, we discuss the project and he also offers us alternatives to the existing model for growth, which he considers obsolete and dissociated.

When was EJOLT set up, and what is the network's goal?

The EJOLT network is a European research project coordinated by us here at the Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona, Institute of Environmental Science and Technology. We study environmental conflict and environmental injustice around the world, and we do so via a network of 22 organizations.

One of the challenges facing EJOLT is that of compiling a large database of ecological conflicts to include themed maps. Are there any estimates for the number of environmental conflicts currently in existence?

That's a good question. There are no hard statistics, but we do know of the thousands upon thousands of conflicts involving mining, biomass extraction (eucalyptus plantations, agro-fuels, and deforestation), oil and gas extraction, waste disposal, etc. For example, climate change is a result of over-producing greenhouse gases. And, who is responsible for this? Who foots the bill for this without actually being responsible, in the historical context? In order to analyse each conflict, we prepare inventories and maps by theme and country and, before 2015 we'd also hope to have completed an atlas covering around 2,000 conflicts.

One of the central themes referenced by EJOLT is the concept of 'ecological debt'. Can this debt be quantified?

If we go back and take a look at climate change, the ecological debt (which many organisations and even some governments in the southern hemisphere demand) is the amount of money wealthy countries save by not reducing emissions by the amount required in order to prevent the greenhouse effect. Several studies quantify the debt have already been published, but not everything can be assigned a monetary value, given that we should also take into account the damage being inflicted from the North. We should also calculate the environmental liabilities of multinational companies which go unpaid. For example, Chevron's liability in Ecuador, as a result of oil exploration and extraction, or Shell's liabilities in the Niger Delta resulting from toxic gas emissions. In order to perform this analysis, we base our calculations on court rulings in specific cases. However, justice is not done very often; in fact it's safe to say that justice has hardly ever been done.

Faced with this scenario, what solution are we left with?

In the two cases I've mentioned, which are really serious abuses, the actors involved pursued the legal channels. In Ecuador, a court has already ruled in favour of the victims, in the region of 30,000 people, and handed down a sentence, which was subsequently ratified after an appeal. Nevertheless, Chevron refuses to pay. Both Nigeria and Holland have held trials against Shell, and there have been several sentences ruling against the company, but they also refuse to make compensation payment in the Niger. In today's world, there is no environmental justice and in lieu of this situation, many people believe that the time has come to set up an International criminal tribunal to try socio-environmental crimes.

These environmental abuses were denounced by local communities in a show of what you refer to as 'poor peoples' ecological practises'. Do you think there is greater awareness among countries in the Southern hemisphere in terms of land conservation?

Ecologists are active in the north and south. There is often a more vital necessity in Southern hemisphere countries. If you are poor, then you need access to clean water and land to cultivate, as you don't have the economic resources to purchase food or water. If your food and water supplies are contaminated, then you protest. This is poor peoples' ecological practices and very often it is women who occupy the front lines in this fight. In addition to this vital necessity, there is also a cultural question which means that people defend their lands, and also the question of rights, the right to land, the right to subsistence and above all, the rights of Nature.

Can you give us any clear-cut examples?

Recently there was another case in the Niyamgiri Hills in the Odisha State in India, where the local community chose to save themselves from bauxite extraction when they managed to impose their own vision for the area. Local communities have turned their backs on the mining industry because the mountain is a sacred place, the seat of their god. This is just an example of how culture can defend the land.

The current economic crisis has a positive impact on the territory? Would it be true to say that the crisis acts in favour of ecological movements? (a drop off in consumerism, lower CO2 emissions...)

In certain aspects, it is true, yes. For example, cement production has fallen significantly as well as stone extraction from quarries and as you say, a reduction in CO2 emissions. However, at the same time, new threats have appeared which affect the land. For example, gold mining in Greece is generating protests against the possible environmental damage caused, or without going any further, we currently have a disastrous new coastal law in Spain and they tried to get Eurovegas for Catalonia to generate income...

You mentioned the need for a 'Green Keynesianism. What exactly do you mean by this?

It seems that the struggle for economic policy is the exclusive right of either neoliberals or Keynesians. The neoliberals maintain that we have to pay the debt – debtocracy has won!-, creditors call the shots, we have to reduce wages and introduce cut-backs in social spending. The Keynesians also want to pay the debt but they want to go even further in an effort to overcome the crisis and return to a period of economic growth. However, they're not so cruel and propose greater social spending. Ecological economists are in favour of exercising financial prudence –in the past and now-, we prefer not to increase the debt and we don't propose further economic growth for wealthy states. What we believe is required is to consider taking another route, work towards a state of 'prosperity without growth', as Tim Jackson says.

This is where the theory of degrowth comes in... what would the advantages be of such a theory?

We get into debt in order to grow and now we have to grow in order to pay the debt! What is required is a slow degrowth in terms of energy and materials, a shift towards an economy without growth. The standard of living in wealthy countries is already sufficiently high, in fact, there is no correlation between an increase in GDP and an increase in life satisfaction and happiness. Putting the brakes on economic growth in wealthy countries does not just make ecological sense; it is also a necessary step towards a social re-evaluation of common assets. This degrowth means not paying a significant part of the debt and moreover, implementing social policy. The most important of these being, a basic income for every adult, but also to encourage agroecology, energy renewal, education... as well as introducing measures such as donating refurbished housing to those without, or to grant housing under favourable low rent conditions-, work sharing by way of reducing the working day, living better without fanaticizing about economic growth based on fossil fuels... We have seen massive private and public investment over the years, which has been useless! It's really shameful.

PLATFORM

Peace and constitutions

Christophe Barbey

Lawyer and peaceworker. Coordinator at APRED (Participative institute for the progress of peace)



Constitutions are locally universal. They express our ideals. They are to a great extent binding. As much as possible, they moderate the use of power in order to serve all the people. The word “peace” is present in most constitutions¹. Too often, however, it occurs only in the preamble or relates solely to powers of war, to public order or “justice of peace”². Nevertheless, as constitutions are revised more frequently, more often than not through popular votes, peace progresses in our fundamental texts, thus ensuring that both the people and their institutions receive greater means for the establishment of peace. I will show here where and for what purposes peace is present or can be added to constitutions.

Preambles are a good place in which to assert what the people aim for through their constitution. They recall the symbolic dimension of peace and state peace as one of the governing values of a country.

They can also express peace as a need for unity and conciliation, acknowledging the political and social differences that the constitution will later address in order to regulate peacefully the political debate. Peace should also be included in preambles because it offers the only sustainable solution to conflicts. However, as preambles are of an exemplary nature, more concrete ways of furthering peace are needed.

Usually, constitutions affirm the guiding principles ruling the form of the State and its modes of action. As part of the rule of law and of the democratic system, peace can be mainstreamed, taken into account in all State activities, just as should be - or already are - gender equality and the preservation of natural resources. Adding peace to the basic requirements of governmental action affirms the need for harmonious relations between the State and the population, as well as between all elements of society.

A welcome example can be found in the new constitution of a Swiss canton, Vaud that stipulates: “In all its activities, the State shall see that justice and peace prevail. It supports conflict prevention”³. A different example of peace governing all State activities exists in the strong body of jurisprudence developed by the Supreme Court of Costa Rica, a country that has no army.

Constitutions usually contain a catalogue of human rights. Can peace be considered a human right and, if so, to what purpose? Everyone has the right to live in peace. This is only a stronger assertion of the right to security granted to all. The human right to peace will promote peaceful living, dialogue instead of opposition, and peaceful solutions for most, if not all, conflicts. It will assure that the State issues regular reports on the progress of peace in its own activities as in society as a whole, and will establish the right to exercise judicial control over any use of force. The United Nations’ Human Rights Council is working on the concept, in an original approach, by affirming that the right to peace should express itself through measurable standards of peace. Any new constitution stating that peace is a human right will further this form of progress.

The dispositions regulating legislative, executive and judiciary powers, sometimes including the specificities of federalism, are mechanisms intended to ensure the peaceful functioning of institutions. They can be improved by adding to the democratic system more effective consensus procedures and more participative democratic rights, for example by creating or extending the people’s right to call for referendums.

If peace is a human right and a guiding principle of State activities, then the State must give its inhabitants and its personnel the means to learn how to live in peace. Peace is therefore to be taught, practiced and studied in schools, from the lower levels on to higher education. This can also be provided for in the constitution.

As conflicts nevertheless do sometimes arise, peaceful conflict-solving methods are to be made easily available for the population and for its authorities: traditional or local peaceful conflict solving methods, mediation and other dispute-resolution mechanisms, as well as ombudsmen institutions now appear regularly in constitutions.

This may be insufficient, so policies for the prevention of violence are also needed. The duty of the State to prevent violence peacefully and to ensure public order is a constitutional mission. In so doing, the State functions as an example of peace for the people.

Should prevention nevertheless fail, the use of force to restore peace may be necessary. To avoid abuses and to limit damages, the use of force must be strongly regulated. The 2012 constitution of the local Swiss state of Geneva offers a good example of what can be done: “In conflictive situations, the use of force shall in priority be avoided, or limited. Persons concerned shall participate”⁴.

Can we imagine international relations without peace? Some countries ban war in their constitution⁵. The United Nations charter bans war as well⁶, so all countries should in fact ban war. Some countries do ban having an army⁷, or nuclear weapons. More countries have made peace a prerequisite for international cooperation. And many others have reaffirmed that the peaceful coexistence of people is a general principle of international law.

Peace is a human gift, a human need and the expression of our creativity towards a better quality of life. We all relate to a given constitution, and theoretically, we all have a say regarding its contents. We also have a say in the future of humanity, on what we want for ourselves, for our countries, for our institutions. Assuming that we desire a sustainable and therefore a peaceful future, we can start by improving the presence of peace in our local constitutions.

1. 174 out of 187 listed (16.10.2013). www.constituteproject.org
2. Lower jurisdictions in civic law systems.
3. 2003, article 6, §2, letter c. <http://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20030172/index.html>
4. Article 184, §3 http://www.ge.ch/legislation/rsg/f/s/rsg_a2_00.html
5. Japan, Italy, Bolivia and Ecuador.
6. Article 2, § 3 and 4, by deduction and art. 51 by limitation.
7. Costa Rica, Kiribati, Panama and Liechtenstein. Japan.

Syria: Nonviolence in war time

Blanca Camps-Febrer

Political Scientist specialized in the Middle East and North Africa



One of the goals of peace journalism is to flee the age old stereotypes and simplistic explanations regarding societies and their conflicts. This objective also coincides with that held by the men and women who believe that conflict resolution is not possible without taking into account local grassroots initiatives, far too often ignored by media sensationalism and high-level diplomacy. The civil war in Syria involves far more stakeholders and many more stories which fail to factor into the regular narrative of armed violence and mass atrocities.

It is not surprising therefore that outside Syria, few have heard about the story of Yabroud, a city located to the north of Damascus which, since the end of 2011, has been under self-government by way of a local council. The council controls everything from street traffic to schools and bakeries. Essentially, these local grassroots organizations are responsible for organizing many acts of resistance. Their activities include setting up local news agencies, documentation and communication of human rights abuses, groups providing humanitarian and medical aid, managing services (waste, water, education, etc.), translations, groups engaging in civil disobedience, pressure campaigns, demonstrations, support network for those detained, and coordinating campaigns, strikes and boycotts at a state-wide level, etc.

Yabroud is one of many examples where the local population has organized and is attempting to build a model for conciliation and civil disobedience against the regime in a town where Sunnis and Christians have coexisted for centuries. The initiative in Yabroud takes its inspiration from the writings of Syrian anarchist Omar Aziz, who set up the first local committee in Barzeh. Aziz wanted to break from the dynamics of protesting every evening, only to return to normal everyday life within the structures imposed by the regime¹. Nowadays, these forms of local organizations are commonplace in the majority of areas liberated from the regime and in some areas and neighbourhoods under government control. Some figures estimate that the number of committees or coordinators throughout the country is in the region of 400. It is estimated that the number of local councils in large cities and districts is somewhere in the region of 1982. Nevertheless, some local Councils have acted in a more inclusive manner than others. While many hold regular free elections, others are bogged down with internal power struggles, lack of financing or incapable of overcoming authoritarian structures inherited from the Ba'athist regime.

However, popular resistance, despite its essentially local level of organization, has also created different structures at state level of coordination. The best known examples of this are the Local Coordination Committees (LCC), which oppose armed resistance and foreign military intervention³ – and the sector specific student organization, the Union of Free Syrian Students – and the Youth Coalition of the Syrian Revolution. The group known as Aiam alHorria (Freedom Days Syria), created in late 2011, was successful in organizing and coordinating several general strikes affecting the entire country during the so-called 'Week of Dignity' from December 14th-21st, 2012. In addition, another group known as Nabd promotes interreligious coexistence and non-discrimination.

The NGO, the Syrian Nonviolence Movement, made up of Syrian activists based throughout Europe, has compiled a elucidating although incomplete interactive map of nonviolent initiatives throughout Syria, in an effort to publicize their work⁴.

- Throughout the country and far from the cameras, these committed stakeholders develop essential roles for the Syrian revolution which began peacefully in 2011, some of which include:
- Maintaining resistance against the regime and the legitimacy and social basis of their demands.
- Developing experience of direct democracy and organization to provide local communities with basic services in addition to creative forms of resistance
- Building bridges between local communities and promote cohesion
- Acting on many occasions as intermediaries between the civilian population and armed groups.

The vast majority of activists is young and would have previously classed themselves as apolitical, except in the case of Kurdish men and women, a historically more politicized group. From the very outset of the revolt, this latter group has been successful in building and organizing networks and groups independent of the traditional parties, such as through the Kurdish Youth Movement (TCK). According to activist and blogger Leila Shrooms, the majority of activists do not feel represented by traditional political parties or political ideologies, and are in fact “motivated by the causes of liberty, dignity, social justice and basic human rights”⁵.

Some of these groups take their inspiration from the culture of nonviolence from its most Gandhian expression and principles, such as figures like octogenarian scholar Jawdat Said, who some have called the Syrian Gandhi. Many others however, do not defend nonviolence as a moral principle but rather claiming that arming the country is merely inflicting a greater toll and bringing about an increase in violence and radicalization. As professor Stephen Zunes points out, “The opposition’s turn from nonviolence to armed struggle resulted in higher civilian casualties, reduced defections from the Assad’s forces, and contributed to the rise of anti-democratic elements within the opposition”⁶. Other groups coordinate with the Free Syrian Army or other brigades engaged in local protection, but they face the battering and repression from the Syrian regime as well as efforts to impose radical and intolerant Salafist ideology, something that up until now has been fundamentally inexistent. The personal price they pay is immense and they do so with nothing more to protect themselves than the power of the people. Moreover, according to Syrian scholar and activist Mohja Kahf, “...armed resistance renders the rest of an uprising population, those unwilling or unable to carry arms, passive”⁷.

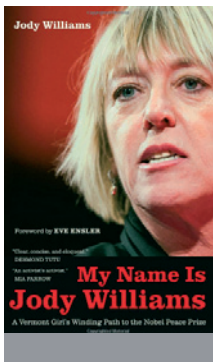
Therefore, it is essential to include these initiatives and the thousands of men and women who offer nonviolent opposition to the regime and the war, not only in order to fully get to grips with the situation, but also to achieve the transformation of the conflict and a conciliatory, lasting, and inclusive resolution to the civil war. These stakeholders are already engaged on a day-to-day basis as mediators, promoting reconciliation and transformation, something that can only be attained with the support and trust their efforts earn daily among the local communities. Their experience has the power to build the necessary structures for self-government and conciliation between peoples who until very recently possessed an extremely precarious associative fabric under the fierce control of the Ba’athist regime.

Perhaps some of these experiences do not fit into the theoretical definition of nonviolent groups, nevertheless, they should be included if the objective really is to achieve a true and inclusive new Syria.

1. “Translated: ‘A Discussion Paper on Local Councils in Syria’ by the Martyr and Anarchist Comrade, Omar Aziz”. A Muqawameh. September 14, 2013. <http://muqawameh.wordpress.com/2013/09/14/translated-quota-discussion-paper-on-local-councils-in-syriaquot-by-the-martyr-and-comrade-omar-aziz/>
2. This and other initiatives can be found at: Leila Shrooms. “The struggle continues: Syria’s grass-roots civil opposition”. A Tahrir-ICN. September, 2013. Access 16 October 2013 <https://tahriricn.wordpress.com/2013/09/16/syria-the-struggle-continues-syrias-grass-roots-civil-opposition/#more-1297>
3. Official website of the LCCS and documents explaining their political vision <http://www.lccsyria.org/2322>
4. Interactive Map showing nonviolence activities in Syria, created by Omar alAssil and the Syrian Nonviolence Movement: http://www.alharak.org/nonviolence_map/en/
5. Shrooms, 2013.
6. Chair of Middle Eastern Studies at the University of San Francisco <http://www.yesmagazine.org/peace-justice/syria-six-alternatives-to-military-strikes>
7. Mohja Kahf. Then and Now: The Syrian Revolution to Date. Special Report by Friends for a Nonviolent World. February 28, 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS

My name is Jody Williams



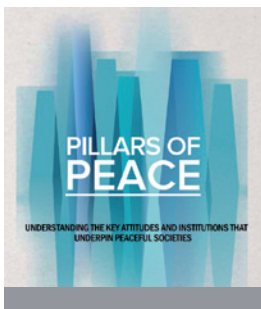
Jody Williams is a fascinating individual. She's fascinating for any peace or human rights activist, but even more so for those of us who have researched disarmament campaigns in any depth such as the campaign to ban landmines. Our paths have crossed on many occasions, especially during the negotiation period for the treaty to prohibit cluster munitions. And, as other activists and diplomats can confirm, she is the kind of person who leaves a lasting impression on you.

That is exactly the impression you get from reading her biography. Written for a US reader, this extraordinarily charismatic girl from Vermont goes into detail once again in a self-critical work which she began with the publication of "Banning Landmines: Disarmament, Citizen Diplomacy, and Human Security". Even though Williams has written about the genesis and evolution of the campaign before, on this occasion she goes into much greater detail. In this regard, the author describes herself as the 'bad cop' to explain her role during the negotiations which would eventually lead to the prohibition of landmines.

From a sincere and mature perspective, the author shares anecdotes associated with her strong personality, evident when she describes disagreements or arguments not only in her role as an activist, but also in her intimate personal life. In fact, the true novelty in this new book really is the whole personal dimension of her life, including her tales of romance, probably of less interest to the reader in search of diplomacy and civil society issues, in which Jody Williams is a figure to be reckoned with. In this regard, the reader can find useful first-hand reflections on leadership and the different manners in which to lead.

Perhaps, the most interesting aspect of her life is the fact that during her final years at university, Jody Williams' political conscience was practically non-existent; and it was the university of Life, stemming from a curiosity to discover how the world beyond the mundane day-to-day life, actually worked. This desire would assist her in becoming one of the 100 most influential women in the world today. The bottom line; any one of us can become a Nobel Peace Prize winning activist. Or at least, that is the message that leaps out at you from the pages of this autobiography. X.A.

The Pillars of Peace



What factors make one society more peaceful than another? How can positive peace levels be measured?

The Institute for Economics and Peace recently published a report titled 'The Pillars of Peace', which provides a precise definition of the structures required to build a peaceful society, understanding peace as a state of social justice beyond a mere absence of violence.

It is these 8 pillars, 8 interdependent elements describing the optimal environment for peace to flourish: a well-functioning government (effective and close to the people), a sound business environment, an equitable distribution of resources, an acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbours (individual, communities and nation states), free-flow of information, a high level of human capital, and low levels of corruption.

The report demonstrates how each of these factors has an impact on the others; they are interdependent, in such a way that the strength or fragility of each factor effects whether the other factors become stronger or weaker. For example, there is no doubt that the levels of corruption in a society are closely tied to the correct functioning of the government and the free-flow of information.

The study also demonstrates the association between resilience – the human capacity to overcome extreme situations and to adapt- and peace. Therefore, it is true to say that countries with higher levels of peace tend to be more resilient to external shocks, whether they are economic, geopolitical or natural disasters. Two recent examples of this can be seen in the respective recoveries in Iceland and Japan, one after the financial crisis and the other following the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami. E.R.

<http://www.visionofhumanity.org/sites/default/files/Pillars%20of%20Peace%20Report%20IEP.pdf>

Parliamentarians for Global Action– Acción Mundial de Parlamentarios



Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA) (<http://www.pgaction.org/home.html>) is a non-profit, non-partisan association established in 1978, with a network of over 1,000 legislators in approximately 130 elected parliaments. Initially, the driving force behind the association was the struggle for nuclear disarmament. Nevertheless, over time the list of issues has expanded to include fostering peace and democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and gender equality. In order to do this, the association strives to inform and mobilize legislators in order to progress in achieving these goals.

The two main programmes implemented by the association are that of International Law & Human Rights and Peace & Democracy. Under the framework of the latter, the PGA initiated a global parliamentary campaign for signature and ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The campaign boasts a wealth of material resources including a parliamentary Tool Kit to assist legislators in promoting signature and ratification of the treaty. It should be pointed out here that the guide includes a hands-on drafting of the ATT with Article-by-Article comments regarding how Parliamentarians can best assert their constitutionally bestowed prerogatives to satisfactorily discharge the responsibilities and promote adequate implementation, thereby representing an extremely useful parliamentary tool.

Before year-end in December, the association will hold the 35th session of the Annual Parliamentary Forum, to be held in Bogota, Colombia. The topic to be addressed is: "Building a stable and durable peace: the role of parliamentarians in support of peace processes".

Global conflict trends



Center for Systemic Peace

The Center for Systemic Peace (<http://www.systemicpeace.org/>), founded in 1997, is engaged in research on the problem of political violence. The CSP supports quantitative research in areas related to violence. The center reports on general trends at global, regional and state levels. Included within the framework of its activities is the Global Conflict Trends initiative (<http://www.systemicpeace.org/conflict.htm>), which adopts a systematic approach in examining the general condition of peace in the global system.

The center's perspective on peace includes aspects such as income distribution, global trends in armed conflict (intra-state and inter-state), the number of states participating in any form of warfare, the number of deaths from political violence, the number of refugees and displaced populations, regime type by income, deaths from international terrorism and state fragility. All the aforementioned statistics attempt to collect the data from the middle of the past century up to the present time. In addition, to accessing graphs depicting this information, it is also possible to access data used to compile each graph and the technical specifications used to collect the data. All this information is available from their website.

The site also provides succinct data concerning some of the keys to current conflict trends. Among other factors, the trends that stand out include, the effects of armed conflict spreading to neighbouring countries and the importance of controlling black markets (drug trafficking, diamonds) where war is becoming increasingly privatized.

NEWS

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The USA signs Arms Trade Treaty and advances towards its entry into force



The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was adopted by UN General Assembly in overwhelming vote. Since then, we have reached 114 signatories, including the largest exporter of arms in the world, the USA, which did so on September 25 of this year. The number of countries that have ratified the Treaty is lower, with just 8 countries on the list (Mexico, Nigeria, Costa Rica, Iceland, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Granada and Antigua, and Barbados). It is forecast that if the current calendar of ratifications maintains the impulse (there are a significant number in process of ratification), at some point in 2014 we will be able to announce the entry into force of the Treaty (which will be 90 days after the fiftieth ratification). Truth be told, the process involved in the entry into force of the new international legislation is slow going. The evident premise is that countries have to agree with each other before a new treaty is adopted. The immense diversity between countries; size, development, population, culture, geography, perceptions, interests, etc., means that reaching a majority multilateral decision is nothing short of a colossal task, even more so when countries often demand unanimous support for the text before its adoption. Any new treaty always includes the conditions

required before it can enter into force, which normally means a specific number of signatory countries as well as others who have ratified the Treaty already. After becoming a signatory, an act with little legal effect, countries must perform the process for ratification. Ratifying a treaty implies its incorporation into the country's legal system, and in order to do this, it must firstly follow parliamentary procedures, evidently a slow process in itself.

As I'm sure you're already aware, you can find further news, articles, links and much more information by clicking on the following link: l'apartat web de l'ICIP dedicat al Tractat.

The Peace process continues in Colombia

A new round of negotiations got under way in La Habana last October 23 between the FARC and the Colombian Government. The Peace talks began in Oslo in November last year and continued in La Habana one month later. The objective is to put an end to an armed conflict that began over 50 years ago and which includes drug trafficking, kidnappings and terrorism.

The Peace talks are focused on a six point agenda: reforming rural land, political participation of the FARC, disarmament of the guerrillas, drug trafficking, rights for victims of the conflicts and implementing a peace treaty. In May, an agreement was reached concerning the first point, of which the only information available is that it focuses on the small producer and the setting up of a Land Fund for Peace in charge of redistribution of lands amongst landless rural inhabitants, or those who do not have sufficient land to use productively.

This new round of talks has one clear objective: to reach an agreement on the second point concerning political participation, for which the FARC have presented a list containing 99 proposals. Nevertheless, talks have been at an impasse since May and may be affected by the upcoming legislative and presidential elections in 2014. In this regard, President Santos has given his assurance that the peace talks will take priority over his re-election and that the FARC are willing to accept a pause in the negotiations while the elections take place.

The previous attempt at negotiating a peace process took place between 1999 and 2002. The process was characterised by implementing prior conditions of a ceasefire which held and the designation of a demilitarized zone by the FARC. The process came to an abrupt end when the FARC were accused of importing weapons into the demilitarized zone and rebel forces hijacked a plane and kidnapped Congressman Jorge Gechem and the presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt.

However, there has been no such similar ceasefire decreed for the current peace talks and as a result, the army continues its operations targeting the guerrilla. The FARC has made a commitment to refrain from acts of kidnapping but refuses to renounce its other activities. The goodwill in the process is evidenced by the fact that negotiations continue, despite the army killing the FARC leader who had initiated this process.

2013 Peace awards

The peace awards do not always generate consensus. Last year's Nobel Prize, awarded to the European Union, generated a mixed response to a period of social and political crisis for the continent. The 2009 winner, Barack Obama, received criticism from a host of organizations and public figures for his involvement in wars at the time of receiving the prize. Even so, the response has been more positive to acknowledgements this year, awards that reflect the harsh reality of the conflict in the Middle East.

This year's Nobel Prize was awarded to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), an intergovernmental organization whose goal is to verify the Convention on Chemical weapons and work towards destroying existing arsenals. The Norwegian committee thereby acknowledges the organization's goals and their efforts to reaching an agreement to deactivate Syrian weapons used by Bashar al-Assad's government against the civilian population.

The Sakharov Prize established by the European Parliament, was of special significance for two reasons this year. This year's prize was awarded to the young Pakistani Malala Yousafzai, a victim of Taliban violence last year after setting up a campaign in support of women's right to education in the Swat Valley where the Taliban had forbidden women access to education. Despite receiving two bullet wounds to the neck and one to the hand, this young girl continues to fight for women's access to education without fear of threats from the Taliban. In addition, also in attendance at this year's award ceremony was the Burmese political activist Aung San Suu Kyi, who was unable to pick up her award in 1990 given that she was under house arrest imposed by the Burmese regime.

ICIP NEWS

Jovan Divjak, ICIP Peace in Progress Award 2013

ICIP's Governing Board have unanimously decided to grant the ICIP Peace in Progress Award of 2013 to Jovan Divjak, "for his courage, while a member of the armed forces, in disobeying the orders of the Yugoslav People's Army and by defending Sarajevo during the siege of the Yugoslav War, and subsequently for his extensive civic work, with diverse initiatives in favour of war victims.

ICIP's Peace in Progress Award is granted annually and consists of a public recognition, a sculpture created by the Nobel Peace Prize Winner, artist and activist Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, named 'Porta del Sol', and a financial prize of 4,000 euros. The presentation of the prize will take place at the Parliament of Catalonia during the first trimester of 2014, in an event where the recipient will be present.

ICIP's Declaration on the International Day of Peace

To coincide with the celebration of the International Day of Peace held on the 21st of September, ICIP publicised its annual institutional declaration which outlines the priorities of the Institute for the coming months. Its title, 'Educating for peace, Building Peace', emphasises the importance of education in peacebuilding. "Educating for peace and building peace are two inseparable elements. Both mean working in the very long term by generating empathy, formulating convictions of peace and democracy, internalising procedures and changing, in a positive sense, certain deeply rooted cultural practices."

With this declaration, ICIP will situate peace education at the centre of its activities during the coming school year through publishing new work, by organising a seminar and through a joint project with the Norwegian PRIO Centre on imagined sovereignties.

ICIP publicises the magazines of the peace movement in a digital format

ICIP has undertaken the digitalisation of the most emblematic publications associations related to the Catalan Peace movement, aiming to publicise fairly unknown sources that are difficult to find due to their special character – often not through regular publishing channels – and their across the Catalan territory.

The project has been possible thanks to the collaboration of the Library of Catalonia (La Biblioteca de Catalunya) which conducts a digitalisation project of Catalan periodical heritage, or the Catalan Archive of Old Periodicals (ARCA).

In this first phase of the project, a list of the most significant periodicals of the age have been selected in order to localise complete collections, to digitalise them and make them available for consultation by the pub

ICIP presents the 'Peace Capsules' project

The 'Peace Capsules' project is a coproduction between ICIP and the Col·lectiu Contrast that aims to demonstrate the diversity of visions and expectations projected about the word Peace. People from all over the world respond to the question: What is peace for you? The question asked in relation to the experiences of those who have lived through conflict and their commitment against war and for building peace.

Beginning with presentation video on the 21st of September 2013, a 'peace capsule' will be published weekly on the ICIP website. The 52 capsules published over the year will be compiled both on the website and on ICIP's YouTube channel.

Peace in Progress / La Revista Per la Pau recieves an upgrade

Peace in Progress / Revista Per la Pau enters a new period next year with upgraded design and contents. The changes will enter into force in the next issue, published in January and dedicated to drones, unmanned aerial vehicles. The objective of the magazine's upgrade is to offer a more attractive and easier reading experience, more connected to social media and aimed at a wider audience.

Rafael Grasa, ICIP President
Tica Font, ICIP Director
Pablo Aguiar, Antoni Pigrau
Issue Co-ordinators
Guifré Miquel, E-review Co-ordinator
Design/Layout: ComCom

This issue involved the participation of:
Pablo Aguiar, Javier Alcalde, Christophe Barbey, Blanca Camps-Febrer, Pablo Fajardo, Rafael Grasa, Martí Grau, Emyr Gruffydd, Ferran Izquierdo, Joan Martinez Allier, Jordi Noé, Edwin Novoa Alvarez, Jordi Palou, Antoni Pigrau, Eugènia Riera.