

Report

Golitsino Workshop

25.–29. September 1995

for Peace Builders

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Berghof Occasional Paper No. 2
August 1996
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ISSN 1432-4016

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Weekplan

Time	Monday 25.09.1995	Tuesday 26.09.1995	Wednesday 27.09.1995	Thursday 28.09.1995	Friday 29.09.1995
9.30 h	VALERIJ TISHKOV: WELCOME ADDRESS DIANA FRANCIS: PERSONAL INTRODUCTION OF EVERYONE NORBERT ROPERS: PRESENTATION OF PROJECT	AGENDA REVIEW THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE PROJECT QUESTIONS TO THE PROJECT PROPOSAL OF SUB-GROUP TOPICS: PRESENTATION, RESPONSES, CHOICE PROCESS	REPORTS OF THE FIRST ROUND OF SUB-GROUPS BUILDING NEW SUB-GROUPS FOR SECOND ROUND ISSUE-CENTERED SELF-REFLECTION IN 3 SUB-GROUPS II	WARMING UP: KITCHEN GAME REPORTS OF THE SECOND ROUND OF SUB-GROUPS BUILDING THE GROUPS FOR PERSON-CENTERED FACILITATED SELF-REFLECTION	WARMING UP NORBERT ROPERS: „DIFFERENT WAYS OF WORKING FOR PEACE“ LECTURE AND DISCUSSION.
11.00 h	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
11.30 h	NORBERT ROPERS: WORKING AGREEMENTS AGENDA REVIEW (WEEK PLAN) PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECTS/ INITIATIVES	VALERY TISHKOV „DILEMMAS OF MEDIATION“ LECTURE AND DISCUSSION BUILDING OF 3 SUB-GROUPS FOR FIRST ROUND	ISSUE-CENTERED SELF-REFLECTION IN 3 SUB-GROUPS II	PERSON-CENTERED SELF-REFLECTION IN 3 SUB-GROUPS FACILITATORS: DIANA FRANCIS VALERIJ TISHKOV, NORBERT ROPERS	VALERIJ TISHKOV: „RESOURCES FOR PEACE MAKERS.“ SUB-GROUP ON COMMUNICATION & COOPERATION: REPORT + NETWORKING
13.00 h	LUNCH BREAK	LUNCH BREAK	LUNCH-BREAK	LUNCH BREAK	LUNCH BREAK
15.00 h	PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECTS/ INITIATIVES	ISSUE-CENTERED SELF-REFLECTION IN 3 SUB-GROUPS I FACILITATORS: DIANA FRANCIS VALERIJ TISHKOV, NORBERT ROPERS, 1-2 RAPORTEURS PER GROUP	AFTERNOON + EVENING: SIGHT SEEING MOSCOW	PERSON-CENTERED SELF-REFLECTION IN 3 SUB-GROUPS	INTERACTIVE EVALUATION
16.30 h	BREAK	BREAK		BREAK	BREAK
17.00 h	PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECTS/ INITIATIVES	ISSUE-CENTERED SELF-REFLECTION IN 3 SUB-GROUPS I		PERSON-CENTERED SELF-REFLECTION IN 3 SUB-GROUPS	LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: TRANSFER, DECISION ABOUT FUTURE PARTICIPATION, WISHES FEEDBACK OF THE TEAM
18.30 h	BUILDING OF BASE GROUPS (DID HARDLY WORK)			DINNER	DINNER AND FARE WELL PARTY
19.00 h	DINNER	DINNER		TEAM MEETING	
20.00 h	TEAM MEETING	TEAM MEETING		VIDEOS MEETING OF COORDINATION SUB-GROUP	
evening					

Project Idea

Idea: Exploring & Promoting constructive contributions of insiders (because local people are central, their successes and failures are much more important than those of Western organizations).

Aims:

1. Exchange of experiences
2. Sharing new approaches (of participants and researchers/team)
3. Developing mutual support

Participants: Insider Mediators, Bridge Builders, Community Developers, from different escalation levels

Core method: Facilitated self reflection

Responsible organizations & team:	Core Team	Extended Team
Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management	Norbert	Anja Aleksej
Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology	Valerij	Mara Igor
International Alert (NGO focusing on conflict monitoring, prevention & resolution)	Diana	

The Berghof Research Center is a small research center exploring new concepts and strategies of peace making. Combining research with activities in the field ("action research") is the approach of the Center's projects. The Center is part of a small foundation, that also sponsors other small action research projects. Apart from the support project, that you are participating in, some of our colleagues are working on the influence of culture on conflict resolution.

Documentation:

- Seminar reports & Addendum & Material (done by Anja and Aleksej)
- First draft to be confirmed by participants
- Taping of sessions (compare working agreement)

Research aspects: Gain insights into processes & structure of peace making & -
building

Time schedule: 1. seminar here

2. seminar January/February in Central Europe

Four more planned but not yet financed (1996-97)

Contract: Continuity of group, mutual reconsideration after this workshop

Funding: PHARE & TACIS

Working Agreements

1. The seminar will be held in English and Russian. If you have difficulties understanding others please ask for help. If you would like to contribute something which you cannot express in English or Russian, please find someone to assist you in translating.
2. Since we will all have much to contribute and to learn, it will be important for all of us not to take up too much time with our own spoken contributions or to interrupt others. Punctuality will ensure that session time is not eroded.
3. The contributions of others should be treated with respect even when they are matters of disagreement.
4. Confidentiality is important. When matters of sensitivity are shared within this group (or a sub-group) they should not be made known outside the group without permission.
5. Smoking is permitted only in the bedrooms and outside.

The team's offer focuses on the setting and framework for mutual exchange, learning and support and not so much on certain contents. Taping in the sub groups needs explicit permission by the subgroup members. It was agreed that Sergey P. can use a video recorder, because he wants to show the method of the workshop to his colleagues. His taping does not focus on individuals, but on the workshop.

Presentation of Participants' Projects

(compare Addendum)

Issues of Particular Interest

sorted, from the flip chart, with additions in [] from Anja's notes

- What is democracy? What are human rights?
- Different concepts of nationality
- Concepts of collective identity (ethnic, nation, state...)
- Role of religion in ethnic conflicts
- "Guilt"-Feelings between nations [Should some pay for the historical crimes of others?]
- [There is much speculation and false reporting about the past.]
- What is mediation and what is the role of the mediator?
- Differentiate the various levels and concepts of mediation - don't generalize too much! [When people are displaced or killed, we think that education is not important, but it is and we should work on that issue even now]
- New methods/instruments for reconciliation in war zones.
- [How to gain a better negotiation position]
- How to overcome the anger of the disputing parties as 3rd party [How do you manage to deal with both sides? After a while both will consider you as taking sides for themselves.]
- Problems of preventive peace making for NGOs [No one shows interest before conflict becomes hot. Efforts of peace makers are crushed when the military comes in. Afterwards many attempts with little success. Ship with a hole gets recognition only when sinking].
- [Fighting] stereotypes as a way of conflict resolution
- Difficult position of peace makers between polarized enemy images, own stressful position [We need to gain position, be recognized]
- [Prevention of violence]

- How to organize early warning & actions & coordination
- How to raise money for these projects
- [Getting a forum for our activities, including criticism]
- Small positive steps for NGOs
- How can NGOs be accepted by authorities as mediators?
- How to do business with official structures?
- [Complementarity of being a public official and representing an NGO. Sometimes NGOs can say something when officials have to be silent.]
- How to provide lobby action from the NGOs to the government?
- Naiveté in addressing the governments on dangers of war.
- How to establish contact between NGOs & minorities?
- Problem of self-isolation of minority groups
- How to implement proposals that were agreed upon in an ethnically mixed commission? How to reach consensus for bridge-builders?
- How to work in a multicultural group of trainers?
- Working with young people and children
- Psychological problems of children in ethnically-mixed families
- [How should history be represented to children? Ethnology might be a less politicized and more helpful subject]
- A lack of time and information
- How to get reliable information on subjects of our activities.
- Information exchange between bridge builders of opposing sides
- Find appropriate persons from different sides of conflicts to link them in coordinated actions
- Consulting local bridge builders
- Transfer and adaptation of conflict resolution experience. Local perspectives in conflict resolution.
- History is rolling over our heads all the time.
- [Many projects are failing]

- Keeping some kind of optimism. Instead we are jumping from one project to another one.
- Limitations for bridge builders
- Stress of mediators
- [Psychological relaxation of the mediators. How to handle it when mediators only think of survival and fear.]
- A problem of trust & respect of activists
- How can you stay "neutral" as mediator if you have close relationships with people who fell victim to one side?
- Personal concerns of mediators: experience of resistance [Some people are getting angry when they are not recognized, when they meet resistance and their projects break down], stress, breakdown of relationships
- [Propaganda to support those who are not taking position in the conflict]
- Establishing the nature of the conflicting issue (ethnic/social) [The political struggle against the definition of minority conflicts as a social deficit or humanitarian problem of the minorities]
- [The Russian intelligentsia in Latvia that supported the secession now is turned off by nationalists and cannot connect with the new class of "professional politicians"]
- Building morality
- Outside evaluation of bridge building activities
- [There are few translations into Georgian: language problem]
- Let's have a practical outcome! Proposals: [practical examples of fruitful activities], newsletter on peace making, database, [material/books,] training on a regular basis

Base Groups

were supposed to be a way how the participants could criticize the team and make suggestions. Somehow that never worked, so that the idea was dropped soon.

Sub Groups

Explanation of Sub Group method (paper by Norbert Ropers)

We are interested in a joint discussion and reflection on the personal experiences of those working as dispute managers, bridge builders, and community developers in ethno-political conflicts. We hope that everyone will be able to learn from each other about the various "insider"-approaches of responding to ethno-political conflicts. Learning in our workshop will include two methods: To deal more effectively with very particular approaches and experiences and to discuss general strategies in this important field of social and political action.

We are convinced that in order to establish a lively and interesting exchange we have to go beyond the traditional forms of academic seminars or training sessions. Therefore we would like to introduce to you the "*facilitated self reflection*". This method is a particular form of small group work which offers a safe setting to reflect about personal involvement in your work. Each small group will be facilitated by one of the core teamers and will consist of five to ten participants. The goal is to concentrate on topics of common interest. However, the main idea is not to discuss these topics in an impersonal, exclusively "objective" manner, but to reflect on related personal and "subjective" experiences.

Hence, after choosing a topic, in a first step every participant will define her/his interests and needs in dealing with the topic of the sub-group. Then, the particular experiences and problems connected with this topic will be described as concretely as possible. The next step is to discuss and reflect upon these experiences and problems in order to broaden the individual definitions, interpretations, and perspectives. The responsibility of the facilitators is to help all participants gain a greater awareness of the three most important aspects of professional social interventions: the issues, the social setting, and the personality of the activist. If the reflection phase actually leads to a new idea or perspective, then the group could proceed to a discussion and reflection about new approaches, aims, and methods concerning this topic. Ideally the small group work will therefore contribute to a

new, more comprehensive understanding of the practical endeavors of the participants.

In addition to applying this "issue-centered" approach of "facilitated self reflection" to topics of common interest, we may also work directly with the particular experiences and problems of individual participants (= "person-centered"). According to a "person-centered" approach we will deal with one individual case after another, focusing on the particular interests and needs of the participants presenting her/his case. Likewise, the joint discussion and reflection of her/his case would address the distinct characteristics and conditions of her/his work situation as well as her/his personal style and perspectives. Hence, this person-centered approach aims to link the issues, the social setting, and the person of the activist. Nevertheless, the focus is on helping one particular person gain more awareness and deal more efficiently with her/his task.

"Facilitated self reflection" is therefore an approach for dealing with people's concrete questions and case studies in order to improve their awareness, their skills and the overall efficiency of their work.

Proposals for Sub Groups:

1. How to deal with official structures?
2. Education for a Culture of Peace
3. How to deal with myths, fears, enemy images, collective guilt, & different concepts of statehood
4. Dealing with the consequences of victimization (was dropped due to little interest)
5. Strategies and tactics for effective mediation in crisis situations
6. Reconciliation in divided societies
7. Preparing a suggestion for improving coordination, communication and networking for peace builders (Andrey K.'s suggestion)

Issue Centered Self-Reflection I

(1) How to deal with official structures

Participants: Evgenija, Jennifer, Krassimira, Miroslav, Piotr, Victor

Core teamer: Valerij

Simultaneous translation.

Flip chart:

1. The interests of public officials should be determined and we need to decide with whom we can cooperate without endangering our bridge building activities.
2. We should explain our status, position, goals, and the possible positive effects of our activities for public officials and we should neutralize their fears.
3. Broaden the horizon through information that is helpful for the management of conflict.
4. We should try to find common goals and interests.
5. Participation of the public officials in the activity of the bridge builders.
6. Overcoming the reserve/seclusion of official power structures
7. We should try to find out more about the officials and examine the assessments of others about them. We should avoid negative assessments a priori and start from positive assumptions.
8. Absolute neutrality in the relationship to the secret services. No cooperation in the area of information. At the same time be open about your own activities.
9. Search for and use of real authorities as allies in the work with power structures
10. Decide on an individual basis whom to give information
11. The monitoring of official propaganda about the conflict
12. Cooperation with international official structures in order to strengthen the status and the position of the bridge builders
13. Support the priority of internal bridge builders against external structures.

(3) How to deal with myths, fears, enemy images, collective guilt, and different concepts of statehood

Participants: Andrey B., Jelena S., Julia, Larisa, Marina K., Ruzica, Vartan

Core teamer: Norbert

with translation

Report by Marina K. filled with more detail by Anja

We talked about myths, the feeling of collective responsibility, collective shame, and collective guilt. Myths: Julia described specific myths, for instance the myth that refugees will be able to return to their home land at a certain date. These dates are never realistic and when they pass, a new wave of suicides and nervous breakdowns takes place. Andrey B. suggested that myths cannot be denied or disillusioned. It is important to identify the correct aspect of the myth. For example if there is a myth, that Russians are to be blamed for the aggression in Chechnia, it is important to accentuate that not the Russians, but the dark forces are to be blamed. In these dark forces there can be people of different nationalities, for example those who kill to be paid. Then a Russian soldier as such is not an enemy. Thus the image of the enemy is destroyed. Andrey B. also tries to change the image of the infidel from "belonging to another religion, such as Christians" to "those who violate the rules of both Christianity and Islam". Vartan suggested a deep religious approach to fight myths, that takes the person from a collective ethnic frame to a frame of one human being in relationship to god. Like the saying: "Paris is province. Christ is the capital."

Collective guilt and repentance: Many described how belonging to a specific ethnic group made them feel guilty of the crimes that this ethnic group had been responsible for, even though they did not commit the crimes. They are being addressed as "Russian" or as "Serbian", despite of the fact that not everyone feels part of the "we" in whose name the crimes were committed. Ruzica noted that there is a strange idea behind guilt feelings. It implies that humans are omnipotent. When I feel guilty, I am assuming that I could have controlled the crime. In several conflict situations the victims are asking for some form of public repentance, but it also was noted that repentance is an inner purification of the mind that cannot be forced. We came to the conclusion, that collective guilt and collective shame are different things. Marina described how guilt was felt by many Russians during the fight for Latvian independence, because they felt guilt for the communist structure, that was utilized by the Russians. She felt shame when these Russians were betrayed by Latvian radicals afterwards.

It is important to respond to guilt feelings by specific actions, e.g. Jelena S. told us how she is taking up links to all parties in the war, because she does not want to be part of those who fight the Croats and Bosnians. Andrey B. who works in Chechnia finds it important that people take responsibility. Marina K. quoted him saying: "Because of my religious upbringing I cannot do anything that I will be ashamed for, but I do feel this collective guilt, collective shame and I compensate for it by working as a doctor. I help the wounded, and this is how I contribute to the process of compensating for our guilt." Vartan noted that for victims such as the Armenians it is also important to get over their feeling of collective victimization, see themselves as individuals and identify with their family rather than with their nation.

In the plenary Marina K. quoted Victor Kogan-Yasni, who was not part of the sub-group: "Those are soldiers and officers who against their will began to fight in Chechnia. Their mothers and their families are innocent. Their guilt has been compensated for by suffering and death. The soldiers fought bravely and honestly. We who have not participated are to be blamed. We are guilty, because we do not regard our indifferent non-participation as guilt and more than that we dare to be proud of our non-participation. We close our eyes and shut our ears and open those of bloodshed." Marina K. finds this a very important statement. Marina K.: "I may add personally, that this round has given me a lot and I realize that I am not alone, that I am not the one who is suffering, that there are people who do much more in this sphere and I felt very much encouraged for the future and I also learned a number of practical issues."

Discussion:

Evgenija: I would like remind us of the example Andrey Sacharov gave us by blaming himself for the war, thereby accepting the guilt of a whole generation. It may help us so that we do not always blame our partner but blame ourselves.

Marina K.: The feeling of collective guilt cannot be suppressed by justifications on an ethnic level, such as: My nation committed that crime, because in the last century the other nation hurt me." Repentance should not by any means be

related to self justification of ethnic crimes. We should not justify ethnic crimes which are conducted by our contemporaries.

Andrey K.: Whenever we are talking about collective guilt, I have a feeling that people who talk about it are just people of a specific type, but for the majority of the population to explain what collective guilt is, I think it is similar to demanding something completely unrealistic. We will only provoke anger and frustration. And secondly, wouldn't it be better to start not with the word guilt, but learning the objective historical truth, because how can we ask for repentance or discuss guilt with someone who is not aware of historical reality?

Sergey P.: During a press conference with the people who were in Budjonovsk the correspondent who was shooting the film wanted us to start repentance. I said that I would not want to apologize for what Stalin did to the Chechens. We have been in Chechnia since August '91 and we saw how many people fled Chechnia, Russians to begin with. There was no war at that time, there was no ethnocide, there was simply lack of statehood, which was destroyed. We will have the same story in Stavropol, if there is a lack of statehood, and ethnicity has nothing to do with it.

(5) Strategies and tactics for effective mediation in crisis situations

Participants: Andrey K., Jurij, Sergey P., Vladimir

Core teamer: Diana

with translation

Written Report by Jurij (with additions from flip chart paper):

1. How should we as mediators start our work and get into the informational zone and create an opinion of the conflict?

We should have the following information:

- What is the problem in this conflict (and can it have a common definition)?
- Is there a problem?
- Do both conflicting sides have the same problem?
- (What are the coinciding and conflicting interests?)

- Who are the primary and secondary players in the conflict?
- What does each side want?
- What are their hopes and fears?
- How does each side see the other side and the resolution of the conflict?

We discussed how and from whom to get information which would answer these questions. It was mentioned that accessibility of information depends on:

- accessibility of the conflict zone
- how the conflicting sides take the people who collect information
- status of the mediator (state organization, NGO, international)

The information should come from:

- people directly involved in the conflict from both sides
- people who were not involved in the conflict from both sides
- official structures from both sides

It was mentioned in respect to this that even when we have objective information its interpretation may be different. Also it is necessary to present as much as possible information of difficult cases because incomplete information or its absence provoke gossiping and rumors.

2. What kind of steps should be taken after the cease of fire? Who could play the role of mediator in such cases?

In such cases it would be useful to give positive information about the other side which would destroy the image of it as an enemy. It could be done through newspapers and radio, TV. Also it is useful to have work-shops and conferences with both conflicting sides, where they would discuss their common problems.

Mediators could be:

- NGOs
- people which are well known and respected on both sides
- international and foreign organizations

It is efficient when there is an initiative group with members from both sides, which works on both sides.

3. We discussed the difficulties which mediators meet concerning their position in the society, political circles, conflict. Also the discomfort we feel when we fail to achieve something. We mentioned a few moments a mediator should remember:

- He cannot solve the conflict; he does not have the authority to do that.
- not to be too keen on his role and take himself as a savior
- to understand and recognize his competence and limitations
- to cooperate and coordinate his actions with other mediators and not to take them as competitors
- the mediator cannot press and push himself as a mediator on the conflicting sides
- the mediator cannot press the conflicting sides to accept his idea of the resolution of the conflict
- (low profile groups can sometimes act where high profile ones cannot)

What is concerning the position of the mediator in the society it takes quite a long time. Often it does not depend on your success, but it depends more on how persistent you are, politeness, your methods of work and diplomacy.

Some moments which could help you to get a position:

- inform the society, NGOs, international organizations on your work
- (respond to questions that are supposed to test you and your neutrality and understand the implications of your answer)
- step by step get in touch with different levels from both sides, provide them services related to the work with the conflict
- include in your organization well known people even if they are not very effective in work
- start your work from small programs at the available level which would show higher levels your efforts and intentions.
- (be known for integrity if not power)

- (Truth is multifaceted. "Facts" need to be checked. Interpretations are always attached. Information can counter rumor and new ideas can transform understanding.)

NGOs have more freedom and could solve some problems which state and international organizations cannot solve due to their official position.

Additional suggestions from the plenary discussion:

Andrey K.: When you enter a situation any niche can be enough for peace makers as long as they do not know enough about the conflict to intervene (e.g. missionary activities, distributing leaflets, etc.)

Sergey P.: Don't believe anyone except yourself. Keep a realistic self image. Each conflict is an individual case.

Often mediators can be drawn into one side's position. Andrey K. recommended to always try to listen to both sides and physically change your living situation in order to make that possible. When actually listening to people you will realize that their opinions are much more complex than you expected beforehand.

Issue Centered Self-Reflection II

(2) Education for a Culture of Peace

Participants: Krassimira, Larisa, Julia, Ruzica

Core teamer: Valerij

Observer: Norbert

with translation

Larisa's report:

Education for a culture of peace is an UNESCO project. It includes work for tolerance and creating an atmosphere of openness in education. That is important everywhere, including calm regions. Programs are aimed at children and adults, at teachers, trainers, and pedagogues.

How can we create the motivation for participating in that program, since those who are responsible for education usually are not interested in it? When often there are no resources for normal schooling, how can we get special programs for teachers?

Suggestions are:

- Multicultural education: Textbooks that educate on all ethnic groups and on the history of interaction.
- Tolerance should not be confused with patience. It also includes respect, for example when Christians help Muslims with building a mosque.
- We should identify early forms of intolerance in children, such as nicknaming or the violation of monuments.
- The transition or reforms should not create new lines of tension.
- Information should reflect a multicultural state, e.g. TV speakers.
- Holidays/festivals should be used for multiculturalism and holidays of minorities should be shown in calendars.
- No religion may take over the state.
- Some experiences: Krassimira's organization invites officials to workshops.

They have established some clubs and they are working with parents. Julia's group in Georgia tries to use the campaigning for elections. They ask candidates for clear statements about education issues.

Discussion:

Evgenija: The educational system and the denial of mother tongue education often is an important point of conflict.

Marina K.: In Latvia now we are having many minority language schools. Very small minorities are taught in Sunday schools together with their parents. But that means that the family is reinforcing its ethnic identity. Also I think that ethnic schools should have a connection to the mother country, so that they can get books or money from there.

Vartan: The status of ethnic groups should be equalized.

Ruzica: I want to point out that education as such is not to be confused with education for tolerance. Also education in the mother tongue is not the same thing like education for multiculturalism.

Jelena S.: We also need human rights education.

Valerij: Like Ruzica I would like to emphasize that we are in need of a new doctrine of multiculturalism, which is very different from creating many different

ethno-national schools. Multicultural education is not nation specific. For example in the subject religion, children would be taught about many religions, such as the Bible, Koran and Torah. The language in the school is decided by other factors, such as the wishes of the parents. The institution should not impose a language, but let the parents choose.

Jurij: But what about the problem that the officials are imposing a language and a system of writing that is historically wrong for the country?

Valerij: In a situation like this the new state also should not decide for the parents and create a new imposition.

(6) Reconciliation in divided Societies

participants: Marina K., Marina B., Evgenija, Jelena S., Jurij

core teamer: Diana

with translation

Suggestions:

1. Reframing the view of the conflict by referring to common suffering, to needs of all for security and other things common to all
2. Understanding differences
3. Dissolving enemy images:
 - by concrete questions and answers, e.g. in order to challenge labeling among children
 - workshops (e.g. on neutral ground), individual encounters, practical situations, e.g. in the hospital. There may be a reentry problem for those who participated in these events, changed their view of the other side and could be seen as traitors at home.
 - radio, performances, e.g. with anti-war poetry, TV
 - try to stop or counter propaganda
 - create seed groups composed of both sides
 - women's groups
 - talk to both sides (as a third party) and give a positive image of the other: We are all victims.

- blame a third party and stress that the other side regrets the conflict very much
 - quote example where someone from the other side helped
 - create feeling of affection
4. Peace keeping - ensure current security. There has to be some security/stability at the local level before people can deal with the past. Sometime it may be helpful to invite experts. Not experts who explain the past, but who help people by explaining the past. People need to understand their own errors in the past, but not as conscious crimes, but as miscalculations
 5. Sometimes there may be a need of a cooling off period without much direct contact. With time other concerns become more important to people than the war. There is a danger of the vacuum being filled by nationalists however. Therefore we should maintain some activities, such as observing, monitoring
 6. In some cases people are more peaceful than their leaders. Therefore we should look closely at the reality.
 7. There are situations where both sides have been offenders and situations where clearly one side has been oppressed. Reconciliation must take this difference into account (Diana).
 8. Importance of positive sanctions: Parents will be tolerant for their children's sake. Hospital treatment for war victims of both sides. Humanitarian programs with reconciliation elements. Remind small ethnic groups that their survival may depend on the survival of some young people, that the bravest and best die in the war and that continuous warfare may in fact threaten the existence of small ethnic groups. Sometimes the latter argument may not work, because revenge is also a way of deterring others from destroying your group. So both arguments follow the same logic.
 9. Find out what would help one side to trust the other and what they would be prepared to offer to promote trust. And vice versa.
 10. Deal with revenge, e.g. by traditional purification ceremony or symbol of friendship or kin relations, e.g. a exchange of babies during a festival that constitutes kinship between the mothers and the breast-fed babies of the

other side. Raising orphans of the other sides is a very controversial issue, because there were cases, when the majority diminished ethnic groups by taking away their orphans.

- As a mediator one should not think about questions of guilt too much, because that costs a lot of energy and prepares the ground for revenge.
- Diana told a story from a local conflict in South Africa, where a representative of the one side visited the other without excusing himself, but solely focusing on the question of how to decrease the number of killings together. After that was achieved, they tried to decrease tension by doing some common activities, such as football games. And only after that they asked what they should do with the past and again they did not excuse or reexamine but underwent a collective purification ceremony. This taught her that it is not always necessary to deal with the guilt question first.
- Use an anecdote, that is used in Latvia: When a slave has lost the chains he/she may start a new life. But the psychology of the slave still controls them and they first want to bite their master. Then they are punished and have to carry chains again.
- When Marina K. was attacked by an article her desire for revenge left her in the moment when she saw how embarrassed many people were about the article. So it might be important to see that the offenders are few and that many regret.

Discussion:

Vladimir: When unarmed people appear in a zone of conflict, that also stabilizes the situation.

Helena B.: Even during an armed conflict we can work for peace.

Marina K.: We were trying to explain that after cease fire there may be a need for a cooling off period without many contacts between hostile groups. We did not want to say that nothing can be done during a war.

(7) Preparing a suggestion for improving coordination, communication and networking for peace builders (Andrey K.'s suggestion)

Participants: Andrey K., Vladimir, Sergey P., Andrey B., Jelena P., Piotr, Miroslav

Extended team: Aleksej, in the evening session: Anja

in Russian, in the evening with translation

During the first meeting the group collected issues that should be clarified for a network, e.g. technical and financial problems, etc. In the Thursday late night meeting goals of the network were determined and a proposal was developed. On Friday the project was discussed in the plenary:

Flip chart: Possible goals of the network:

1. Action calendar (no parallel actions)
2. Mutual support
 - when you get to a new area
 - practical cooperation
 - to distribute reports
 - to organize campaigns
3. Create a system of peacemaking
 - in order to feel better
 - in order to gain status
4. Get information on:
 - projects similar to own plans
 - issues/material of interest
 - analyses (ethnological, etc.)
5. Spread information
 - in media
 - to contradict lies

Flip chart: Incoming information:

1. File with self-description, information on skills and capabilities (once, compare questionnaire)

2. Periodical exchange of information (1-2 pages once every 2-3 months)
 - past activities
 - planned activities
 - requests for support (information, material, addresses of and ways to reach network partners)
 - list of materials/pamphlets that the group can provide to others

Flip chart: Possibilities for distributing that information

1. Newsletter (separate or included in other publications)
2. E-mail and phone to send urgent messages
3. Other networks (please give brief information about networks you know to Andrey K.)

After the report Norbert advised the network organizers that they need three things: a clear target group, dedicated people to do it and resources. These things are partly available or presently being organized. Valerij offered a cooperation with the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology and their bulletin and network. Mara informed that there are 25 (by next year 40) local offices with computers and e-mail connection. Her e-mail address is:

umara@eawarn1.msk.su

She will write to the agents in these offices who are having a contract with the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology and she believes that it is not necessary to start a parallel structure.

Agreement about Things to Do:

Once

- Self-description
- list of materials
- recommendation of other networks

Everyone will send that (also compare the questionnaire) to the Berghof Research Center by October 31st, 1995. The Berghof Research Center will include that

information in the addendum to the workshop report and give the information to the organizers of the network.

Every two months

- past activities
- planned activities
- address update
- material update
- support needed

Questionnaire:

Please, write down the following information about your organization and yourself.

1. Name of the organization. When was it organized? When did you begin your peace activities?
2. What is the geographic region of your activities?
3. What do you do (in 2-3 sentences)?
4. Which means of communication and networks do you use for interaction and keeping in touch with other activists and groups?
5. Which methods do you apply in your activities?
6. Which groups and organizations would you like to establish permanent communication with?
7. Would you be willing - on a regular basis (once every 2-3 months) to write a report (about 2 pages long) including the description of your past activities and your plans for future actions, information about necessary support, proposals for cooperation and information about materials for distribution?
8. Any additional information you would like to provide.

Person Centered Self-Reflection

Flip chart: Some Questions for my work as a Peace Maker:

- Why do I do it?

- How does it affect my professional life or my need to earn money?
- What is my mix of altruism and ambition?
- Do I want to be famous?
- Do I ever feel out of my depth (= that what I have taken on is beyond my emotional or professional capabilities)?
- How do I cope with stress/failure/burn out?
- Do I sometimes feel helpless?
- How does it affect my personal/family life?
- What are my hopes and fears for the future?

Lectures

Valerij Tishkov: Dilemmas of Mediation

Valerij Tishkov's lecture is attached in the back.

Discussion:

Andrey K.: Local self-management makes it possible that minorities get privileges such as having their own university. Thereby they create their own intelligentsia that elaborates the so called ethnic or national issue when it comes to power. That may bring new ethnic conflicts.

Valerij: To some extent that has happened in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The break up of the Soviet Union was not only due to crimes, oppression and discrimination, but also a result of the success of the national or ethnic policy that created prestige institutions and high education among minorities. It was exceptional for Europe that even very small nations had their own academy of science and conservatories. That creates a challenge and a dilemma, because you cannot constrain the cultural demands and needs of minorities and these demands will bring forth a call for freedom. We need to find a solution that makes small nations not be interested in having a small state. In a big flourishing state creating your own small state would not be attractive, because it is too expensive. But in a civil society

that has problems the small nations think, that if they create their own state they will have no problems. Therefore the creation of local administration does not imply a threat to the larger administration always.

Marina B.: You said that the value of life is low in the Northern Caucasus and Central Asia. Do you think that the reason is the low social-economical standard or a different culture?

Valerij: Two factors are important: Firstly the lack of modernization in the region and most of Russia. We are on a medium level of modernization, where the rights of the individual including the right to life are not of primary importance, and collectivist mentality is very strong. In Soviet mentality the value of life was very low. I would not like to consider traditional mentality as absolute, that for example dignity is more valuable than life, that Chechens can only be seen with knives. Each Swiss has a gun in his home, but Switzerland is a highly developed society and the fact that they have guns is not a sign of traditional mentality. But sometimes traditional institutions are used for manipulation, e.g. when the elders are used by military people as "spokesmen of the people". The role of traditional culture is important but cannot be made absolute. For example in Abchasia the leaders are definitely modernized and they pursue their own interests and follow their own strategies. Sometimes values such as dignity and life are used for mobilization and sending people to be killed.

Sergey P.: What are the bodies of authority that we mediators are to establish contacts with? Contacts with local authorities seem to be most effective. Even though Andrey K. was skeptic of local self-administration, in reality people are governed locally and not by central authorities and the delicate issues linked to this have never been dealt with properly. A mediator should facilitate the development of local self-administration and establish effective contacts with them.

You said that the interaction of communities does not account for conflicts, but Russia is no melting pot and we really see the interaction of communities and our model does not work out.

Valerij: Scholars are often obsessed with demonstrating cultural differences. For politicians it is the basis for their electorate or for the formation of paramilitary groups. Actually there are more common things between cultural communities than

we think. In a radio discussion among the Turkish groups in the former SU they discussed what their common language should be, whether it should be Esperanto, but in fact they all spoke perfect Russian. In a cultural sense YU is a community of Serbo-Croatian speakers. In Russia almost everyone can speak Russian. And when the small nations discuss their problems they often use Russian. Often more importance is given to differences than to common things. In Russia very many marriages are mixed. We should use this reality as an ally in peace makers' actions. Sometimes the diaspora, who is living in Moscow and has served in the Soviet military, is telling the local people that they have always been suppressed by Moscow. That is a very contradictory thing.

Vartan: What are the deep reasons for ethnic conflicts in general, not only on the territory of the former totalitarian states?

Valerij: Ethnicity is a vessel for the discontent in societies where wealth and access to power and resources are distributed unevenly. When social differences, social prestige and power coincide with ethnic borders. I started to realize that I am Russian when I moved from a small mainly Russian village to Moscow. Only when you are surrounded by "others" will you start to determine yourself.

Vartan: Even though it is not good to be obsessed with the trauma of the Armenian genocide, it is also wrong that no attention is devoted to genocides and right now some are ongoing. Who will insist on condemning them? What about the public expression of guilt?

Valerij: I am against the cultivation of trauma and the Armenians are the classic example of this like Hungarians in Europe. There is no other topic for them. Condemnation shall take place, but trauma should not be treated as a key factor in history, because we cannot correct historical injustice, we can only commit new injustice. People say we have to restore just borders. All borderlines in all countries are unjust, are a result of negotiations with power and force. Many scholars discuss the difference between nation and tribe, and some say that a nation is a tribe, but with an army.

Vladimir: How can peace makers count on the mass media in peace making? I know some people with whom I can talk, but they do nothing concrete. Very often the media are provoking conflict.

Valerij: In modern societies TV is a very powerful force that does not only reflect reality but builds it. Some war reporters in Bosnia did not only explain but enlarge the conflict. In our country mass media people have a contradictory role, because the differences between columnists who do an analysis and reporters who just tell about things without giving their opinion are unclear. Everyone is doing analysis. And censorship makes things even worse. There is a big and important problem of individual responsibility and ethics in this field.

Jennifer: The lack of responsibility that relates to the lack of ideology in transformation phases is a big problem. For example in communities after pogroms no one is punished for acts of violence against Roma in Rumania. There is no legal responsibility, no example that you will be punished. There is no central responsibility, such as a condemnation, so that the local authorities claim that they do not have any example from the central authorities.

Valerij: I would not qualify Rumania as a "legal society" in the full meaning, which is true for most former communist states. The legal system does not work properly and concerning sensitive issues it does not work properly in developed democratic societies. For peace makers I would like to recommend that they are no judges. But the problem of punishment remains important for them, at least on the level of fact-finding and public activities regarding those people. It may be possible to get punishment in the future on the basis of information collected by peace makers and so that is a warning for the offenders and they do become more cautious. But peace makers are no judges and they should not go to court. May be I am wrong.

Julia: Thank you for addressing the importance of the subjective factors of the leaders. The events in Georgia to a large extent were due to the fact that both leaders wanted to appear nice to the part of the population that they considered to be "their" electorate. About the question of military crimes: Do you think that a joint appeal of both sides acknowledging that both are responsible for these crimes is possible and useful?

Secondly, the system of representation in multicultural communities, that was attempted before the war. It failed and we must know why. We had hoped that the elected parliament would succeed in preventing the conflict but this did not

happen. We need to know why the good system has failed to work and whether the system was good to begin with?

Valerij: In my impression this scheme which was applied in Abchasia - and Georgia agreed to it - with a group of deputies from Abchasia, that this scheme is not effective and it often brings about conflicts. It did not work in Nigeria. It works in Pakistan, but is not very successful, etc. I stand for creating impetus for politicians, e.g. there is a system where the third party delegates all the votes to one of the two major groups, so that the third party will give the votes to that big group that is most favorable to the minority. So the small groups would ultimately decide who is taking over. In many states ethnic parties are not allowed - even though is difficult in practice.

I agree that the leaders are very important for the development of the conflict, but we must also note that over years there was a discussion in the media, which territory was older and that intellectual discussion could easily be transformed to the sphere of military actions.

Jelena S.: When 5 % in a society are militant it is enough to go to war especially when the policy of the state is war. And the media mobilizes. I have a question related to patriarchy - a system where the leader is always like the father of the nation. Can we explain some of the difficulties today historically? Russia much like Yugoslavia never had a democratic process in the 13th/14th century, towards freedom of individuality in renaissance and humanism. Therefore the battle for individuality and the responsibility of the individual is much harder than in other parts of Europe. The second question: In Europe nationalism is rising also: between 12 and 30%

Do you have any view about the connection between the Russian and Yugoslav crises & nationalisms and the European movements in nationalism and fascism?

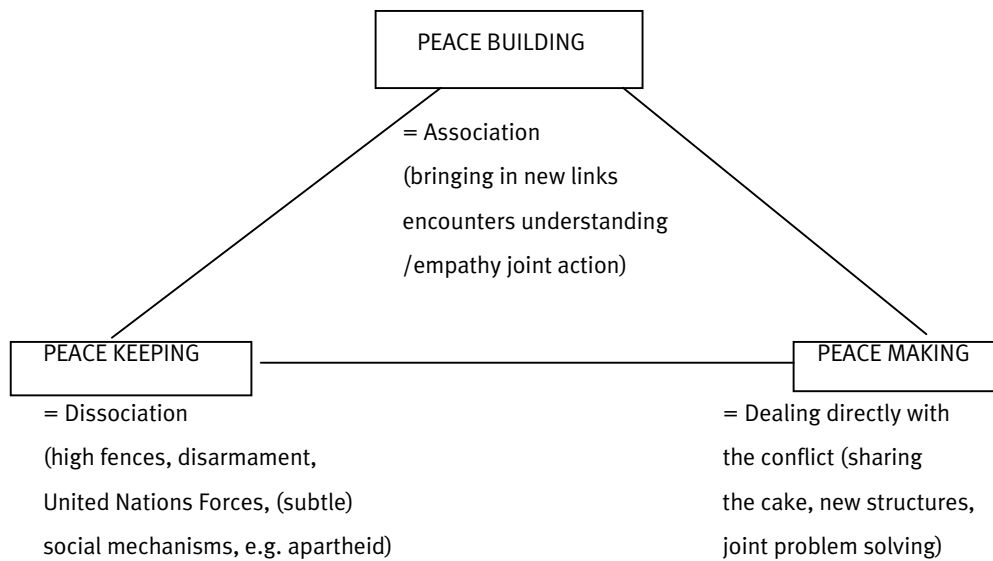
Valerij: One of the arguments of nationalism is that it is a world trend and that even in Europe you can see similar processes that you can compare to Yugoslavia. There will be examples of Ulster, Quebec, Belgium. But Quebec is different, because for decades the extreme option of secession has never been accepted by referendum. I have heard the rhetoric that nationalism is a disease. I agree. There is a civic

nationalism that is closer to patriotism. Ethnic nationalism seems to be the front-line in the public life of the world, but this can be explained by the fact that the global contradiction between the superpowers is gone. This contradiction was extremely dangerous and it did subdue internal tension. I see no reason for nationalism at the end of the 20th century to be seen as a universal trend. It may be a response to certain cultural levels, possibly a response to Western pop culture in its American version, but this alone is not enough to interpret it as the major cause for nationalism. The second cause is to be found in migrations especially migrations of the labor force through Europe to rich countries. These migrations create tensions of a more global character, but again, there have always been migrations in Europe. There used to be more urgent questions in the past, there was no such fertile soil for ethnonationalism, no euphoria of the west to do away with communism, which implied the existence of large states, such as the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia. For some Yugoslavia seems to be too large of a state to exist in Central Europe.

Norbert Ropers: Different Ways of Working for Peace

The process of peace includes the decrease of physical violence and the increase of social justice. Sometimes the relationship between these two goals is contradictory.

Core Strategies



Responding constructively to ethno-political conflicts

Definition of ethno-political: at least one party defines conflict as ethnic, but there may be various reasons that sometimes are covered up with the label "ethnic".

	<i>State Level</i> (It is a problem that the state level so far focuses on interstate conflicts only)	<i>Social Level</i> (Has to take over part of the state's responsibility)
<i>Process Level</i> <i>Micro-social</i> (Rarely does it change structures. It needs initiating actors.)	<i>Power-Negotiation + Mediation</i> (Gets a lot of attention by the media)	<i>People's Diplomacy</i>
<i>Structural Level</i>	<i>Power Sharing</i> (Is necessary for long term solution)	<i>Culturally Tolerant Society</i>

Discussion:

Ruzica: I have a problem with the framework referring to physical violence and social justice only. There also exists mental violence, which is important for the introduction of physical violence, e.g. the media preparing the war. There are subtle processes of mental violence, that also hurt.

Jelena P.: The threat of physical violence also is important. We need an up-bringing for peace in the former Soviet Union.

Diana: This concept of violence may be related to Galtung's triangle: He is talking of structural, physical and cultural violence being related to each other.

Valerij: In any case it is important to note that peace is not just the absence of war.

Sergey P.: When we are talking about the philosophy of peacemaking we should be clear about terms. The term "social injustice" has been used by the Bolsheviks who killed millions of people for its sake. We should be clear about the way of reaching this goal, for example active political work or work towards non-violence within society regardless of ethnic differences.

Vartan: "Peace keeping" is often used as a term that describes a response to already existing violence. But peace keeping should be preventive. I liked an image that Diana used: When a man is standing firmly on the ground his body makes small movements all the time to maintain balance. We need a new category: peace maintaining.

Valerij: Which is the opposite of peace enforcing.

Jurij: There are different steps in time. The tasks differ according to the stages of the conflict.

Julia: Social justice can be injustice, because it depends on the perspective of the viewer.

Andrey K.: How does this concept relate to the principles of non-violence, e.g. when bombs are dropped in the name of peace? Some peace making NGOs just represent one side, e.g. those who are working for human rights or social justice. Is peace making everything that just barely touches on peace making?

Jurij: There is also a necessity to alter the psychology of people and children in order to prevent conflicts. Therefore there are two types of organizations working

for peace: those who are dealing with the consequences of war and raising a new person and those who are dealing with hot spots and immediate problems.

Norbert: Some people accept physical violence in order to overcome social violence. Therefore the definitions indeed are important for the strategy. On the other hand it is clear that there are roots of violence in the minds of people. Then there starts a controversy: What kind of violence is legitimate to overcome other forms of violence. I think it is important to use correct terms in this respect, for example the term "peace enforcement" basically means "just war". Sometimes when people think that war is justified, they should name it truthfully. My definition of peace is helpful in this effect, because it becomes quite clear that bombing is not working for peace according to that definition.

Also I know that there is a tension between the reduction of violence and the increase of justice. Many people in this room have made experiences with communism, when the suffering of people was justified by referring to social justice. These experiences are valid, but there remains the fact that a sustainable peace is not only a problem of an absence of violence, but also some way of dealing with issues of social justice. We need strategies that combine both and I think that for example the strategies of non-violent action do combine both.

Diana: I am convinced that non-violence is also important for peace keeping. Enforcing needs forces and I disagree with that method.

Norbert: I would accept forces that are similar to a police force.

Jelena S.: Bombing in order to make peace is bad. But there remains a huge moral dilemma, of how to protect Sarajevo. How long will it take until peace keepers without arms will achieve that? That also means how many more victims will it take until that time. I have no answer for that dilemma.

Sergey P.: We as peace makers should agree to use similar terms.

Valerij Tishkov: Resources for Peace Makers

Education/Training:

- ETC
- Journals/newsletters (e.g. ethnopolis in the former Soviet Union, newsletter of the network of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology can be received via e-mail also)
- conferences, seminars, etc.
- literature
- (There is a guest researcher program at the Berghof center. Project on Ethnic-Relations also offers information brochures and seminars.)

Support/Funding

- GI (e.g. Guggenheim, Ford, Carnegie)
- governmental or commercial funds (if there is no contradiction with your goals)
- charities (e.g. churches)

Sources of information and cooperation (outside collaborators)

- IGOs and INGOs (international (non-)governmental organizations), e.g. UNESCO, International Alert, etc.
- NNGOs (national NGOs)
- Peace makers' networks (e.g. IPRA)
- Peace research centers

Collaboration (was dealt with in the context of the sub-group about that issue)

Questions:

Julia: Training is important, but we also need time to do our work. It would be good to have a training that does not acquire long term attendance.

Diana: A network of trainers that I am working with is offering local training.

Valerij: There are summer schools that take 8-10 weeks in the summer, e.g. in Oslo we lost 2 places, because of a lack of participants. Our institute can send 3 people every year.

Vartan: We should do an infobulletin in the workshop with the names of magazines and samples of applications.

Vladimir: That would also be good so that we do not forget what we know about each other already until January.

Helena P.: We should exchange written notes and take a report about our work with us for the next seminar, so that we will not waste time with a renewed introduction.

I for example can offer networking addresses in Ukraine, Tatschikistan, etc.

Participants' Offers

Videos

- Andrey B.: video on the situation in Grosny
- Sergey P.: video about a meeting of all Caucasian veterans celebrating the 50th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany.

Creating a Network for Peace Builders (compare sub group 7)

Evaluation

(a detailed report of suggestions is available on request from the team)

Future Contract

For the next workshop the Berghof center will bring an information manual.

Everyone agreed on the date of the next workshop: 27.01.1996-02.02.1996.
(As plane tickets will be much cheaper, if a Saturday night is included in the trip, we will have workshop days from Sunday to Thursday and you should travel on Saturday and Friday.

Spare Time

Apart from some severe problems with the beds, two injured fingers and some colds, the week went along nicely. With the excellent autumn weather many of us enjoyed walks in the park. Food was good and plentiful and I think that most of us were quite satisfied.

Amongst us were lots of talented singers, dancers, toasters and jokers who made the evenings pleasurable and some should be mentioned here by name: For example Vartan who took responsibility for the organization of the evenings. He proposed lots of toasts and jokes or motivated others to propose toasts. Julia sang and played the piano beautifully - accompanied by many other musical talents. Jurij provided home-grown Moldovan wine.

Almost all of the participants understand Russian and many speak it. That made it an ideal language for spare time communication. As there were some professional and volunteer translators among us, those team members who do not understand Russian got translations frequently.

Wednesday Afternoon

With a bus we drove to a metro station. Some Moscovites left the group there, but the others accompanied the foreign guests to the Kremlin, where a guided tour of the armory had been organized for us. Some were too tired to listen to a guided tour, while others enjoyed the stories about the many artefacts. In the evening a larger group went to an excellent Georgian restaurant, others stayed in Moscow over night visiting friends or new acquaintances.

Addendum

by Aleksej Nazarenko

Yuri Ataman represented at the seminar the Joint Committee for Conciliation and Democratization located in Chisinau, Republic Moldova.

Members of this organisation, started their work individually as peacemakers in the Spring of 1992. In January 1993 the Committee was formed, in September 1995 it was expanded to ten members and was officially registered as an NGO.

Members of the Committee represent both conflicting sides – 5 from Moldova and 5 from Transdnistria. They have different backgrounds: journalists, administrators, lawyers, businessmen, etc. Such a compound gives The Committee a possibility to work with both conflicting communities and also to maintain a neutral position in the conflict.

Its work is concentrated on three main directions: conflict resolution, community development and voluntary movement.

Usually members of the Committee work with the communities: meet with people, local administration, government representatives etc. During such meetings Committee's members discuss with the people the information which they have at their disposal, usually about positions of the opposite side on different problems. Then the Committee's activists discuss with people their problems, fears, plans, visions etc. At the same time the Committee tries to find out how it could help them to overcome these problems. On this base the Committee elaborates its programmes and actions.

Committee's goal is to support the process of conflict resolution, to prevent an escalation of the conflict, to build trust in both communities and enable people to develop their individual capacities.

Up to now the Committee has organized three conferences on community development and conflict resolution with the participation of both conflicting parties.

Together with their associates Committee's members were involved in the comparative study in Belfast in August, 1995.

Committee's last action (4th of October, 1995) was the start of the program called "Good Neighbours". At the first stage it organized a meeting between the mayors and representatives of local administration of the two adjacent towns and districts. As a result they signed a protocol of intentions, also was agreed to establish commissions (economy, transport, education, health etc.) on each side which will co-operate and elaborate proposals for co-operation between these two districts.

In its work Committee co-operates with and enjoy the support of international organisations such as OSCE, UNDP and embassies.

With Committee's support and of attendance of its members 2 workshops were organized by ICDS (Northern Ireland) and MICOM (Great Britain) at the University of Kent, Canterbury UK, with the participation of the representatives of both governments (Moldova and Transdnistria). Elaborated proposals served as basis for the elaboration of the agreement between two conflicting parties.

Future: to continue the program "Good Neighbours", to perform the second part of the comparative study, to prepare a conference on community development and conflict resolution in Bendery (a town divided by two conflicting communities), to develop a program on human rights.

Andrej Bazavluk. and Elena Petrova. come from Kharkov (Ukraine). and represented the independent newsagency "Lita-M".

"Lita-M" was founded in 1993.

Its main objectives are:

- the initiation of open and closed negotiations between opposing sides in areas of ethnic conflict,
- the collection of information about the actions of these parties, and the transfer of this information to human rights organizations and other institutions.
- public information work using the mass media with the goal of reconciling the opposing groups and to mediate tensions.

The news agency produces videos, newspaper articles on topics such as reconciliation and nonviolence. „Lita-M“ produces historical and cultural television programs which serve the mutual understanding and reconciliation of different ethnic groups and peoples; it provides information on possible conflict escalation in regions with mixed ethnic populations.

Actions undertaken during the past two years.

Tadjikistan, 1994.

Lita monitored the highly charged situation on location before, during and after the presidential elections. The agency developed suggestions designed to prevent confrontations between enemy clans. In cooperation with the International Red Cross and other international groups, Lita facilitated the exchange of prisoners between: members of the Tadjik opposition and Afganistani M. on the one hand and Russian troupes on the other.

Chechnya, 1995.

Lita attempted to coordinate the mass media on location in order to inform the public about the conflict in as objective a manner as possible. Lita organized the exchange of prisoners and their legal defence, and handed them over to the family members. It also organized negotiations between Grachev (Russian Minister of Defense) and Dudaev (Chechnyan Leader) in the town of Slepzovsk. The agency helped evacuate the population of the civilian population out of war areas and transported wounded civilian to Moscow hospitals. Lita informed military authorities as to the location of the civilian population in order to prevent civilian casualties and identified those responsible for executions in these areas. Lita researched cases of human rights violations by the Russian military. It informed the public as to the locations of mass executions and graves. Lita organized a field hospital in Grozni during heaving fighting and conducted inquiries in order to inform the public about irregularities in the distribution of humanitarian aid.

Piotr Bajda from Poland represented at the seminar "Helsinki Foundation for Human Righths"

This organisation has a long and reach history, It started its activity in the period of Marshall law in Poland (1982) under the name of "Helsinki Committee"

In 1989 members of the "Committee" organised the "Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights", which main objects now include education and monitoring.

Education.

Starting from 1990, and in co-operation with the Council of Europe since 1991, the Foundation organise "International Summer School for Human Rights" for lawyers, parliamentarians, leaders of NGO's and journalists from all post-communists states.

In 1991 they organised, together with Judges Association, a conference for judges from post-communist countries to discuss the legal means of protection of judiciary.

In 1992 a conference on constitutional mechanisms of human rights protection in the new constitutions and constitutional drafts was organised.

The next conference on constitutionalism, devoted to the role of Constitutional Courts was held in September 1991.

In September 1993, the Foundation staged a two day's meeting for leaders of NGO's dealing with the problems of human rights and democracy in post-communist countries.

The bulk of The Helsinki Foundation's Activities focus on Poland. They include public education, and courses of instructions for human rights activists, speakers on human rights; and teaching the legal means of protection to the people may resort in cases of violation of their rights.

The Foundation provide public education through the media: press, television and radio.

These activities include bringing regularly newspaper articles commenting upon the current decisions of European Human Rights Commission and other European human rights organisations, preparing and broadcasting of features on history and philosophy of human rights, constitutionalism etc., TV features in which representatives of the Foundation discuss current events in Poland, educational

films introducing the problems of human rights, radio programs on human rights issues, freedom and tolerance in five languages: Polish, Russian, Byelorussian, Ukrainian, and Lithuanian.

The Foundation conduct a two hundred hour course of instructions called "Human Rights School" .The participants of this school are teachers, lawyers, journalists, police officers and prison staff. The graduates of this school are organising local branch of the Foundation and building a network of independent, specialised local NGO's.

The Foundation also develops special programs and conducts training courses for different professional groups such as future police offices, prison staff, journalists, teachers etc.

Monitoring.

It includes monitoring of the legislative process, prison conditions, right to fair trial etc.

An important area of the Foundation's activity is work with national minorities and refugees. The Foundation has organised meetings of represents of minority groups, aiming at definition of problems shared by all minorities and at search for their solutions. Joint actions are an entirely novel idea. There are many indications that it has been of crucial importance for minority rights in Poland. The Foundation's role resolves itself into provision of expert's assistance. The Foundation also prepared a report on the situation of minorities in Poland and drew up a draft act on their rights. At present, the draft is being processes by the parliament.

The Foundation regularly monitor the situation of refugees and foreigners. It has formed a special unit for free legal aid for these groups. The Foundation monitors and appears in cases of appeal against refusal of the right to stay in Poland, trains in refugee and foreigner rights leaders of other organisations in to welfare assistance to refugees.

The rights of the patient and of the handicapped is another important focus of Foundation's activity.

Marina Bartsyts represented a nongovernmental charitable association Center for Humanitarian Programms which was established in Sukhum (Abkhazia) in November 1994.

The aim of the Center is to assist in processes of recovery and renewal in the spheres of medicine, culture, and ecology in Abkhazia.

In the period since cessation of armed conflict in Abkhazia it has become evident that the state of economic collapse in the unrecognized republic will not allow for funding of programmes in humanitarian sector for some time yet. However, those in need of assistance are not in a position to wait for years. Thus, the Center has begun to develop and implement following programmes to address urgent needs.

- Programme of urgent assistance to victims of the conflict in Abkhazia, a joint programme with UMCOR to help women who suffered during the war in Abkhazia and are in need of reconstructive surgery.
- "Children of the war and the protection of motherhood". Medical and psychological rehabilitation of mothers and children exposed to the suffering from post-traumatic-stress syndrome.
- The rehabilitation of war veterans- organizing psychotherapeutic services for war veterans.
- Home help- medical, psychological and social assistance.
- Emotional rehabilitation- the development of models for diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic stress among survivors of torture and organized violence.
- The establishment of alternative comprehensive schools-setting up independent schools which use modern methods of education.
- Information service-the re-establishment of lost archival and library materials, and the creation of audio-visual archives of wartime and post-war Abkhazia.

Krassimira Damjanova (Bulgaria) represented at the seminar a "Foundation for Negotiation and Conflict Resolution" based in Sofia and its local branch "Youth Educative Centre" from the town of Haskovo.

The Foundation started its activity in 1992.

The main aims of the Foundation are:

- teaching people how to solve conflicts in a peaceful way and negotiate constructively,
- carrying out programs on multicultural co-operation,
- teaching conflict resolution trainers,
- issuing materials.
- The Foundation has carried out following activities:
 - It elaborated and realised (conducted) projects for multicultural co-operation and agreement in the city of Plovdiv, in 1992, projects for multicultural co-operation in towns of Haskovo, Pazardjic, Asenovgrad and Veligrad – towns of ethnically mixed population. These projects were carried out in co-operation with CDR Associates Border from Colorado in 1994-1995.
 - It has conducted several seminars teaching NGO's and journalists to work in the multicultural society, and forming multicultural teams of trainers in civil education and conflict management.

The Foundation organized seminars in co-operation with the "Open education Center" of the "Open Society Foundation". The next project in elaboration aimed to prevent the youth crime.

"Youth Education Center" in Haskovo was founded in the Autumn, 1994, as a result Foundation's activity in this town. YEC works in the area of civil education, negotiations techniques and debating culture, conflict resolution, multicultural education, tolerance, ecological education, peer consultation, education in human rights, fostering the behaviour of the young people according to the norms of democratic, civil society.

Besides seminars and workshops on these topics, YEC carries out different youth charitable, peace, ecological and other actions, and publishes youth newspaper and other materials.

"Nonviolence International- Newly Independent States" is a nongovernmental nonprofit organisation was represented at the seminar by Andrey Kamenschikov

It has been set up to support peace activities in areas of potential and open conflict. It works in the Newly Independent States of the former USSR.

As a group Nonviolence International-Newly Independent States began its work in the summer of 1993 even though its members had worked in the field of peace activities earlier.

The society was officially registered by the Moscow city government on May 13, 1994.

The activities of the society include:

- Preparing leaflets calling on military to adhere to international humanitarian laws, have mercy on enemy soldiers that surrender and to spare civilians. Members of the group distributed these leaflets on the Abkhazian front line during the storming of Sukhumi, September 1993.
- Publishing an information bulletin to describe efforts to mediate and resolve conflicts in different countries of the former Soviet Union (April 1994).
- Assisting family members separated from one another because of fighting by locating and providing information about their relatives.
- Developing proposals to protect civilian population and presenting them to government and military officials of conflicting sides.
- Monitoring developments in Narva, a city in northeast Estonia, populated mostly by ethnic russians, during referendum on its autonomy. Nonviolence International met with representatives of Estonian government and city council and urged both sides to avoid moves leading to further confrontation and violence.
- Providing educational materials on nonviolence and negotiation to officials and peace activists in various conflict areas throughout the former Soviet Union.
- Assisting in organisation of trips to conflict areas for foreign human rights specialists and NGOs, including meetings with republic leadership and visits to refugee camps.
- Monitoring the events during presidential elections in Tadjikistan, Central Asia, November 1994.

- Briefing congressional staff members as well as officials at the State Department, US AID and human rights organisations on developments in conflict zones in Newly Independent States and their effect on the future of Russia.

Activities of Nonviolence International during the War in Chechnya.

As early as September 1994 "Nonviolence International-Newly Independent States" warned peace and human rights organisations about the dangerous developments in the breakaway Republic of Chechnya that could evolve into a war between the local population and Russian troops. In an effort to attract public attention to this issue we organized and led a delegation of Russian and International human rights organisations to visit Chechnya in October 1994. This was two months before a full scale war broke out.

"Nonviolence" offered a five steps plan that could be taken by the Government and the Parliament of the Russian Federation in order to solve peacefully contradictions in the Russian-Chechen relationship. This proposal was submitted to members of the Russian Parliament. "Nonviolence" also proposed specific actions which could be taken by the Chechen Government in order to prevent a war or attract public attention to the possibilities for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Nonviolence International assisted the work of Sergei Kovalev, the Human Rights Commissioner of the Russian Federation and deputies of the Russian Parliament in their efforts to stop the violence in Chechnya and gather information about human rights violations in the conflict zone.

"Nonviolence" gathered information and produced a report of the possible consequences of the war for the ecological situation in the region (January 1995). "Nonviolence" initiated and assisted the work of the International Organisation on Migration on evacuating the civilian population from Chechnya's capital Grozny and other areas. "Nonviolence" also participated in the publication of a special newsletter "Not to know. Not to hear. Not to understand" devoted to tell the truth about the war and publish materials which had not been published in January-February 1995 in other sources.

Nonviolence International was one of the organizers of the Commission for Public Investigation of crimes, committed during the war in Chechnya.

It organized collection of humanitarian aid for refugees from the Chechen war zone.

The group also organized an action called "The Christmas Present to the President". Peace and human rights activists sent president Yeltsin letters with Christmas congratulations and paper soldiers, tanks and coffins.

At the present time Nonviolence International - Newly Independent States is participating in preparing a joint publication with the Quaker Peace Center in Moscow for peace activists and other interested persons. Its objectives are to show examples of constructive nonviolent activities which already have been or may be carried out in conflict zones of the Newly Independent States, tell about organisations and individuals who are involved in those activities and describe the work of the Quaker Peace Center in Moscow as well as different international organisations.

"Nonviolence International – Newly Independent States" has also developed a proposal of an information and educational center for peace activities which could play an important role in facilitating the work of grass-root organisations, help them cooperate and increase the effectiveness of their activities. This project involves cooperation of people from different organisations and a team of 6 such activists already exists.

Julia Kharashvili from Tbilisi (Georgia) represented the Association of Women Displaced from Abkhazia.

Today more than 175 thousands women displaced from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region live on Georgia's territory. After displacement a lot of new problems added to a traditional women's trouble: hard material and economical conditions, lack of qualified medical help, loss of own dwellings, difficulties in earning enough money to keep the family and many others factors influence life of the IDP women. The creation of the Association in Tbilisi was an attempt to ease at least a part of our problems.

The Association's work has begun with data collection. Special questionnaire was written by Leila Naroushvili and Julia Kharashvili, two members of the Association from Sukhumi. The questioning was carried out in November 1994.

The obtained data was used in the work of the Association, which includes following directions:

1. Protection of displaced women's and children's human rights (inherent right to life, right on shelter, free medical aid, education, work etc.)
2. Medical, social and psychological rehabilitation of women and children-victims of the military conflicts in Georgia.
3. Psycho-sociological study of displaced women's main problems.
4. Educational projects for the IDP children.
5. Tracing the missing persons, hostages and prisoners of war.
6. Peacemaking activity including joint projects and actions with Abkhazian NGOs, cross-conflict projects, building of confidence between conflicting communities.
7. Establishment of contacts with other women's NGOs in Georgia and abroad.

Victor Kogan-Yasni has represented at the seminar a nonprofit charitable society "Right to Life and Human Dignity" based in Moscow (Russia).

Aims of this organisation are to propagate diverse aspects of the right to life, to protect all lives endangered as a result of direct actions on the part of the society and the state.

One of the most actual tasks is combatting the employment of the death penalty and other unadequately cruel punishments in the former USSR.

Since there is no possibility to establish independent local human rights groups because of hard persecutions (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) or material difficulties (Belarus) "Right to Life" has to use its own forces protecting human rights in different regions of the former Soviet Union. All information connected with death penalties "Right to Life" can get only by unofficial ways. This information they use in cooperation with other organisations ("Amnesty International", Memorial Center for Human Rights, "Prison and Liberty", organisations of confederative Moscow Human Rights Center which collective member we they are) for defence of the people sentenced to death or to unadequate long camp detention, and people under such threats.

Another practical field of "Right to Life" activity is getting and spreading information about tortures and cases of brutal treatment. We, particularly, participate in independent investigations of violent event of October 1993 in Moscow, when many people died under unknown circumstances.

Another very important field of the Society's activities is campaigning for human and just ethical and legal principles through publication and distribution of different kinds of literature concerning these problems.

Society participate in observing of the situation in Chechnya region and conduct there humanitarian actions. It has established there a Humanitarian Mission.

Members of the "Right to Life" undertake also expeditions in some other regions of potential instability and also try to research very attentively the situation in Moscow and its region.

The Society's main program is now „Human Rights Monitoring, Campaigning and Peacemaking Activities“. It includes :

- monitoring of acute and potentially acute situations in some regions of the former Soviet Union in order to defend people against human right violations and prevent conflict outbreaks ,
- establishing of local groups able to promote human rights enlightenment and tolerance mentality,
- effective spreading of information about conflict situations and elaboration of proposals to resolve the respective constructively.

Evgenia Poplavskaya and Larisa Kudryavtseva represented at the seminar a non-government, charitable and human rights organisation "Order of Charity and Social Protection".

It was founded in 1989 in order to help people, affected by the social crises in Russia, victims of the ethnic conflicts and disasters.

Every year about 500 000 socially unprotected people receive an assistance from the Order.

The Order has organized and conducted several large-scale charity actions.

The main direction of the Order's work are children programs. The Order takes care on a regular basis of about 2000 children from Moscow and 1800 refugee children.

Order's activity includes following main programs:

"Orphan Children"

These activities include providing orphans, children from incomplete families and refugee children with material, social and other kinds of support; regular home nursing of the children, fosterage of gifted children, assistance by vocational orientation

"Gavroshe":

It is a program of psychological rehabilitation of children and parents- victims of ethno-political conflicts, fosterage of constructive creative activity orientation, reducing of destructive behavior, revenge attitudes

While working on this program, a parents club "Gavrosh" was established. Members of this group provide support for the refugees from conflict areas of the country.

"Work places for unemployment":

Creation of work places at home for the families with low income and uncomplete families. Up to now about 200 people got jobs thanks to this program.

"Stop the war":

This program includes organisation and facilitation of meetings and peace negotiations between conflicting ethnic communities, peace making actions / missions in the arias of ethnic and ethno-political conflicts, collection and distribution of humanitarian aid, evacuation of children from conflict zones, psychical rehabilitation of children of different ages, victims of wars and conflicts.

During this program about 100 tones of humanitarian aid were sent and distributed among the affected population.

Besides the peace making actions and mediation activity a legal assistance, psychological and medical aid were provided in conflict areas and musical concerts and festivals for the affected population were organized.

About 200 children were evacuated from the conflicts zones for medical treatment and rehabilitation in Moscow health centers.

The Order has organized and facilitated first successful negotiations between the conflicting parties in the area of Ossetia-Ingushetia conflict (negotiations between the elders of both parties and between women organisations).

Vartan Kukuyan, Lecturer at Kuban University (Krasnodar., Russia) represented the Armenian Society in the Krasnodar region, which he has directed since 1987.

Since the society's founding, the society has met with the resistance of regional authorities which have tried to hinder its activities. In his function as director of the Armenian Society, Vartan has participated in a series of negotiations with the regional authorities. As a result of these negotiations a number of oppositions were solved and mutual understanding reached which served to make the work of the society much easier.

The other problem with which the ethnic minorities in the Krasnodar region were faced, problems which also face the Armenian minority, is the strong antipathy among Cossacks which is directed at all non-Russians. One of the central ideas of the Cossack revival has been the "deliverance" of Russia from refugees of other ethnic minorities. These are refugees that have been driven out of their native regions by conflicts in neighbouring Caucasian republics. This has led to a strongly anti-Armenian atmosphere. In order to diffuse the situation, Vartan carried out negotiations with regional Cossack leaders. The negotiations were subject to difficult conditions and were interrupted repeatedly. Cossack leaders proved to be uninterested in finding constructive solutions because they relied on the image of the Armenian in order to recruit new followers. Nevertheless, certain successes could be reported as a consequence of the negotiations, namely the prevention of an escalation of the conflict and increased bloodshed.

Since 1991, Vartan has worked in the Department of Ethnic Relations in the Krasnodar Regional Soviet. In this function, he has facilitated a number of negotiations between various ethnic communities. He has worked on a solution to the

problem of the Shapsug people which involves their attempt to re-establish an autonomous region, which had been dissolved in 1944. The Russian and Russian-speaking population living in this area has protested against such efforts. As a result of these negotiations, in which Vartan played an important role, tensions were reduced, but the problem of the status of the Shapsug people remains.

The eruption of the conflict between Ossetians and Ingush people on the territory of the Northern Ossetia has also caused tensions between Ossetian and Ingush communities in the Krasnodar region. Negotiations between the communities initiated by Vartan have played an essential role in the easing of these tensions.

In order to foster inter-ethnic relations, Vartan is currently carrying out a number of seminars on tolerance and conflict resolution for Kuban University students, school children, and civil servants in the Krasnodar region.

Sergei Popov, Chair of the Committee for National (Ethnic) Affairs in the Stavropol Region (Southern Russia), Director of the Stavropol Branch of the Russian Peace Foundation, which he represented at the seminar.

The Stavropol region is populated by diverse ethnic groups. In recent years, the ethno-political situation in the Stavropol region has escalated considerably due to the proximity of conflict areas in the Caucasus, refugees from these areas, and the rebirth of the Cossack movement with its stridently nationalist overtones.

As a civil servant and director of the Stavropol Branch of the Russian Peace Foundation, Sergey has, since 1991, had the difficult task of preventing outbreaks of violence by developing methods to diffuse tensions and to develop and implement strategies for stabilizing this precarious situation.

Activities in the Field of Ethno-Political Conflict Management

In 1992 Sergey Popov was involved in the reconciliation of conflicts between Cossaks and Chechnyans in the village of Kitayevka in the Novoselitski region, between Cossaks and the Armenian population in the village of Lysogorskaya in the

Georgievski region, between Nogai and Dargin people in the Neftekumski region, and between Cossaks and the Stavropol regional authorities.

He also served as an official intermediary in the negotiations between Ossetian and Ingush delegations in the town of K.

In 1994 Sergey was active in the mediation of conflict between Cossaks and local authorities in different villages of Stavropol region.

Sergey was chairman of the organizational committee for the conference "Ways of Improving Ethnic Relations in the Northern Caucasus Region" in the town of Zheleznivodsk.

He is the founder of the program "Concept of the Stabilization of Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Stavropol Region."

Sergey Popov was the director of the group responsible for the project toward an accord between Karachaevo-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkar Republics and the Stavropol Region.

Ruzica Rosandic and Jelena Santic represented the Group MOST for Cooperation and Mediation of Conflicts which was founded in the fall 1993 as an independent association and collective member of the Center for Anti-war Action.

The MOST group consist of experts who have been educated to provide training in methods of mediation and negotiation in conflicts situations, and likewise to take part directly as mediators and negotiators in the constructive resolution of conflicts.

The MOST group has organized a series of training seminars in the framework of its program "Education", with the goal to widen the idea of non-violent conflict resolution and to train other relevant groups and interested individuals (members of peace and related groups, social workers, psychologists, teachers, etc.)

As part of a UNHCR project, the psychologists from MOST group were engaged in working with children refugees. The program consisted of workshops with the goal of offering those children all necessary skills to enable them to cope with dramatically difficult surroundings. This program was presented in the book

"Cognition Through Games" which received in 1994 an award from the Serbian Psychologists Association for the popularization of psychology.

MOST group has successfully completed the project "Elimination of the Glorification of War, Nationalism, Ethnocentrism and Sexism in School Textbooks"- an analysis of the socialisation of school children in society. The aim of the project was to offer an alternative program and affirm the value of a peace loving and democratic society. The results of the research were presented in the book "Warfare, Patriotism and the Patriarchy, published both in Serbian and English.

During 1994 the project "Community Building in Ethnically Mixed Regions" was completed. This program was implemented in Vojvodina in the district of Zrenjanin, in an area with a high percentage of ethnically mixed population (Serbs, Hungarians, Slovaks). Through conversations, contacts and workshops citizens in these mixed villages were shown the possible ways to resolve conflicts by establishing dialogue and normal communication. A local ethnic mixed group of mediators was formed to resolve conflicts and problems. This project developed into "Monitoring ethnic rights in Vojvodina" project.

As a continuation of this project, MOST has begun to establish a "MOST Network" throughout all of Serbia. The initiative for this program came from a number of towns (Cacak, Nis, Novi Pazar, Sombor, Leskovac), a number of psychologists, peace activists, social workers and people of other professions who expressed the desire to become more acquainted with organizational skills and networking as well as methods of constructive conflict resolution in order to work on conflict resolution and widening a culture of dialogue in their own towns. In 1995 was formed a team, which started to work on the development and widening of the network (assistance in the formation of local civil groups for cooperation and mediation through development of facilitation skills, organizational skills, education and techniques of negotiation and mediation in the resolution of local problems, strengthening vulnerable groups, etc.)

The program "Good Will Classroom" introduces methods of non-violent conflict resolution in elementary and secondary schools. The fundamental goal of program is to re-enforce behavioral that encourage constructive communication, social responsibility, tolerance and cooperation and general good will. The

promotion of this model in schools requires deminution or isolation of the existent models based on hatred, fear, insecurity and hostility. This project begun in January 1994 with evaluation of the conditions prior to the preparation of the program. An experimental program of workshops was implemented in many elementary and middle schools. The resulting program consists of two forms - for elementary and secondary school pupils and is published in a three volume manual. The program is accepted by UNICEF, and training of teachers, school psychologists and pedagogues is in progress all over Serbia.

At the end of 1993, the project "Pakrac" was started in cooperation, with the Antiwar Campaign from Zagreb. This project was implemented in the town Pakrac which is in UNPA Zone, Sector West. The town was divided in two parts: the larger part was under control of the Croatian authorities and the smaller under control of Serbian authorities of Krajina. The goal of the project was to initiate and support activities to(re)build the essential infra-structure for the citizens, activities that would lead to normalisation of life in the divided community and to re-establishing trust between former neighbors and current enemies. A team from MOST started to work in the field, on the Serbian side. In a similar way, associates from Zagreb worked on the Croatian side of Pakrac.

During 1994 MOST developed its activities on two levels and not only in Pakrac but also in the surrounding villages. On the first level MOST worked with children and youth, promoting methods and skills of non-violent conflict resolution (we organized drawing workshops, photography, calligraphy and poetry evenings, English classes, psychological workshops and sport competitions. On the second level MOST worked with adults(trained in work with looms, organizing selling of products from Pakrac, supplying seeds, fuel, incubators, etc.)

At present a group of volunteers from Serbia and international volunteers continue their work on the territory, promoting the culture of peace and tolerance and creating possibilities for the people to work and earn their livings, which would in turn positively influence their social and psychical stability. Since the last outbreak of war the activities has been oriented to the refugee families, situated in Belgrade and surrounding areas.

Miroslav Samardzic from Zrenjanin, Vojvodina (autonomous province of Serbia) represents a group of human rights and peace activists -Center for Minority Rights (in foundation). This organisation is a local branch of the Center for Antiwar Action (Belgrade).

The group started its activity in since the escalation of ethnic tensions in Vojvodina, which is extremely multiethnic and multiconfessional region. In particular tensions had started during the period of mobilisation (1991) and during the periods of large refugee crisis for the largest portion of Serb refugees was settled in Vojvodina

During 1993 the Center for Antiwar Action organized several public discussions in Zrenjanin and surrounding villages with an intention to raise consciousness in ethnically-mixed communities about their own abilities to live in peace and mutual understanding.

In the second half of 1994 the Center implemented a project "Advocating the rights of ethnic and religious minorities in Banat" (a subregion of Vojvodina). The results of this project were very encouraging since it has created a large number of activists educated in grass-root work in the multi-cultural communities. This has enable the local activists to start the work on the foundation of the Center for Minority Rights in Zrenjamin.

The objectives of the Center for Minority Rights are:

- To protect and implement the rights of ethnic and religious minorities in multi-cultural region of Vojvodina,
- To prevent inter-ethnic conflicts before the stage of "no return",
- To promote a culture of peace, tolerance and inter-ethnic dialogue,
- To establish a network of local groups and individuals (composed of different nationalities) who would, especially in local communities, work over a longer period of time on monitoring minority rights.

At the present moment the Center for Minority Rights is organizing its work along following directions:

- Establishing immediate contacts with members of minority communities, including their political representatives, journalists, teachers, and activists.
- Visiting local communities and collecting data about violation or reduction of the minority rights for the each minority community in Vojvodina.
- Providing legal assistance to the members of minority groups in cases of maltreatment and discrimination,
- Informing the public about the situation of minority rights in Vojvodina, by organizing dialogues with responsible groups and authorities,
- Organizing workshops in ethnically mixed local settings on conflict resolution and mediation.
- Publishing report about the status of minority rights in Vojvodina and proposing measures for its improvement.

Vladimir Sukhov represents a group called OMEGA, organisation of missions of ethnic harmonisation, which founded and registered in May, 1992 , in Moscow.

Before the foundation Members of OMEGA were already active in the field of peace making and worked in conflict zones (Nagorny Karabakh).

Activities of the group include: human rights monitoring, exchange of prisoners, observer in prison camps, campaigns for the saving of lives, the search for solutions for various types of social conflict, propagation of moral principles, active support of peace and stability in society, interceding for the abolition of the death penalty, human rights monitoring, aid for victims of conflicts, environmental catastrophes and the sick without means.

In 1992–93 members of OMEGA worked in the region of the Abkhas-Georgian conflict.

After their meeting with the leaders of the conflicting parties E. She-wargnadze and V. Ardzinba, both leaders expressed the principal interest in the OMEGA activities and took the responsibility in its development.

In follow up activities (November-April,1992) OMEGA found out whereabouts of more than 500 missed civilians and informed their relatives.

OMEGA initiated several exchanges of hostages for captured militaries and took part in these exchanges as observer and also initiated an exchange of the corpses of killed people.

In February 1993 OMEGA transported a group of wounded to Moscow for medical treatment.

Together with members of the Anti-Fascist Center (Moscow) delivered humanitarian aid to the cities of Sukhumi and Tkvarcheli.

OMEGA initiated negotiations in Kvarkhelo-Ochamchirsky region.

An Abkhazian member of OMEGA repeatedly initiated exchanges of civilians and hostages, and distributed approx. 3 mln. Georgian coupons of private donations to refugees.

OMEGA has elaborated "The Caucasus is our Common Home" project based on the working experience in Karabakh and in the region of the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict to tie up prevent military activities in in the region.

At the time of the rebellion in Moscow in October, 1993 members of OMEGA collected information about the cases when the police exceeded their authority during the state of emergency. The collected information was passed to the General Prosecutor's office and to the mass media. OMEGA also put the investigations under public control.

In December 1993 OMEGA acted as public observers during the election campaign to the Russian State Duma.

Since February,1994 OMEGA worked on the Ossetian-Ingush conflict in Ingushetia and Nord-Ossetia. Members of the group studied the situation, worked also in refugee camps, met with regional authorities, members of the Joint Inquiry Group of the General Prosecutors Office of Russia and interacted with Provisional Administration of the Prigorodny region (an area in Nord Ossetia where pogroms against Ingush population were committed).

OMEGA developed mechanisms and ways to reduce tension and help refugees return. These proposals were then delivered to the governments of Nord Ossetia, Ingushetia and the Head of the Provisional Administration of the Prigorodny

Region. An agreement was signed with the government of Ingushetia on the status of public observers and mediators.

In October, 1994 members of OMEGA were monitoring the problems of Ingush refugees and their returning to their homes and were also involved in delivering and distribution of humanitarian aid.

Chechnya.

In October, 1994 a member of OMEGA took part in developing propositions aimed to prevent escalation of the situation in Chechnya and visited this republic with a delegation of Russian and international NGOs in order to study the situation on the spot and search for ways of reducing confrontation between the conflicting parties.

In December, 1994 OMEGA initiated and facilitated the work of Commission of Public Patronage of Mutual Obligations of Russia and Ichkeria (Chechnya).

Members of OMEGA were in Chechnya when Russian troops began their offensive and participated in several non-violent actions of protest against the war. They also inform the media about development of the situation in this region.

As a result of activity of Victor Popkov, the head of OMEGA, in January 1995, 8 prisoners of war were released by Chechens.

Members of OMEGA also registered violations of human rights, the Hague and Geneva conventions by all parties in the conflict.

In March, 1995 OMEGA took part in the "Mothers March for Life and Compassion". It assisted a Dutch NGO to deliver humanitarian aid to the town of Nazran.

Omega carried out a legal defence of Russian servicemen who were prosecuted by military prosecutors office after their release from Chechen captivity.

In June propositions were made of constructive procedures to implement the agreements between Russia and Chechnya, which were passed to the leaders of the Russian and Chechen delegations in Grozny.

Initiated by OMEGA the Chechen Parliament adopted a unilateral decree on the observance of the Geneva Conventions.

OMEGA also co-operated closely with the human rights mission of Sergey Kovalev in Chechnya.

In August, 1995 OMEGA took part in the investigations of facts of epidemic diseases in the village of Avtury as part of a Russian-Chechen joint delegation.

At the present moment OMEGA constitutes its efforts to initiate a public movement aimed to put pressure on the politicians to give up their efforts for a military resolution of the so called "Chechen Question".

Jenifer Tanaka represented at the seminar a non-profit, public association Romani CRISS- The Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies which was registered on April 9, 1993 in Bucharest as a successor of the "Group for Studies regarding Romani and Community Development".

The Mandate and Program of CRISS:

Criss aims to continue its growth and effectiveness of activists and professionals oriented toward concrete social work in communities where there are Roma persons. In approaching the social, economic and cultural realities of these Roma communities, CRISS aims to improve communication and cooperation between the local authorities, other community members, civic organisations and political institutions in Romania. These social actions represent the part of the "social intervention" in the program and structure of CRISS.

At the same time, we promote the systematic documentation of case studies and theoretical discussions, with the aim of a more efficient implementation of economic, social and cultural/educational projects in Roma communities. We also promote the increase of individual for promotion of civil and political rights of Roma in Romania and, in the long run, other European countries. This involves the raising of consciousness and understanding of civil rights and responsibilities, as citizens of the Roma people.

For example, CRISS established a cooperative agreement with the Institute Of Science and Education (Bucharest) and with the school inspectorate of Maramures Country, for the promotion of a pedagogical method incorporating the culture and social psychology specific to the Roma children.

Cooperative Projects, 1993-1995

1. Interface: The first cooperative project was started in 1993, through a research contact among the Center for Tsiganes(Gypsy) Research (CRT) and the institute of Sociology and financed by the Commission for European Communities. The aim is to gather information to be stored in the CRT database, through the distribution of the Interface survey/questionnaire regarding organisations, projects and publications concerned with the Roma in Europe.
2. Analysis and Evaluation: In 1994, CRISS and CTR began a new project on the methodology of comparative analysis and evaluation of social action projects in Western and Central Europe (schooling, economic development, education in civil rights, etc).
3. Conference "Roma in Central and Eastern Europe: Social Policies and Everyday Life": Romani CRISS contributed with personnel and in the preparation of the agenda for this conference, which was held in Snagov-Bucharest, April 29-May 2, 1993. The conference was co-sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Project on Ethnic Relations and the International Union of Roma.
4. "Preventing Violence against Roma Communities in Romania". The Project on Ethnic Relations (PER) sponsored a mission of international experts on February 6-12, 1994. In which Romani CRISS helped with the preparation, contacts and acted as a filter.
5. Contact Point for Roma Issues: The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) recently appointed the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti in Warsaw. The mandate of the Contact Point is to act as a clearing-house for information on Roma issues, to facilitate contacts on Roma issues between OSCE participating states, international organisations and NGOs.
Romani CRISS is working to help fulfill the mandate of the Contact Point, through the exchange of information and advice concerning the Roma in Romania.

Romani CRISS Projects, 1993-1995.

1. "Situation of the Roma Children in Europe". In this project, launched in 1993 and financed by UNICEF, CRISS coordinated research teams in Romania and Hungary.

2. "ROMANO LIL" - a newsletter with information regarding activities of Roma organisations. Financed by the U:S: Embassy-Bucharest, launched in 1993.
3. "Work Places for Roma in Romania" CRISS, in collaboration with NGOs in Germany and the Roma Federation in Romania, provides resources and assistance in the organisation of seminars focused on economic management and income-generating/self-help activities for community use, the organisation and application of skills for income-generating activities. Further support setting up work places for Roma groups in 1994 were funded European Conferences of Churches and Romani CRISS acted as filter/mediator for information, advising and networking.
4. "Economic Activities and Human Rights". Kaplan allocated funds for economic projects of other Roma organisations, and where Romani CRISS acts as a filter.
5. "Romani Mediators". In 1992-1993. Romani CRISS and the Federation of Roma organized seminars and public meetings for the training of Romani mediators for civic participation, confidence building and community development in local communities with Roma persons.
6. "Prevention Combatting Violence in Communities and Zones in which Roma Collectives Live". This project, financed by the PHARE Democracy Program, concerns the promotion of grass-roots level democracy, by holding round table discussions with local authorities and Roma community members in towns villages where there has been violent group conflicts. In doing this we aim to resolve past conflicts (understanding how the conflicts developed, progressed; update the situation of the investigation not concluded or files sent to judiciary, ect.) and to prevent future conflicts. The round tables provide a forum to open lines of communication, promote tolerance and better understanding among all individuals involved.

Activities for 1996

CRISS intends to develop the activities of documenting and monitoring the respect of the human rights and minority rights of Roma in Romania, on permanent and systematic basis.

Criss will also carry on :

- Documenting events of collective violence, racial violence and harassment.
- Monitoring the administration of justice and providing legal defence to Roma victims of racial violence and human rights abuses.
- Conducting content-analysis of mass communication about intra-community conflicts affecting Roma collectives, press of Roma in Romania.
- Acting for the reducing of intolerance and stereotyping against Roma and other minorities as expressed in. mass communications.
- Mediation in the reconstruction of destroyed houses and social reinsertion of Roma communities in post-conflict situations.
- Lobbying for local government funds and applying pressure for unfulfilled government commitments to fund the reconstruction of some houses and conclusion of judicial cases.
- Working on the project "Work places for Roma in Romania."

New activities/projects will include :

- Organising a network of early-warning, and quick intervention teams in cases of violence against Roma.
- Building-up Local Councils for Prevention of Manifestations of Intolerance and Conflicts in Intra-community Relations.(Project carried-on in cooperation with the Project on Ethnic Relations, Princeton, USA).
- Training of Roma mediators for local developement, civic participation, confidence building and community developement in local communities with Roma population.
- Providing legal aid for Roma in Romania (funded by AIDROM).
- Conducting a study on the situation of Roma children in Romania (funded by Linden Stiftung)
- Conducting new pedagogic actons for Roma children (Funded by the Council of Europe).

- Creation of databases at Romani CRISS to organize, store and retrieve more efficiently the all documentation regarding projects and studies.

Marina Kostenetskaya is a writer and journalist working at Latvian Radio.

Marian Kostenetskaya was one of the founding members of the Popular Front in Latvia, a movement (now a political party) that supported Latvian independence and the secession of Latvia from the USSR.

In publications and public appearances addressing the Latvian and Russian speaking communities, Marina Kostenetskaya promoted the program and goals of the Popular Front. In doing so, she emphasized the necessity of dialogue and the peaceful coexistence of the both populations. She has been a vocal supporter of tolerance and mutual understanding between Russians and Latvians. Marina Kostenetskaya's work as a bridge builder benefited from the fact that she was raised in a bilingual and bicultural setting. This allowed her equal insight into the problems of both populations and fostered her acceptance by them.

The tensions between Latvians and members of the Russian-speaking communities have not abated since Latvian independence - in some respect tensions have in fact worsened.

Marina Kostenetskaya currently works at Latvian Radio, where she seeks to take advantage of this position in contributing to the improvement of relations between the two communities in the new political and social situation.

She moderates two programs in Russian, one for children and one for adults.

The children's program is designed to introduce Russian children to the culture and custom of the Latvian people. In the adult program, Marina Kostenetskaya addresses the Russian-speaking audience on the question of „Why the Latvians don't like us“. This takes the concrete form of stories about the history of Latvia and real events in the lives of people who have suffered under Stalinist terror. Along with reports about secret documents from the Soviet period, this experience helps the Russian-speaking population to understand Latvian problems and to view the situation from a Latvian perspective. According to Marina Kostenetskaya, this is the first step toward reconciliation.

On the other hand, when Latvians see that many Russians are sensitive to the historical traumas of the Latvian people they begin to understand the problems of Russians in the region, who were in fact hostages of the Soviet occupying regime.

In Marina Kostenetskaya's experience, this manner of peacemaking is the most adequate in the current situation.

As a writer, Marina Kostenetskaya travels extensively throughout Latvia and also appears before Latvian audience. These local efforts toward reconciliation among the Latvian population complement her radio programs for the Russian-speaking community in Latvia.