



LISA SCHIRCH

CIVILIAN PEACEKEEPING



Preventing Violence
and Making Space for
Democracy

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*Preventing Violence and
Making Space for Democracy*

Lisa Schirch

Life & Peace Institute, Uppsala

Front cover:

The photo is taken in Kathmandu, Nepal, showing a 'sadhu', a holy man within Hinduism, discussing with a group of soldiers outside a Hindu temple in Durbar Square. Photo: Kerstin Lundgren

Civilian Peacekeeping

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Foreword

Already in the 1970's Johan Galtung observed the fact that the closer you come to a conflict, the more difficult is it to stay unbiased in your judgment on who is to be blamed. This research was conducted on UN peacekeeping personnel. The same occurs for civilian peacekeepers. One response to this problem is to have a really good preparation before you go on a mission and be aware of the risks you are running into. On the other hand - the deeper you get in the understanding of a specific conflict, the less inclined you are to make simple and general statements.

It is inspiring and thought-provoking to read about people who try to address problems that have been treated by humankind for centuries, with new approaches. This book describes one of these. Under what circumstances can a non-armed third party presence in violent surroundings make a difference, through a coercive exercise of power, based on a conviction that it is not through arms but through other means that the conflict is successfully dealt with so that peace can be built?

Lisa Schirch, a well-known US-based peace researcher, is well equipped to give this overview of how the civil and non-armed alternatives to traditional military peacekeeping can be structured and elaborate on why, when, who, for whom etc.

I have had the chance to participate in both the selection and preparation of volunteers, who under very basic circumstances have participated in missions as peace observers in conflict zones in Latin America. It has been inspiring to meet and get to know these applicants, mostly very well educated with relevant academic background, with experience from the region and fluent in Spanish. To get to know how much they are aware of the task they are supposed to take on. And it has been even more inspiring to know afterwards that both the peace observers and those they have been sharing their time and lives with witness of the great impact the international presence has made.

In a parallel process, we also arranged south-south encounters where peace practitioners from Angola, East Timor, Western Sahara, Guatemala, Colombia and Mexico met to share their experiences on local peacebuilding, and the differing contexts and conditions under which this has to be done. In the same way as civilian peacekeepers are sent to conflict zones, individuals from these areas have come to the south-south encounters to discuss the conflict in the country they come from and get a better understanding of the peacekeeping mission. As a preparation for the mission in the field area, the peace observers mentioned above have participated in these encounters. There is no better preparation than this. Together with persons from six ongoing violent conflict-ridden areas the discussions on what the international community, and especially the civil society, can do has given both the peace practitioners from the countries at stake a better understanding of how we can work together.

The Life & Peace Institute has field programs in conflict zones, where many of the war-zone logics apply. It is really not a simple question how to deal with the blind logics of violence when the infrastructure has broken down, and drugged, frustrated and angry young men are ruling the streets. Should we send in unarmed peace observers? Who would be willing to assume the responsibility in these situations? What we often forget is to analyse why it has even come so far, and that civilian peacekeeping most probably could have made a difference if the appropriate preventive measures would have been timely applied. Secondly, the mandate on which one can act is often different. Where military coercive approach has been a traditional response, a “moral” mandate based on the authority of being a well-known, unarmed and respected peace-force is often better equipped to go to certain areas than correspondent armed contingents. It is certainly a risky task, regardless if you are armed or not.

The interest in a third party intervention is increasing. One recent example is how the task is described in the Global Action Agenda on Conflict Prevention, adopted in July 2005 at a conference at the United Nations, where it is said that “the UN should work with existing civil peace services in order to develop shared rosters of specialists, taking into account the importance of cultural and gender diversity as key resources of such teams. Governments should provide political and financial support for Civil Society Organisations that place multinational trained unarmed civilian peacekeepers”. Another example could be in the context of the European Union, where the civilian dimension of crisis management and prevention is being rapidly developed. In the shift from reaction to prevention the civilian peacekeepers will have an increasingly important role.

I have often reflected upon the fact that it is a much more advanced task to try to make a difference by being present in a conflict zone without arms than with. Yet it is often still regarded with some suspicion, something that is also described in this book. But at the same time we can observe a growing understanding of what this can be and how it can be done.

In the first chapter Lisa Schirch refers to the often-heard cry by a frustrated world observing that horrendous events are taking place that “something must be done”. This book shows in concrete and pedagogical terms that there are viable and alternative ways of reacting besides sending in armed people.

*Peter Brune
Executive Director
Life & Peace Institute*

Introduction

This report is an updated and revised edition of the 1995 publication *Keeping the Peace. Exploring Civilian Alternatives in Conflict Prevention*, commissioned by the Life & Peace Institute in response to an invitation from the New Sudan Council of Churches. The Life & Peace Institute has an ongoing interest in developing the idea of action research that combines people, non-governmental organizations, and research. The original mandate of the 1995 report was to research the practice of interpositioning, placing unarmed individuals directly between two fighting groups by organizations such as Witness for Peace, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Peace Brigades International and the Balkan Peace Team. In interviewing these and other civilian groups who had intervened in various conflicts, it became clear that interpositioning was not the sole or primary activity of many of the intervening groups. In fact, there have been very few examples of interpositioning. The report's focus includes the diversity of experiences and contexts where civilian conflict intervention occurred. The term interpositioning is set in the larger context where it is used, first among other peacekeeping activities, and then in an overall peacebuilding framework of intervention.

This book now serves as a guide to unarmed civilian peace teams, also known as civilian peacekeeping. It explains the theory and practice of these civilian peacekeeping teams and can be used as a guide for planning complex peacebuilding missions. The book covers questions such as:

- Why intervention is needed?
- What type of intervention is appropriate?
- Who should intervene?
- When and how will the intervention take place?

The book also explores the theoretical assumptions that underlie these types of civilian interventions. It explores successful and unsuccessful attempts at civilian peacekeeping to provide insights into these questions. While lessons may be learned from past experiences, each intervention will have its own set of contextually dependent answers.

Who should read this book?

The intended audience for this report is:

- Non-governmental organizations who consider involving themselves in conflict interventions in a civilian peacekeeping role;
- Groups in conflict situations who consider inviting or organizing civilians to intervene in stopping the violence, making space for negotiations, or accompaniment of endangered individuals or groups;

- Government, UN, or regional organizations who consider using civilian peacekeepers in their peacebuilding missions; and/or
- Students or others interested in learning about the theory and practice of civilian peacekeeping.

Research Process

This report is based on qualitative, descriptive, and exploratory research that examined peacekeeping functions by civilian peace teams with the aim to reveal the experiences, theories, and practices used by existing civilian peacekeepers. Interviews for the initial report were held during the summer of 1994 with more than two dozen people from key organizations and civilian ad hoc interventions engaged in civilian peacekeeping. The interviewees were selected for their involvement in civilian peacekeeping projects. While attempts were made to interview as many people as possible in a short amount of time, only the most relevant individuals and organizations were included. Both the 1995 and the revised 2005 edition of this book also rely heavily on annual reports, training manuals, organizational documents, newsletters, books, articles and letters that describe the work of these organizations.

In the course of the research, it became clear that while it is important to learn from the past experiences of civilian peacekeepers, the lessons learned may not be transferable from one conflict to another. There are no prescriptive answers to any of the questions posed here. The answers must be discovered from within the context.

Economic and political contexts are only partly responsible for making each conflict unique. The cultural context of the conflict needs to be considered in planning the why, what, who, when and how of civilian peacekeeping intervention. Understanding and utilizing cultural resources are crucial. People in conflicts often have very different perceptions and understandings of conflict in general, the particular conflict at hand, and ways of resolving conflict. Extra care needs to be taken to ensure that civilian peacekeeping missions are shaped with the help of groups in the conflict, and/or that the culture of the groups in the conflict is given validity and priority by peacekeepers.¹

Terminology

There are some objections to the use of the term “civilian peacekeeping” to describe the work of unarmed civilian accompaniment, interposition, and monitoring projects due to its military connotations and the limitations traditional terms hold in describing complex practices. Yet there is a general and broad consensus within the

1 See the following for more on culture and conflict resolution: Duryea, Michelle LeBaron. *Conflict and Culture: A Literature Review and Bibliography*. British Columbia: University of Victoria, 1991, and Avruch, Kevin and Black, Peter W. “The Culture Question and Conflict Resolution.” *Peace and Change*. Vol 16(1) January 1991

groups doing the work described in this book that the term “civilian peacekeeping” does in fact best describe their work, because it plays very similar functions to armed or military peacekeeping. Interpositioning, accompaniment, and monitoring for example, can be done by either armed UN “blue helmets” or unarmed civilians. In both cases it is a process of separating the groups and deterring violence.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who gave their time to this project. The passion and urgency communicated by many of the interviewees captured the spirit of this work for peace and motivated me to continue my efforts to articulate and conceptually map their work.

1. "Something must be done!"

This cry came as the genocide began in Rwanda, as the civil war in Colombia escalated, as the war in the former Yugoslavia exploded, as Sudanese refugees began pouring into Darfur, as terrorists took over a school in Beslan, Chechnya, and in countless other dark moments of history. And the list will only keep getting longer.

Civilians around the world are answering this cry. They deter human rights violations and prevent harassment at Israeli checkpoints by being a symbolic presence, indicating that the world is watching. They accompany human rights workers in Aceh, Indonesia, allowing them to take risks in travel and advocacy that they might not be able to take otherwise. And they use their very bodies as human shields to prevent military attacks in Colombian villages that refuse to cooperate with and shelter military and rebel groups.

Many difficult questions echo in response to the call for intervention. *Why* is intervention called for? *What* types of intervention are appropriate and effective? *Who* are the best interveners? *When* should they intervene? *How* will the intervention take place? This book seeks to answer these questions, particularly as they relate to the concept of civilian peacekeeping.

Prior to the 1948 establishment of the United Nations and before the globalization of media provided instant information, there was often little organized response to the tragedies of genocide, massacres, or other forms of direct violence. Today, the United Nations, regional organizations such as the Organization of American States and the Organization of African Unity, or powerful countries such as the United States are usually charged with the responsibility to "do something" in destructive conflicts. Increasingly, civilians are taking responsibility for protecting human rights in the midst of violence.

This book describes how unarmed civilian peacekeepers can prevent or limit violence and make space for democracy. Civilian peacekeepers place themselves in situations where one or more groups aim to harm others. Some accompany returning refugees and human rights activists, so that they can safely engage in democratic processes aimed at addressing the root causes of the violent conflict. Some deter violence by maintaining a symbolic presence in places that may be targets of terrorism or may suffer an outbreak of violence. Others observe, monitor, and report on human rights violations or election processes.

Civilian peacekeeping is one approach to addressing violent conflict. These very specific tasks need first to be nested conceptually within the broader range of activities that people and groups undertake in the peacebuilding process.

A Peacebuilding Framework

While the term peacebuilding has been limited by some authors to the post-war phase of reconstruction, it is increasingly used by the United Nations and many non-

governmental organizations as an umbrella term for all types of activities in all phases of conflict that contribute to establishing peaceful, stable societies. Peacebuilding seeks to prevent, reduce, transform, and help people recover from violence in all forms, even structural violence that has not yet led to massive civil unrest. At the same time it is a constructive process that empowers people to foster relationships at all levels.

Humanity's peacebuilding response to the cry to "do something!" is improving. In the 2004 crisis in Darfur, for example, UN refugee camps and dozens of international organizations sought to help refugees fleeing from genocidal violence in their communities. Yet it is still woefully inadequate as the violence continues without the political will to fund a large peacekeeping force to prevent further massacres in Sudanese villages.

Peacebuilding often takes place under crisis situations that prohibit reflective analysis. In attempts to reduce violence quickly, people attempt quick-fix solutions rather than concentrate on long-term needs. The interveners and the activities they conduct are chosen by the skills or resources available at the moment rather than what is needed in the situation. The "why" or mandate for the intervention is too often given little thought other than the cliché "we must do something".

Peace does not just "happen". It is a complex, dynamic process. Peace emerges as people take great care in their decision-making by planning for the long term, anticipating potential problems, engaging in ongoing analysis of the conflict and local context, and coordinating different actors and activities in all stages of conflict and all levels of society. Peacebuilding is strategic when there is coordination of resources, actors, and approaches to accomplish multiple goals and address multiple issues within a long-term time period.

The field of peacebuilding is wider and more complex than most people realize. While the term "peacebuilding" was first used to describe activities in a post-war context, it is now increasingly used by the UN and NGOs to describe the entire range of activities including peacekeeping, economic development, diplomacy, transitional justice, democratization efforts, etc. The term peacebuilding holds these diverse activities together, recognizing the interdependence of these different efforts - successful diplomacy, for example, often depends on successful peacekeeping. While the term peacebuilding relates these diverse activities conceptually by emphasizing their mutual contribution to building a stable, sustainable peace, in reality, the actors who engage in these different activities are often not coordinated. There are few forums to help reduce overlap between projects or to coordinate the peacebuilding efforts by different groups involved in the same conflict. This is a problem within the UN, within civil society, and between all groups working in the same region.

The complete inventory of civilian actors who contribute to peacebuilding is too large to detail here. This list of interveners could include groups such as Amnesty International, who use letter-writing campaigns to combat human rights abuses, international media and freelance journalists who observe, document and

alert the international community to violent conflicts, a variety of dialogue and relationship-building programs such as Search for Common Ground, trauma healing workers, peace and human rights education trainers, environmental groups such as Greenpeace who intervene on behalf of the environment, and international relief and development groups such as the International Red Cross, Oxfam, and CARE, who deliver humanitarian assistance and do social, economic, and community development projects.

Peacebuilding requires a range of approaches if it is to be sustainable over the long term. There are four general approaches to peacebuilding:²

Waging Conflict Nonviolently

Advocates and activists seek to gain support for change by increasing a group's power to address these issues, and ripen the conditions needed to transform relationships, move toward democracy, and protect human rights. This approach to peacebuilding raises awareness of social justice issues and ripens the conditions needed for successful dialogue and negotiation.

Reducing Direct Violence

Efforts to reduce direct violence aim to restrain perpetrators of violence, prevent and relieve the immediate suffering of victims of violence, and create a safe space for peacebuilding activities in other categories that address the root causes of the violence. Civilian and military peacekeeping projects fall into this category of peacebuilding.

Transforming Relationships

Efforts that aim to transform people and their relationships use an array of processes that address trauma, transform conflict and do justice. These processes give people opportunities to create long-term, sustainable solutions to address their needs.

Capacity Building

Longer-term peacebuilding efforts enhance existing institutional capacities to meet needs and rights and prevent violence through education and training, development, military conversion and transformation, research and evaluation. These activities aim to build just structures that support a sustainable culture of peace.

Many actors engage in multiple categories of peacebuilding. These approaches are often simultaneous, ongoing, and interdependent. Peacebuilding is multidimensional with multiple interveners conducting multiple activities throughout various stages of a conflict.

There is a temptation for organizations to try to do too much. Many civil society organizations and even the military express the desire to engage in humanitarian

2 Schirch, Lisa. *Strategic Peacebuilding*. Intercourse, Pennsylvania: Good Books, 2004

Figure 1: Map of Peacebuilding



aid, peacekeeping, human rights monitoring, reconciliation, and development work. Each of the approaches to peacebuilding requires a different, unique skill set. There are already organizations that have developed expertise in each of the different approaches to peacebuilding. While the needs in conflict are great, anyone considering taking part in a long-term peacebuilding process should reflect on their own skills and capacity and how they might coordinate with other groups to ensure that other needs are met.

Many civil society groups tend to lump all “nonviolent” work together. However, there are many different kinds of nonviolent action. Most often, the term “nonviolence” is used interchangeably with activism and advocacy designed to raise awareness of social justice issues and empower disenfranchised groups. However, dialogue, civilian peacekeeping, and education are also “nonviolent” approaches. It is important to make distinctions between different approaches to peacebuilding with different goals. Civilian peacekeeping, as described below, aims primarily to reduce levels of direct violence, so that other groups can safely carry out nonviolent activism or dialogue, for example.

The Case for Peacekeeping

The term peacekeeping connotes an image of a soldier who uses violence or the threat of violence skillfully and minimally, "so as to prevent more extensive use of violence".³ The International Peace Academy defines peacekeeping as "the prevention, containment, moderation, and termination of hostilities, through the medium of a peaceful third party intervention, organized and directed internationally, using multinational forces of soldiers, police, and civilians to restore and maintain peace".⁴ The United Nations and regional organizations use military peacekeepers to act as international police to maintain ceasefires, to limit violence, and to assist in the withdrawal of troops and demobilization of armed groups. Peacekeepers may also protect civilian workers and accompany humanitarian aid workers and resources to ensure their safe transportation.

Peacekeeping is a "dissociative" approach to peace: it separates the groups in a conflict from each other so as to stop the cycle of violence. By interrupting the chaos of gunfire and revenge, it also creates a "cool down" period that fosters opportunities for the political expression of conflict. Traditional peacekeeping tasks involve supervision of cease-fires and the staffing of buffer zones.

Recent UN and civilian peacekeeping projects have added new activities, including election monitoring, facilitating communication between armed groups, and protecting refugees and internally displaced peoples. In this sense, many peacekeeping operations are "multidimensional". Peacekeeping is an essential component in peacebuilding, as it is often impossible to engage in other forms of peacebuilding in the midst of a war, such as waging conflict nonviolently through activism or advocacy, transforming relationships of the groups in conflict, or building long-term capacity.

The number of UN peacekeeping operations is increasing. In the first forty years of the UN's existence, there were thirteen peacekeeping missions. Since 1988, there have been well over forty missions. At the beginning of 2005, there were more than 60,000 peacekeepers operating in 16 missions in various parts of the world.⁵ Individual countries, such as the United States, are also exploring how they can transform part of their militaries into units that can perform in peace or stability operations rather than engage in traditional forms of warfare.⁶

3 Galtung, "Participants in Peacekeeping Forces," p. 265

4 Diehl, Paul F. *International Peacekeeping*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993. p. 5.
International Peace Academy. *Peacekeepers Handbook*. New York: Pergamon Press, 1984. p. 22

5 *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*. Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. New York: United Nations, 2004. p. 68

6 *Peacemaking and Peacekeeping: Implications for the United States Military*. Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1993. The author of this book, Lisa Schirch, participated in teaching a course on Winning the Peace at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point as part of the effort to transform the military and increase its capacity to contribute to building peace.

While military peacekeeping is important, it also receives wide criticism. In the former Yugoslavia, there were too few peacekeepers to prevent massacres. In places like Sierra Leone and Cambodia, peacekeepers routinely raped local women or forced them into prostitution in exchange for food. In Cyprus, peacekeepers separating the two sides may have removed the urgency for a political solution. Due to the perceived failure of many military peacekeeping missions, such as in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia, the high costs of military peacekeeping and the trend to target civilians in inter and intrastate war, there is increasing interest in civilian, unarmed approaches to peacekeeping. At the same time, a growing number of civilians are trained and prepared to work in conflict zones as civilian peacekeepers.

Military and civilian peacekeeping efforts share these goals and tasks but use different methods to coerce or persuade groups to stop fighting. There is a conceptual problem with armed or military peacekeeping – it models the efficacy of using violence and thus can inadvertently reinforce the idea that violence, rather than dialogue, is a useful way of addressing conflict. Unarmed or civilian peacekeeping models the efficacy of using other forms of power - such as relationships and communication skills - to achieve similar goals. Civilian peacekeeping, as defined here, involves unarmed individuals placing themselves in conflict situations in an intentional effort to reduce inter-group violence.

Civilian peacekeeping, also called unarmed peacekeeping, peace teams, or third party nonviolent intervention, performs many of the same tasks as military peacekeeping. There are some situations of deadly conflict, such as the genocidal violence in Rwanda, where it is hard to imagine that civilian peacekeepers could have been effective after the violence began. However, in many situations, civilian peacekeepers can play important roles in preventing and deterring violence. Civilian peacekeepers are inexpensive, have access to and legitimacy with grassroots groups, use nonviolent forms of power to prevent violence, and often have a committed constituency of peace supporters around the world. The stories of civilian peacekeeping in the next chapter give testimony to the powerful, protective work civilians do to interrupt the cycle of violence.

2. Stories of Civilian Peacekeeping

In the 6th century, the Buddha stopped a war by walking between two opposing armed groups engaged in a battle over water rights. Since then courageous men and women around the world have put themselves between guns and human bodies to deter or stop violence. While unarmed civilians have a long history of interrupting armed conflict by interposing themselves between armed groups, most of these stories are not documented. More recently, both civil society and United Nations agencies have been using civilian peacekeeping as a means to reduce violence. This chapter surveys a variety of different kinds of civilian peacekeeping efforts, historical examples, short term projects, non-governmental organizations, and official UN civilian peacekeeping programs. Many of these examples explain how international groups of people intervene in war zones to prevent or reduce violence.

But historically, civilian peacekeeping has emerged from within war zones. The chapter starts with a variety of stories of indigenous civilian peacekeeping.

African Women

Across Africa, there are stories of unarmed women interpositioning themselves as peacekeepers between warring tribes. In many traditional African communities, it was prohibited to kill women. Only other warriors were allowed as targets. In some societies, women would walk between armed groups to prevent them from fighting each other. In other cultures, where seeing a naked woman brings a curse, not on the woman, but on the man who looks at her, women would expose themselves by lifting their skirts or showing their breasts to the warring tribes as a cultural way of bringing shame and a curse on them for fighting. Other women would expose their breasts as a way of reminding the men that they are mothers and should be respected.

Shanti Sena

Gandhi popularized the idea of an unarmed interpositionary peace army, the Shanti Sena, after seeing the effects of nonviolence in South Africa in 1913. Gandhi's followers developed the Shanti Sena to concretize the idea of regional neighborhood peace armies to prevent and reduce public direct violence. When Muslim and Hindu people began fighting in the streets during and after Indian independence from Britain, Gandhi's Shanti Sena, or peace army, provided civilian peacekeeping. Highly disciplined and trained units of the Shanti Sena were watchful of early warnings or indicators of impending violence. They would quickly intervene in situations to de-escalate the tension through six steps.

First, they would meet with the groups in conflict and create a forum for dialogue to discuss the situation and find an equitable solution. Second, if tensions continued, they would call in other units of the Shanti Sena from other areas to help them call on city leaders to appeal for peace. They placed these appeals for peace in newspapers and on the radio. Third, if violence broke out, Shanti Sena units would first go to the

site of the disturbance for analysis, discuss the dynamics in their units, and would begin to strategize. Often, they would quickly publish pamphlets to dispel rumors and plead for peace. If violence continued, the Shanti Sena units would walk into the violence, encourage rioters to disperse, and create opportunities for constructive communication between groups. A fourth step was providing clothing, blankets and other relief aid to the wounded. Fifth, the Shanti Sena worked with those with formal education in educational seminars to analyze the roots of the violence. A sixth strategy was to interview and listen to ordinary people and their stories to assess their perception of the other side, collect and disseminate information about basic needs, and to encourage acts of repentance, such as helping to rebuild the homes of victims and creating joint cultural festivals with the opposing groups.⁷

Civil Rights Movement

During the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, white Americans accompanied African Americans on the Journey of Reconciliation, which tested segregation laws on interstate travel. In 1964, nearly 1,000 white staff from the north, often known as Freedom Riders, worked in Mississippi alongside African American field workers to register other African Americans to vote. In this context, the presence of white staff often worked to deter violence against African Americans.⁸

Filipino Revolution

In 1986, thousands of Filipino civilians placed themselves between dictator Marcos' army and the forces under the control of General Ramos in the Philippines. Prompted by a local Catholic radio station, which broadcast urgent messages calling on civilians to stop Marcos' troops, the civilians successfully prevented a violent clash between the two military factions.⁹

Non-Governmental Civilian Peacekeeping Organizations

While these historical examples involve local civilians serving a peacekeeping function in conflicts within their own country, in the last twenty years it has become more common for international civilian groups to intervene in conflicts in other countries. A wide variety of non-governmental, civil society organizations are involved in civilian peacekeeping. Some of these groups are institutionalized organizations and others are short-term projects. The descriptions below give brief examples of some of the major organizations involved in civilian peacekeeping today, starting chronologically with the oldest organizations.

7 Weber, Thomas. *Gandhi's Peace Army: The Shanti Sena and Unarmed Peacekeeping*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1996. pp. 115-116

8 Sitkoff, 1981 in Coy, Patrick G. "What's a Third Party to Do? Nonviolent Protective Accompaniment in Sri Lanka with Peace Brigades International." Paper presented at the 35th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Washington, D.C. March 28 - April 1, 1994. p. 3

9 Lakey, George. "How to Develop Peace Teams: The Lightbulb Theory." 1995

Peace Brigades International (PBI), the longest running civilian peacekeeping organization, was formed in 1982 in response to invitations from grassroots groups in Guatemala, El Salvador, Sri Lanka, Colombia, and Native Americans in the United States to accompany endangered individuals and groups to deter violence. PBI's first action was in Nicaragua along the border with Honduras in 1981, where PBI placed an international monitoring contingent and human shield to prohibit what seemed like an imminent invasion by the U.S. and contra forces. PBI's presence was followed by another organization, Witness for Peace, described below.¹⁰

In 1983, PBI began its long-term presence in Guatemala. PBI accompanied individuals whose relatives had disappeared, been tortured or killed by the military, or who themselves were involved in organizing for social change. In El Salvador, PBI attempted to ensure the security of outspoken individuals and public figures in the Salvadoran peace process. In Sri Lanka, PBI accompanied lawyers who were advocating for human rights workers who had disappeared. In Colombia, PBI teams document human rights abuses, accompany human rights activists, and provide a protective presence in communities that have declared themselves as "peace zones".¹¹

In coordination with their Guatemalan contacts, PBI developed an overall goal to help "provide space" for nonviolent groups to work for human rights with a distinctive new activity: international protective accompaniment of local human rights workers living under threat of abduction or assassination. The most common PBI activity is accompanying activists, refugees, and communities threatened with violence. Assuming that violence against internationals exacts relatively larger political and economic costs on the perpetrator, team members hope to deter violence by their presence. Accompaniment as a peacekeeping technique continues to be an effective deterrent to violence, described more fully in the next chapter. The effectiveness of their work was proven shortly after their accompaniment began, as the level of threats on accompanied individuals and groups lowered.¹² Accompaniment often requires a 24-hour a day presence with a vulnerable individual or group.¹³

PBI teams also document events and trends in the conflict and initiatives for peace. Documented human rights abuses are sometimes funneled through the PBI emergency response network, which is composed of thousands of grassroots people around the world, as well as a high-level contact network of in-country embassies, overseas ministries of foreign affairs and parliamentarians ready to send faxes, e-mails,

10 Moser-Puangsuwan, Yeshua. "From the Peace Army to the Balkan Peace Team: A short history of grassroots initiatives unarmed peacekeeping." January 1995

11 It should be noted that accompaniment is of no use and may actually be detrimental if it raises the visibility of a person who may need to remain in hiding because of the volatility of the entire situation. (Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher.)

12 Mahony, Liam and Eguren, Luis Enrique. *Unarmed Bodyguards: International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights*. Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1997

13 Interviews with Liam Mahony, Bob Seidle-Kahn, Michael Beer, Kurt Wands, Dan Dayle, George Willoughby; PBI pamphlet

letters or make phone calls to protest the violation and urge for the protection of human rights. PBI trainers also often educate and train local groups in nonviolent social change techniques and human rights. Today, PBI is active with a staff of 60 people in Colombia and smaller teams in Aceh, Indonesia, Guatemala, and Mexico.

Witness for Peace (WFP) is an ecumenically religious organization formed in the early 1980's to change U.S. policy and provide a nonviolent presence in Nicaragua and later Guatemala, Haiti, the Middle East, El Salvador, Mexico and Colombia. In the early 1980s, the war between the Sandinistas and the US-backed contras was just beginning to enter the public arena of debate in the US. WFP developed out of a fact-finding tour by an ecumenically-based group of North Americans who visited Nicaragua. Their experiences interacting with Nicaraguan people who were daily facing contra attacks moved them to mobilize others to go to Nicaragua. In the spring of 1983, 153 North Americans from a variety of religious traditions went to Nicaragua believing that the presence of unarmed U.S. citizens near the Nicaraguan/Honduran border would deter attacks by the contras.

WFP began its work in Nicaragua with the idea of being a "human shield" between the contras and the Nicaraguan people in several Nicaraguan towns near the Honduran border which were under attack. As the contras' strategy changed from trying to take over certain strategic towns to attacking cooperatives and towns over a wider part of Nicaragua, WFP also changed its strategy, since it was literally impossible to act as a shield when attacks were occurring in random locations. In addition, the WFP teams on the ground were growing less fond of the shield metaphor for their work. Instead they began seeing themselves standing in solidarity with the Nicaraguan people.

WFP placed long-term staff in Nicaraguan villages which were prone to contra attacks. When an attack occurred, WFPers visited the site of the attack and interviewed the survivors to document their stories. This information was used by WFPers who returned to the U.S. to talk to other North Americans concerned about Nicaragua. It was also fed to the national WFP office, which used it in lobbying Congress to stop funding of the contras.¹⁴

Witness for Peace has helped thousands of North Americans travel to Nicaragua to see the impact of U.S. foreign policy and to stand in solidarity with Nicaraguans as they work for the protection of human rights and democracy. Short and long-term delegations to Nicaragua and other countries have been the mainstay of WFP activity. Long-term staff made commitments of one year or more to live and work with the Nicaraguan people. Short-term delegates visited Nicaragua for two or three weeks. They lived with families and met with a variety of religious, political and media

14 WFP also documented Sandinista human rights abuses. This information was fed to the human rights office of CEPAD, the Nicaraguan Protestant churches' development organization. CEPAD would then meet with government officials about the reported abuses. The Sandinista abuses would not be reported to the U.S. government, since to do so would give them more reason to support the contras. Interview with Doug Schirch.

leaders. Many of the delegates were involved in praying, standing with the grieving, documenting atrocities, recording stories, attending funerals, harvesting coffee and beans, and returning to the U.S. to talk about what they saw and heard.

Back in the United States, WFPers traveled the country with their slides and stories of Nicaragua in public education efforts. They also contacted the media and their members of Congress to change U.S. policy toward Central America.¹⁵

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), also a religious organization based in the Mennonite, Brethren and Quaker church traditions, began in 1986 to provide a trained full-time corps of people to work towards the objective of violence reduction in crisis situations. It is currently involved in providing a nonviolent, protective presence in Colombia, Israel/Palestine and areas in the U.S. by protesting violence and documenting atrocities. CPT confronts violence by providing teams of persons trained in mediation and nonviolent direct action to work with local leaders on alternative models of security and nonviolent ways to address conflict. While working for peace, CPT believes that if justice does not accompany peace, practical nonviolent steps need to be taken towards loving the enemy as taught in the Bible.¹⁶

In Hebron and the Gaza strip, CPT conducts projects to create a peace presence in the midst of the violent situation. Members of the team rotate in and out of camps, maintain a protective presence with families whose homes are threatened by Israeli bulldozers, protect Israeli and Palestinian civilians from violence from the other side; and connect with people from Israel, Palestine, and the international community who are working to improve the situation.¹⁷

CPT sent over a dozen teams to Haiti in response to a call from Christians in Haiti to “let the people of the world charter flights, rent boats, and create a civilian invasion. Let them come by the hundreds to stand beside the Haitian people and say “This situation is finished””. CPT attempted to accompany and dialogue with many groups in the conflict, including the police, who had sided with the military.¹⁸

The goals of CPT are to advance the cause of lasting peace by giving skilled immediate support to peacemakers working locally in situations of conflict, providing Christian congregations with first-hand information and resources for responding to worldwide situations of conflict, and to be a peaceful presence, standing between or alongside opposing factions to prevent bloodshed and to attempt dialogue.¹⁹

Servicio Internacional Para La Paz (SIPAZ) is an international observation program created in 1995 in response to requests from Mexican church and human rights groups, who believed that an international presence could reduce violent expression

15 Griffin-Nolan, p. 225

16 Christian Peacemaker Teams pamphlet

17 “CPT to Gaza.” *Signs of the Times*. Summer 1993. p. 1

18 “Christian Peacemaker Teams in Haiti.” Christian Peacemaker Teams

19 <http://www.cpt.org/index.html>

of conflict in the state of Chiapas. SIPAZ seeks to monitor the conflict in Chiapas, support the search for peaceful solutions, and aid in the construction of a culture of peace, dialogue, and tolerance between all of the actors involved. SIPAZ urges the international community to carefully examine its relationships with Mexico, in addition to its responsibility in the construction of greater economic, social, and political justice within an international order. It aims to “forestall or reduce violence and to protect and expand the precious political space in which dialogue is possible” between the Zapatistas and the Mexican government.²⁰

The **Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation** (SweFOR) is the Swedish chapter of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. SweFOR sends staff to Guatemala and Chiapas, Mexico, where they are part of an unarmed international protective presence. From 1992 to 1997, SweFOR sent staff to accompany refugees returning from Mexico to Guatemala. SweFOR returned in 2000 to start its current work in close cooperation with local human rights partner organizations. In Chiapas the peace observers provide a preventive presence in 27 vulnerable villages. The observers are coordinated by the Mexican human rights organization Fray Bartolomé de las Casas.

In Guatemala, SweFOR works with the local human rights organization Centro para la Accion Legal en Derechos Humanos. Here, the task of the SweFOR observers is to accompany witnesses testifying in the judicial trials of perpetrators of atrocities committed in the early 1980's, who continue to be threatened by death threats. SweFOR's work with unarmed international protective presence is always a third party presence, whose primary aim is to offer protection and open up spaces for local civil society organizations to act.

The **National Coordinating Office on Refugees and Displaced of Guatemala** (NCOORD) coordinated efforts to accompany returning refugees in Guatemala under the UN repatriation plan and repopulation of the conflict zones. These refugees declared themselves Communities of Popular Resistance (CPRs). They engaged in a form of nonviolent direct action by choosing to reenter the conflict zones as unarmed civilians. The CPRs requested a high profile protective international presence in moments of crisis. The presence of internationals allowed the CPRs to return publicly and increased the political cost of violence against the CPRs.²¹

The **Iraq Peace Team** (IPT) was formed in 1996 by a Chicago-based group called Voices in the Wilderness, which is dedicated to active nonviolence, and ending first the sanctions and then the war against the Iraqi people. Now based in Baghdad, the organization monitors the conflict and provides information about civilian

20 http://www.sipaz.org/fini_eng.htm February 20, 2005

21 Interview with Kurt Wands, Director of National Coordinating Office on the Refugees and Displaced of Guatemala

casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure.²² The group's website lists its goals as: to live among the Iraqi people during any aggression directed at them, including continued economic sanctions, maintain a presence and nonviolent actions to witness, understand and expose the situation both of the civilian population of Iraq and highlight the importance of facilities such as water purification plants that are critical to daily life, and report on experiences in Iraq through their website, and support teams.²³

The **International Solidarity Movement (ISM)** and the **Grassroots International Protection for the Palestinian People (GIPP)**²⁴ both aim to increase awareness about the Palestinian struggle through monitoring and observing acts of the Israeli occupation and work to be a presence in solidarity with Palestinians to prevent the demolition of homes and olive vineyards. Both groups desire an increased international presence in the occupied territories through civilian peacekeepers and international protection forces. On December 28th 2000, hundreds of Palestinians, Israelis and internationals marched together to Shedma, an Israeli military base that caused suffering for the people of Beit Sahour during the first three months of the Intifada, damaging more than 200 homes and both wounding and killing civilians. The presence of internationals, including an Italian Member of Parliament, kept the Israeli military from using violence against this demonstration.²⁵

In the fall of 2000, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat requested 2,000 UN peacekeepers to separate the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and troops and to limit police actions by the Israeli occupation forces. When the resolution for UN peacekeepers was brought to the Security Council for a vote, it narrowly failed to pass. The **Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)** has been an alternative international peacekeeping presence. EAPPI is a World Council of Churches initiative, which was established in response to a call made by the heads of Churches in Jerusalem, and Palestinian and Israeli NGOs. The mission of the EAPPI is to accompany Palestinians and Israelis in their nonviolent actions and concerted advocacy efforts to end the occupation. It is part of a larger World Council strategy to end Israeli occupation. Since the beginning of its accompaniment activities in August 2002, more than 60 people from thirty churches in eight different countries have served in an accompaniment role.

EAPPI civilian peacekeepers conduct a range of tasks including monitoring and reporting violations of human rights. They also provided company and support to families who have suffered from the conflict, accompanied ambulances and

22 Iraq Peace team. "Civilian Casualties and Infrastructure Damage in the 2003 U.S.-led Attack on Baghdad." April 4, 2003

23 <http://vitw.org/ipt/> February 20, 2005

24 <http://www.pngo.net/GIPP/>. February 21, 2005

25 <http://www.palsolidarity.org/>. February 21, 2005

food convoys, and participated with Israeli and Palestinian peace activists in anti-occupation demonstrations. When engaging in activism, EAPPI requires that Israelis and/or Palestinians are leading and participating in the actions and that the EAPPI team members do not have any leading function, but are seen accompanying those who are leading it.

In 2003, EAPPI provided a protective presence by living alongside villagers in Yanoun, a small Palestinian community that has suffered severe intimidation from neighboring Israeli settlers in the past. Other team members have followed Palestinian health teams and ambulances through military checkpoints to hospitals in Jerusalem.²⁶

To date, EAPPI's broad international and ecumenical support seems to have protected it from harassment by Israeli authorities. While other groups (described below) have had members kicked out of the country or refused entry, EAPPI has operated freely.

The **Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP)** grew out of a recurrent vision to have a large-scale "peace army" that would intervene in violent conflicts. Formed at the 1999 Hague Appeal for Peace and inaugurated in Delhi, India, in 2002, its stated mission is to facilitate the creation of a trained, international civilian nonviolent peaceforce. Its first pilot project in Sri Lanka has approximately fifteen to twenty-five people spread around the country to protect human rights, prevent violence, and enable peaceful resolution of conflict. NP uses protective accompaniment of vulnerable leaders and negotiators in conflict zones, international presence of NP team members in vulnerable villages, borders, and areas of conflict, providing a witness by monitoring and documenting human rights violations, and interpositioning between opposing groups to allow space for cooling off. NP is unique in that it is a truly international organization from the top down. The Nonviolent Peaceforce has world regional offices and a 15-member International Governing Council with representatives from every continent. NP aims to create a permanent, large-scale, paid peace army in the coming years.

Many development groups work in areas where there has been violence in the recent past and where there may still be violent events. Long-term development groups, such as **OXFAM**, the **Mennonite Central Committee**, **CARE**, the **International Red Cross**, and **Médecins sans Frontières** often inadvertently provide many of the same activities as civilian peacekeepers. Simply by virtue of being in conflict zones and working with civilians, they provide an element of international presence and accompaniment to deter violence against civilians, document human rights abuses, develop trust relationships with the people in violent conflict regions, and live in solidarity with the people through crisis periods.

26 Jonsson, Bernt. "International Presence in the Holy Land." Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research. November 7, 2000

Short-term Civilian Peacekeeping Projects

A variety of short-term coalitions and ad hoc-groups have also intervened in violent conflicts. While many of these projects originally aimed to reduce the violence, in practice they have relied more on symbolic gestures of solidarity with local civilians or opposition to the war rather than concrete actions to directly reduce violent conflict. This list of groups is not complete. Rather, it gives a sampling of different civilian peacekeeping approaches.

The **Gulf Peace Team** (GPT) was organized during the first Gulf War in 1990 to interposition between Iraq and Kuwait by maintaining two neutral camps on the borders of the countries. They hoped that this civilian, nonviolent presence would act as a protective shield and preserve peace in the region. The British team described itself as “an international multi-cultural team working for peace and opposing any form of armed aggression, past, present or future, by any party in the Gulf”.²⁷ Only Iraq gave approval for the camps, offering the GPT a Beduin way station on the border between Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

Approximately 250 people took part in the project for part of its duration, with no more than 75 people in the project at one time. The team was evacuated by Iraqi authorities and taken to Baghdad after ten days of the US-led bombing of Iraq. The smaller group created a convoy project to assemble medical relief supplies needed in Iraq and to accompany the overland transport of the supplies along the Amman-Baghdad road, which was being heavily bombed by U.S. and Allied forces. The convoy project successfully accompanied several truckloads of supplies into Iraq. Teams documented conditions in Iraq and the effects of war and sanctions on the civilian population.²⁸

The next three projects aimed at interpositioning in the former Yugoslavia. The first project, **Solidarity for Peace in Sarajevo** was organized by a Catholic Italian group, **Beati i Construttori di Pace** (Blessed are the Peacemakers) in December 1992. It was designed to exercise their international right, as political subjects, to promote a peaceful solution of the conflict, to demonstrate that the search for peace is not an exclusive function of governments, but belongs to every individual and to all peoples, ... [and] to bear witness to violations of human rights and to the living conditions and the will to peace of the people affected by war.²⁹ The 500 people who participated in this project brought gifts and food to the people of Sarajevo and visited different sites in the city.

In the summer of 1993, the **Mir Sada/We Share One Peace** project was organized by both Beati i Construttori di Pace and a French relief group, **Equilibre** in the former

27 Press Release from the British Gulf Peace Team office

28 Interview with Peggy Preston, British member of the Gulf Peace Team

29 Press release of the Solidarity for Peace in Sarajevo project

Yugoslavia. This project aimed to contribute both to the peaceful solution of the armed conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina and to the acknowledgement and respect of the human rights of all people involved. The goal was to set up three peace camps in each ethnic region of Bosnia with groups of 60-80 people. Each group was to stay for a period of one or two weeks, so as to ensure a permanent presence in the territory of Sarajevo from June 25 to September 15. The goals included acting as “permanent observers” of human rights, and carrying out actions to defend civilian targets (hospitals, reception centers, aqueducts, etc.) in order to ensure that these continue functioning, and facilitating communication between the warring groups.

The 2,500 people who participated in the project did not fulfill all of their goals or planned activities. The project met many unforeseen obstacles, had difficulties making group decisions, and eventually disintegrated. Equilibre and many others pulled out of the project as decision-making came to an impasse.

The project continued under the name *We Share One Peace*. The remaining two thousand members of the group did provide an international presence in the region. In addition, a few people made it to Sarajevo despite many obstacles. They carried out some of the planned activities, celebrated International Women’s Day, and began an ongoing mail service for refugees and their relatives in Sarajevo.³⁰

Sjema Mira was a third project in the former Yugoslavia. The organizers hoped for a group of 200-500 internationals to visit and listen to all sides. The leaflet explained their presence to the people: “We are here from many countries because we could not stay in the relative peacefulness of our homes watching while yours are destroyed ... We ask you to adopt nonviolent resistance as your means of struggle.”³¹ In late November and December of 1993, the group traveled to Croatia and Bosnia, distributed nearly 3,000 leaflets, provided a presence in Mostar, delivered medical supplies to both Croatian and Muslim hospitals in Mostar and met with hundreds of people including civilians, soldiers, clergy, doctors, UN personnel, etc, to hear their story of the war.³²

The **Cry for Justice: Nonviolent Presence in Haiti** (CFJ) campaign was put together by a coalition of groups in 1993. CFJ goals were to provide a nonviolent presence of internationals in locations in Haiti where human rights abuses were the most severe in order to report and protest further abuses.

The coalition trained and placed 75 people in teams of 20-25 in Haiti during the fall of 1993 to protect those individuals and groups who were part of the democratic movement, to show solidarity with the Haitian people and educate people in the United States about the situation in Haiti.³³

30 Interview with Lisa Clark and Don Albino Bizotto, members of Blessed are the Peacemakers

31 Leaflet distributed in Croatia and Bosnia prepared by Bradford Lyttle and *Sjema Mira* organizers

32 Interview with Scott Schaefer-Duffy and “Peacemaking in Bosnia”, a pamphlet on the *Sjema Mira* Project written by Scott Schaefer-Duffy, January 1994

33 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

Elections in a number of countries such as Nicaragua, El Salvador, and South Africa have been monitored both by official UN election monitors and civilian monitors. The **Peace Monitoring in South Africa project** (PEMSA), a coalition of 17 Swedish non-governmental organizations and three South African organizations, primarily aimed to prevent violence during the elections by being a monitoring presence in the country.³⁴ Other activities of the monitors included gathering information on the violence, analyzing the course of events and documenting this information, reporting and disseminating information to different organizations in South Africa, and creating and modeling a public alternative to violence.³⁵

Most of these peace monitors reported that “they have made a meaningful contribution and that, on many occasions, they have been able to participate in reducing violence.”³⁶ The evaluators of the PEMS project claim that the very presence of the monitors in the local context at the polling stations as well as demonstrations, funerals and other election-related events had a “stabilizing effect on the relationship between different groupings of the South African society”. Their monitoring holds elements both of being a presence and interpositioning.³⁷

The White Helmets: CIVPOL, UN Volunteers, UN Observer Missions and Civilian Peace Services

A variety of official, governmental actors engage in unarmed, civilian peacekeeping projects. Within the UN system, civilian peacekeepers perform tasks mainly relating to reconciliation and rehabilitation of political institutions.³⁸ They do not use civilian presence intentionally to decrease levels of violence. Military and government actors are calling for increased training and more resources to be devoted to these civilian peacekeeping efforts.³⁹

CIVPOL are the international civilian police element in peace operations. They are increasingly included in all UN peacekeeping missions. While the military components of peacekeeping operations are deployed in units and are authorized to use overwhelming force in their mission, CIVPOL deploy as individuals and live in and with the community they are policing. Many CIVPOL are unarmed, although some UN CIVPOL, such as those in Kosovo and East Timor, did have some authority to use arms under heavily proscribed circumstances. The European Union has 5,000 members in its “civilian police peacekeeping force”.

34 Ewald, Jonas and Thorn, Håkan. *Peace Monitoring in South Africa*. Sweden: Swedish UN Association, 1995

35 Ewald and Thorn, p. 18

36 Ewald and Thorn, p. 8

37 Ewald and Thorn, p. 17

38 Hansen, Wibke, Ramsbotham, Oliver and Woodhouse, Tom. “Hawks and Doves: Peacekeeping and Conflict Resolution.” Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation. March 30, 2001

39 Hayden, William. “American Civilian Police in un Peace Operations.” Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace. July 6, 2001

Almost 90 percent of the **United Nations Volunteers** (UNVs) are active in humanitarian assistance in conflict zones or conflict-related situations. UNVs involvements include supporting electoral processes (registration, observation, verification, etc.) and other humanitarian relief and development work. While peacekeeping is not an explicit goal, their official presence in conflict areas and the activities they conduct often contain components similar to other civilian conflict interventions. More than 4,000 United Nations Volunteers have served in 19 different peacekeeping operations since 1992. They take up assignments in over 175 professional categories in support of activities of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations. More than 1,500 UN Volunteers have been assigned to new peace operation missions in East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leone since 2003.⁴⁰

The **Temporary International Presence in the City of Hebron** (TIPH) was agreed to in 1997 as a civilian observer mission in the West Bank city of Hebron staffed by personnel from Denmark, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey. TIPH's main task is to monitor and report on misconduct by either side in the conflict. TIPH is not allowed to intervene directly in incidents and has no military or police functions.

Almost half of the mission's members are observers. The observers maintain a permanent presence in the Area of Responsibility during daylight hours either from the safety of their bullet-proof jeep, their cars, or on foot. Observers document and report on conflicts and human rights violations taking place in the Area of Responsibility, using report writing, digital cameras and video equipment. They do not intervene. In order to perform the main duties according to the TIPH mandate in a volatile and sometimes hostile situation, each patrol is manned by one observer with Arabic or Hebrew knowledge and one with police or military background. TIPH sends reports on activities in its Area of Responsibility to the governments of the participating countries every two weeks.⁴¹

The **Kosovo Verification Mission** consisted of unarmed civilian monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), who monitored the withdrawal of Serbian troops and return of Kosovan refugees to their homes. Since 2000, OSCE civilian monitors are monitoring the border between Georgia and Chechnya.⁴² The **Bougainville Peace Monitoring Group** and the **Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission** are other examples of UN civilian peacekeeping missions.

40 <http://www.unv.org/>. February 21, 2005

41 <http://www.tiph.org/>. February 20, 2005

42 Wallis, Tim and Claudia Samayoa. "Civilian Peacekeepers: Creating a safe environment for peacebuilding." *People Building Peace II*. Colorado: Lynn Rienner, 2005

Others throughout history have urged for the creation of a **Civil Peace Service** (CPS). In the early 1950's military and political strategists in Britain joined with religious leaders in calling for a government-authorized nonviolent peace force or World Peace Brigade made up of 5,000-15,000 unarmed civilian peacekeepers, trained in Gandhian passive resistance, to patrol the two-kilometre wide demilitarized zone on the Egyptian/Israeli border. The peace force, although never actualized, received widespread attention and provided a vision for a standing unarmed "peace" army that would be able to move quickly and strategically into areas of potential violence. This recurring vision would gain supporters over the next 50 years all over the world.⁴³

In the last ten years, increasing numbers of civilians have been deployed alongside military peacekeepers in UN missions. As the needs for peacekeeping continue to increase around the world, government, military, and civil society leaders are joining the call for more "white helmets" and greater capacity in civilian peacekeeping missions.⁴⁴

Today, the Nonviolent Peaceforce and many of its members around the world are promoting government-funded Civilian Peace Services. A variety of countries in Europe already have Civilian Services as active units of trained civilians that conduct peacekeeping and other peacebuilding tasks. The CPS concept has been adopted by the German Social Democratic-Green Party coalition government and the Italian government, and there is a European Civil Peace Service Network. In the United Kingdom, London-based NGO Peaceworkers and the Scottish Centre for Nonviolence are both working to establish connections with the military, develop rosters of civilians trained and ready to be part of a Civilian Peace Service, and providing training and other workshops to civilians to prepare them for these roles.⁴⁵

In the Netherlands, a coalition of Dutch NGOs created the Dutch Civilian Peace Team, which has sent a peacekeeping team to Palestine to stay with local NGOs there. The missions aimed to show solidarity with the Palestinians by living among them, tried to influence public opinion by giving clear and objective information through the media, and urged governments that the UN should take action in the Middle East.⁴⁶

The idea of a Civil Peace Service developed out of the work of groups such as the Balkan Peace Team and Peace Brigades International, whereas advocates of the Civil Peace Service idea aim to conduct a range of activities beyond civilian peacekeeping, including reconciliation and reconstruction or development work in conflict areas.

43 Weber, 1996, p. 15

44 Martinelli, Marta. "Developing a Civilian Peace Corps: Does Italy Offer a Model for the EU?" United Kingdom: University of Bradford, 2002 <http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk/docs/DevelopingCivilianPeaceCorpsDevelopmentsinEurope.pdf>. February 24, 2005

45 <http://www.peaceworkers.org.uk/news.html> February 20, 2005

46 <http://www.en-cps.org/reports/BVTN06.htm>. February 20, 2005

While the idea of government-authorized and funded civilian peacekeepers is a recent phenomenon, this chapter shows that the idea has a long and successful history. Civil society organizations have a rich history of intervening to reduce direct violence against oppressed communities and human rights activists. Many of these civil society efforts are made by “outsiders” or “third party impartial” to intervene in a conflict situation in another country. While many of these international civilian peacekeeping efforts are relatively new, it is important to remember that civilian peacekeeping is not a new idea, nor does it imply outside intervention into a conflict. The stories at the beginning of the chapter detailed how the idea of civilian peacekeeping organically grew out of people’s desire to stop violence in their own regions. Let us all hope that the next decades bring us even more varieties of local or indigenous unarmed peacekeeping that can be documented in future books on this topic!

The next chapters go into more detail to describe different forms of civilian peacekeeping and the practical ways that it can protect people from violence without the use of arms.

3. Forms of Civilian Peacekeeping

After reading the diverse stories of civilian peacekeeping in the last chapter, it may be difficult to assess what holds these diverse projects together. Indeed there are many differences. Some hold fast to impartiality and others actively engage in promoting the perspectives of one side in the conflict.

There is a variety of forms of civilian peacekeeping. Choosing and designing civilian peacekeeping strategies depend on the nature of the conflict. Civilian peacekeeping is useful in the following potentially violent situations:

- Providing a human shield or moral deterrent against international or civil warfare;
- Strengthening ceasefires by providing a deterrent presence and monitoring of violations;
- Monitoring and reducing the likelihood of violence during elections;
- Accompaniment of human rights activists or people who may be targeted by armed forces because of their work for peaceful social change;
- Accompaniment for internally displaced people, refugees, communities who are threatened because of their ethnic or religious identity or their refusal to cooperate with armed groups;
- Preventing terrorism by non-state actors such as Al Qaeda;
- Deterring violence during transitions in leadership;
- Preventing looting in crises or after natural disasters.

Different forms of violent conflict need different forms of peacekeeping. When fighting takes place along a front line, such as at an international border or across a river or street, buffer zones and interpositioning may be helpful. When violent conflict is dispersed across a region or country, it is difficult, if not impossible, to establish buffer zones or to interposition between armed groups. However, peace zones and accompaniment peacekeeping projects address this form of conflict. This chapter describes different forms of peacekeeping.

Buffer Zones

A buffer zone is a demilitarized area that may or may not be patrolled by peacekeepers to separate opposing groups, so that they cannot have physical contact with each other. Certain rules operate within buffer zones that aim to prevent an escalation of conflict. Cease-fires and other agreements often include buffer zones, if the groups in conflict are clearly separated. Buffer zones can provide sanctuary to people fleeing armed conflict, they can be a neutral area that allows for supervision and monitoring of a conflict, and they can reduce tensions through separation of armed groups.

The United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) was established in 1964. UNFICYP's task was to maintain peace and stability in the buffer zone and to ensure that there was no alteration of the status quo along the two ceasefire lines drawn on 16 August 1974.

Interpositional Peacekeeping

Traditional peacekeeping is based on the idea of *interpositioning* or peacekeepers placing themselves physically between groups engaged in violent conflict in an impartial stance toward all groups. It creates physical space between the groups. In reference to UN peacekeeping, researcher Paul Diehl theorizes and documents that "peacekeeping is most effective in disputes between states" rather than within states.⁴⁷ His research suggests that this correlation between civil disputes and peacekeeping failure is due to the involvement of more than two identifiable groups in dispute, and that geographically, it is easier to separate the groups in interstate conflicts.⁴⁸

It is hoped that interpositioning between protagonists prevents direct violence, since they are not in contact with one another. The peacekeepers provide a moral barrier that requires opposing forces to first risk the lives of the peacekeepers, sparking international condemnation, and the space provided for both groups to "cool off" may prove to be an atmosphere conducive for negotiations.⁴⁹ Interpositioners may also control communication between the groups.

There are several examples of civilian interpositioning. Gandhi called the idea of interpositioning as being a *living wall* between groups in conflict.⁵⁰ Peace Brigades International's first project was in Nicaragua along the border with Honduras in 1981. A PBI team, and later Witness for Peace staff, interpositioned between Nicaraguan civilians and contras based in Honduras. This *human shield* was designed to prohibit the imminent invasion by U.S. and contra forces and to monitor events in the area. The interpositioners later changed their strategy as the fighting occurred more randomly across the Nicaraguan countryside rather than across clearly visible borders between the groups.

There are many examples of small-scale interpositioning. In the Philippines, a group of international religious people were successful in interpositioning themselves between military death squads and a church full of Filipino people, who were threatened with death if they did not move out of the church. The internationals in this case announced to the military that if these people in the church were attacked, the military would also have to kill them. They were a symbolic witness showing that, in effect, the world was watching this event. The interpositioners were successful in deterring violence.⁵¹

47 Diehl, p. 77

48 Diehl, p. 78

49 Diehl, p. 37

50 Weber, Thomas. "From Maude Royden's Peace Army to the Gulf Peace Team: An Assessment of Unarmed Interpositional Peace Forces." *Journal of Peace Research*. vol.30, no.1, 1993. pp. 45-64

51 Interview with David Hartsough, Director of Peaceworks

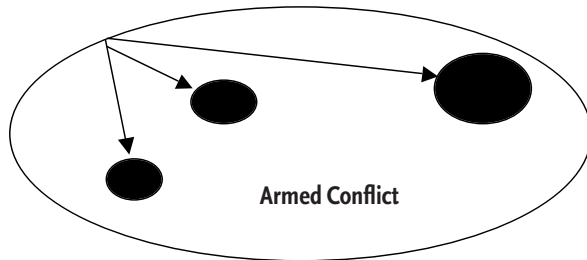
In 1986 in Guatemala, Peace Brigades International interpositioned themselves between the Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo, a women's organization working for social justice that was demonstrating in front of the National Palace, and the riot police who were beating the demonstrators.

Peace Zones

Peace zones are cities or regions within a zone of armed conflict where no fighting takes place. Also called safety, neutralized, demilitarized, weapons-exclusion, confidence-building, or negotiation zones, UN Protected Areas or UN Safe Areas, peace zones are designed to protect civilians.⁵² Ranging in size from a neighborhood block to a larger geographical region, peace zones may be patrolled or unpatrolled by peacekeepers. Recognition of the zone by armed forces is desired, but not required. Civilians in the area may unilaterally declare the space a peace zone. Peace zones may be implemented with or without the presence of peacekeepers that physically monitor the zones.

Inside these peace zones, weapons are prohibited, treatment and sanctuary are given to the wounded on all sides, private and paramilitary units may be dismantled, disarmed combatants of both sides may rest, pluralism and public affairs are encouraged, and dialogue and negotiations over the rules of war, cease-fires during holidays and calamities, prisoners of war and hostages, children, infrastructure and other development projects, etc. are nurtured.⁵³ The figure below shows how a peace zone may be separated from other parts of an armed conflict.

Figur 2 Peace Zones



Community residents may be organized into groups like “peace councils”, which monitor and document peace initiatives, lobby for cease-fires, and address other community issues, such as immunization, peace education, and environmental programs.

52 Santos, Soliman M. Jr. “Forms of Peace Zones” *Peace by Piece: Seven Pieces on Peace Zones*. Philippines: Peace Studies Institute Discussion Paper Series Vol. 1 No. 3, September 1991

53 Soliman

In Colombia, peace zones have a successful track record of deterring violence. When local guerrillas announced an attack on the town of Pensilvania, the local citizens appeared in the town square wearing white and carrying peace flags. They told the guerrillas that they did not approve of the attack and successfully prevented the guerrillas from attacking.⁵⁴

In Bosnia, however, peace zones were less successful. The UN Protected Areas often were unable to prevent interethnic violence between the majority and minority populations inside them.⁵⁵

In the Philippines, civilians have successfully created peace zones as demilitarized spaces for alternative development and consensus-building in a number of communities.⁵⁶ Problems developed with the peace zones, however, as both sides in the Philippines argued that 1) the other side could not be trusted, and 2) the proposal for peace zones was advantageous in some way to the other side. Some claimed that the peace zones were designed to weaken and isolate the revolutionary forces from their base communities. "Peace zones separate the fish from the water" and "... are nothing but a repackaging of the notorious strategic hamlets' concept."⁵⁷

However, others argued that the peace zones were the will of the people, their contribution to peace between the conflicting groups. The call for grassroots-based peace was strong, and establishing peace zones was in the people's interest. The first peace zone, in Negros, was monitored by a group composed of representatives from the military, the Government, and residents of the community. Many deemed it a success.⁵⁸

Accompaniment and Presence

When the groups in conflict are not easily separated and/or the violence is primarily one-way, with one group attacking unarmed civilians, interpositioning between the groups may be impossible or inappropriate. For example, terrorists often strike random locations that aim to create fear among civilian populations or they strike symbolic locations such as the World Trade Center, at a random unpredictable time. Likewise, threats toward returning refugees, disappearance or abduction of human rights workers, and organizations working for structural change also face attacks at random places and times.

Accompaniment and presence are two tactics used by peacekeepers to reduce these random forms of violence that aim to instill fear and restrict people's sense of

54 Rojas, Catalina. The People's Peace Process in Colombia: A Preliminary Review of Zones of Peace. <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/icar/zopscolombia.pdf> February 23, 2005

55 Mitchell, Christopher. "The Failure of Peace Zones" <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/icar/ZOPSYUGO.002.pdf> February 23, 2005

56 *Peace Zone Primer*. Ateneo de Manila University: Gaston Ortigas Peace Institute

57 Montana, Jason. "Tried and found wanting: Why the peace zones in Sagada failed." *Liberation*. September-October, 1990. pp. 11-13

58 Sulueta, Lito. "Peace Zone declared in Negros." *National News*. February 18, 1990. p. 4

security and freedom of movement. Assuming that the use of violence exacts political and economic costs from the world community on the perpetrator, peacekeepers hope to deter violence by accompanying certain individuals or groups in danger or by being a presence in a community that is threatened.

UN peacekeepers maintain a presence when they patrol or occupy certain areas, buildings or facilities to prevent their falling into the hands of one party or the other in violation of law or stipulation. For example, they may patrol a demarcation line, maintain open access to certain areas or routes, or deny access to certain areas, buildings or facilities.⁵⁹

Civilian groups maintain a presence by living and working among endangered individuals and communities. Civilian peacekeepers provide physical unarmed accompaniment and a peacekeeping presence to a variety of different people and groups vulnerable to violence, including:

- individuals, journalists, or organizations engaged in human rights, environmental, labour activism or other work that aims for social change;
- family-members of activists or those accused of activism;
- humanitarian workers delivering aid or supplies;
- refugees and communities threatened with violence because of their ethnic or religious identity or their stance against violence or armed groups; and
- youth who are at risk for abduction or enrollment in rebel armed movements.

Accompaniment and peacekeeping presence projects operate in the same way.

Civilian peacekeepers protect and deter vulnerable individuals and groups by their constant accompaniment and presence. The term “accompaniment” is most often used to describe the work of individual peacekeepers to protect individual human rights workers. The term “presence” is more often used to describe the work of one or more peacekeepers who live among and protect groups or communities of people.

Individual civilian peacekeepers act as “unarmed bodyguards” for the vulnerable individuals or groups. They may spend their time living or traveling with an endangered individual or group. When international civilian peacekeepers maintain a presence at Israeli checkpoints on the West Bank, for example, Palestinians receive better treatment and experience less humiliation and delays.

In the days and weeks after the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York and Washington, religious and civic leaders in communities around the United States reached out to Muslim leaders and communities. They offered to accompany Muslim people to their workplaces, to shopping centers, and to walk with children to their schools in hopes of deterring retaliatory violence against Muslims by other Americans who blamed them for the attacks. Some Christian churches offered to provide a protective presence at Muslim mosques to deter attacks in these spaces as well.

59 Walker, p. 19

Rather than directly advocating for the work of these individuals or groups, accompaniment aims to help create and protect space for the groups to work for nonviolent social change. Peace Brigades International uses accompaniment to create space for local activists to work for social justice and human rights. People who report human rights abuses or expose injustices often work “without a net”. Civilian peacekeepers who accompany these people try to provide that safety net needed in order for them to take risks that might make their work more effective and produce more dramatic results.

Accompaniment has a number of functions:

1. It deters violence from occurring by threatening an international response to a violent act.
2. It emboldens and encourages local people and organizations to pursue peaceful strategies of addressing human rights and the issues in conflict.
3. It reacts to violence by alerting the international community. There have been many cases when the accompaniment has not deterred the abduction of someone. Yet the accompanier was able to immediately bring outside pressure to bear on the detainers of the detained person through an international alert network.

Peace Brigades International was the first organization to use accompaniment on a large scale. According to PBI researchers Liam Mahony and Luis Enrique Eguren, “a PBI volunteer’s job is to be as obvious and visible as possible to the outside world, and yet as unobtrusive as possible in the lives and activities of those being accompanied”.⁶⁰ PBI accompanies both high-profile human rights activists and other vulnerable people and communities.

Balkan Peace Team members accompanied and escorted threatened individuals or groups in the former Yugoslavia. The Balkan Peace Team sought to prevent threats and further violent acts against peace and human rights activists through regular contacts with these workers, preventing harassments in public peace events and meetings, and being a presence at trials and in refugee camps.⁶¹ During the Gulf War, the Gulf Peace Team accompanied convoys of relief supplies into Iraq. The group was told that the road traveled on by the convoy was not bombed during the time when U.S. and British authorities thought that the Gulf Peace Team might be traveling on it.⁶²

In Central America, many extol the success of the accompaniment and presence programs in their region. In Nicaragua, as detailed in the last chapter, Witness for Peace discovered that they simply could not act as an interpositioning shield between

60 Mahony, Liam and Eguren, Luis Enrique. *Unarmed Bodyguards: International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights*. Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1997

61 Balkan Peace Teams Guidelines, February 1994

62 Letter from Kathy Kelly, member of several peace teams

the contras and the Nicaraguan people along the Nicaraguan/Honduran border. The war was too spread out across the countryside. They began dispersing team members as a protective presence throughout Nicaragua. Long and short term WFP staff lived with Nicaraguan families in areas where the contras were active to deter contra attacks.⁶³ Many Nicaraguans cite the presence of Witness for Peace staff in their towns as having protective effects.⁶⁴

The reputation of the effectiveness of the North Americans' presence seems to have spread throughout much of the region. While in El Salvador, David Hartsough reports that a person asked him to come to their town for just one hour and simply walk the streets and make their presence known. The person thought even this token foreign presence would be effective in preventing or reducing violence in that town.⁶⁵

In Haiti, CPT and the Cry for Justice coalition provided a nonviolent presence of internationals in locations in Haiti, where human rights abuses were the most severe, in order to report and protest further abuses. CPT team member Kathy Kelly suggests that a larger presence composed of fifteen to twenty groups of internationals scattered throughout Haiti could have made a dramatic difference in restraining terrorism during the 34 months that followed the coup.⁶⁶

In the former Yugoslavia, where many villages have mixed populations of Serbs, Croats, and Muslims, interpositioning between the two groups would have been difficult.⁶⁷ Some have proposed that groups of ten to fifteen civilian peacekeepers located in many towns across the former Yugoslavia might have been an effective way of reducing violence.⁶⁸

Environmental groups are increasingly using interpositionary peacekeeping activities to protect the environment. Greenpeace staff accompany whales to protect them from hunters. Others maintain a presence with trees and forests to keep them from loggers.

In addition to the clearly dissociative aspects of peacekeeping listed above, there are a number of other activities that are often conducted by peacekeepers.

Observing and Monitoring

UN armed peacekeepers observe, monitor, investigate, supervise and document many types of conflict-related activities, such as military actions, infringement on agreements or cease-fire lines, attacks on civilians, civilian freedoms of movement and access, exchange of civilian populations and/or prisoners of war, troop and weapon movements across borders, arms control agreements, mine clearance,⁶⁹ obstruction of essential services, redeployment of military forces, advancement of

63 Griffin-Nolan, Ed. *Witness for Peace: A Story of Resistance*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991. p. 225

64 Interview with Doug Schirch, former long term volunteer with Witness for Peace

65 Interview with David Hartsough, Director of the Nonviolent Peaceforce and Peaceworks

66 Letter from Kathy Kelly, member of several peace teams

67 Clark, Howard. "Models for Civilian Intervention." *Peace News Educational Offprints*. January, 1994. p. 13

68 Interview with David Hartsough, Director of Peaceworks

69 International Peace Academy. *Peacekeeper's Handbook*. New York: Pergamon Press, 1984

positions or other military incidents,⁷⁰ hostage taking or missing persons, stealing, refugee camps, plebiscites and elections, agricultural and other labor in specific zones. Moreover, they gather information and intelligence on military positions and strengths, changes in the lifestyles or movements of civilian populations and relationships between peacekeepers, armed groups and civilians within the context.⁷¹ Both UN and civil society-based civilian peacekeepers also conduct many of these activities.

Peace Brigades International, Witness for Peace, Christian Peacemaker Teams and the Balkan Peace Team all document human rights abuses and other conflict-related activities. These reports are sometimes funneled through emergency response networks, which are composed of thousands of people ready to send faxes, telexes, letters or make phone calls to protest the violation and press for change.

Witness for Peace began documenting human rights violations in Nicaragua to show how the U.S. military strategy of “low intensity conflict”, which included supporting the contras in waging a random terror campaign throughout the countryside, affected Nicaraguan civilians.

Balkan Peace Team members act as third-party observers at the scene of incidents or potential flashpoints. This documented information was distributed via their network.⁷² The Solidarity for Peace in Sarajevo project witnessed and documented violations of human rights, living conditions and the will to peace of the people affected by war.⁷³ Gulf Peace Team members documented conditions in Iraq and the effects of war and sanctions on the civilian population.⁷⁴

International concern for civilian peacekeepers and the information they gather help educate the world about violent conflict and human rights violations. Civilian peacekeepers are explicit and intentional about their desire for international attention by fostering international alert networks, described more in the next chapters, to bring international pressure to bear upon human rights violators and groups that break International Humanitarian Law during war. These alert networks, composed of thousands of concerned individuals from around the world, receive information on recent human rights violations or developments in violent conflicts. To increase the number of people in these alert networks in their home countries, civilian peacekeepers often conduct popular education seminars on their observations when they return home. By educating individuals and government officials around the world of human rights violations, alert networks help deter violence by the threat of international shaming.

For example, the documentation and observations of Witness for Peace staff helped to educate and organize people to change U.S. policy toward Central America.

70 Ibid., p. 89

71 Ibid., pp. 114-121

72 Interview with David Atwood, former director of International Fellowship of Reconciliation

73 Interview with Kathy Kelly, member of several peace teams

74 Interview with Peggy Preston and her report entitled “Visit of Assessment by Two Members of Middle East Action Network and One Member of the Gulf Peace Team to Alwiya and Saddam Hussein Paediatric Hospitals”, Baghdad, 24th April 1991

WFP currently has a network of more than 40,000 people that are educated both about WFP activities in Nicaragua and the situation there in general. Documentation is also used by the national WFP office, which used it in lobbying Congress to stop funding the *contras*.⁷⁵

Facilitating Communication

The UN ideally combines diplomatic teams with its peacekeeping projects. However, the activities are kept separate except for when negotiation or mediation over the peacekeeping project itself is involved. Peacekeepers may conduct mediation and negotiations between any or all of the groups in conflict to fulfill any of their tasks or ensure their safety.

Sometimes peacekeepers are in the unique position to go a step further and actually bring the groups together in a conflict resolution process, such as mediation or facilitation, which enables them to settle, manage, transform or resolve their conflict. Civilian peacekeepers may help facilitate communication between the groups in violent conflict, if communication channels have broken down between these groups. Controlling rumors and misinformation is an important role in keeping the conflict from escalating. In India, the Shanti Sena found controlling rumors in riot situations was an important role in controlling the level of violence between the groups.

The Balkan Peace Team was involved both with being an international peacekeeping presence in the conflict region and in actively facilitating bringing the groups together. Their activities included seeking to identify possibilities for dialogue between different groups, serving as a channel of independent and non-partisan information from the regions, contributing through contacts and networking to promote communication, dialogue and mutual understanding between different ethnic or peace groups and Croatian people and the international community. They also contributed to team-members' skills for the benefits of all citizens, for instance offering workshops in mediation and nonviolent conflict resolution, or by giving language classes. Christian Peacemaker Teams has also tried to combine mediation and reconciliation efforts with its accompaniment and presence peacekeeping work. In Haiti, CPT attempted to bring together military personnel with community leaders to address tensions between the groups.⁷⁶

Other groups insist that the same organization cannot be involved both in reconciliation and peacekeeping work. For example, in Sri Lanka in the 1990s, the Quakers were doing the reconciliation work and Peace Brigades International did the accompaniment peacekeeping work. In this context, it would be very difficult for one organization to conduct both projects due to the political situation. While the two organizations communicate about their work in Sri Lanka, they keep their distance when they are in the country.⁷⁷

75 Interview with Doug Schirch, former long term volunteer with Witness for Peace

76 Interview with Gene Stolfus, Coordinator of CPT

77 Interview with Bob Siedle-Kahn, former director of PBI

Building a Global Human Rights Movement

Civilian peacekeepers' activities help to build a global human rights movement. One of the goals of Witness for Peace delegations is creating public discomfort about U.S. foreign policy in Nicaragua. It most certainly changes people who go to Nicaragua as WFP staff and many of those they have contact with when they return. WFP has been described by its delegates as a "radicalizing political experience, a life-changing religious experience, an exercise in moral courage, a warning to national security planners, and an experiment in nonviolent action".⁷⁸ Many former WFP staff have spent a great deal of time educating others in the United States about the situation in Nicaragua.

Other civilian interventions have also helped build a human rights movement with their activities. The Gulf Peace Team used its documentation of the suffering of Iraqi civilians to help educate the West about the effects of the war.⁷⁹ Both the Christian Peacemaker Team and Cry for Justice projects in Haiti served as vehicles for information about the experiences and hopes of the people in Haiti. The civilian peacekeeping projects in the former Yugoslavia increased many people's understanding of the complex issues involved in the violent conflict.⁸⁰

In addition to building a global human rights movement, many civilian peacekeeping groups use activism and advocacy tactics to promote human rights within the conflict context as well. In this sense there is a close relationship between civilian peacekeeping and activist forms of peacebuilding, aimed at waging conflict nonviolently as described in the four categories of peacebuilding in Chapter 1. The complexity of this relationship between civilian peacekeeping and advocacy is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Human Rights and Peace Education

In the areas where civilian peacekeepers work, there is often low awareness of human rights and nonviolent strategies for social change. Some civilian peacekeeping organizations, such as Peace Brigades International, conduct training workshops on these themes to complement their accompaniment and presence work. It allows team members to use their time more effectively, as they can be working on curriculum planning while they are sitting in someone's office protecting them, or they can lead a workshop in times when accompaniment is not needed.⁸¹ Education workshops on these topics are important peacebuilding processes to build the long-term capacity of communities to practice democracy and ensure human rights.

78 Griffin-Nolan, p. 225

79 Interview with Kathy Kelly and report obtained from her entitled "Harvard Study Team Report: Public health in Iraq After the Gulf War." May 1991

80 Interview with David Atwood, former director of International Fellowship of Reconciliation

81 Peace Brigades International. "Evaluation of Field Projects in Colombia, Guatemala, Indonesia and Mexico." October 2004

Humanitarian Assistance and Development

Since there is a clear correlation between levels of poverty, lack of development, and the likelihood of violent conflict, it is not surprising that peacekeepers often operate in zones of conflict that have great needs for humanitarian assistance and development. UN peacekeepers have sometimes conducted humanitarian relief activities. For example, the UN peacekeeping operation in East Timor in 1999, UNTAET, included the development of civil and social services and the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation and development assistance in its mission.⁸²

There are arguments both for and against combining development or humanitarian assistance with peacekeeping activities. A number of groups feel these activities provide an *entrée* into a situation and may increase the credibility of the peacekeepers.

Some groups invite civilian peacekeepers to participate both in peacekeeping and development activities. The Guatemalan Communities of Popular Resistance requested technical skills like health, development, and education in addition to accompaniment activities.⁸³

The Shanti Sena, a group in India which follows Gandhi's teachings, argues that civilian peacekeepers should do "constructive" work to help give a *concrete moral basis* for their intervention.⁸⁴ Indian groups such as the Shanti Sena distinguish between "constructive work" or those projects developed and implemented by indigenous social change groups, and "development", which is seen as a Western notion that has little to do with social and political transformation.⁸⁵

Civil society groups that do international civilian peacekeeping depend a great deal on the support of governments and other outsiders. While governments can prohibit relief and development activities if they do not approve of the intervening group, they may actually invite civilian peacekeepers because of the aid they are bringing. Lisa Clark and Don Albino Bizotto of the Italian peace group *Beati i Costruttori di Pace* found that development work was a way of *keeping and developing contacts* in Sarajevo. While their group started out with an agenda to interposition between the armed groups, the relief aid they brought to the war-torn population was an *entrée* to their civilian peacekeeping work.⁸⁶

Engaging in humanitarian assistance activities can also assist in finding funding for civilian peacekeeping. In gathering support and promoting civilian peacekeeping to their funders and potential volunteers, David Radcliffe of the Church of the Brethren found that the aid and development aspects of their proposed accompaniment work in the Sudan was less contentious and gained support from their church constituency

82 <http://www.un.org/peace/etimor/etimor.htm>. February 21, 2005

83 "Sowing the Seeds of a New Guatemala." pamphlet on CPR's by Guatemala News and Information Bureau, P.O. Box 28594, Oakland, CA 94604

84 Transcript of interview of Narayan Desai, Indian peace practitioner. Obtained from Hagan Berndt, nonviolence trainer

85 Interview with Hagan Berndt, nonviolence trainer

86 Interview with Lisa Clark and Don Albino Bizotto

more readily than the more politicized activities of accompaniment and public education about the conflict.⁸⁷

Christian Peacemaker Teams Coordinator Gene Stolfus notes that he receives questions from the groups in conflict such as “how do we know if you’re serious if you don’t help us [by bringing relief supplies and development projects]?” Stolfus argues that while development is an *entrée*, it should be separated from other third party roles. He argues it is a safer way to be involved: Who would resist relief supplies or building toilets? However, it does not directly reduce violence or challenge the “powers that be”.⁸⁸

Other civilian intervention groups, such as the Balkan Peace Team and Peace Brigades International also raised concerns regarding some forms of humanitarian assistance and development peacebuilding activities. Organizers fear that it will duplicate the work by many other organizations that have the capacity and skills to do it more effectively. They also fear it might take up too much of the team’s time, which could be spent on efforts to reduce violence. Finally, some of the groups interviewed see this type of work as a new form of colonialism, where mostly Western outsiders invade regions with their ideas of what local people should do in order to “progress” or “develop”. While many PBI volunteers see accompaniment as a form of development work, they are very careful to avoid imperialist overtones to their work. Former PBI director Tim Wallis states that PBI developed more like a culturally-sensitive development agency than a peace agency. “We didn’t have the attitude of ‘we’ll go there and stop this terrible war’, but ‘we’ll enable them to be more self-sufficient.’”⁸⁹

Many UN peacekeeping personnel express the desire to be involved in development activities.⁹⁰ However, the UN has run into difficulties by combining its functions. For example, former UN Volunteer Director Frank O’Donnell maintained that the different UN roles in Somalia made it difficult for the local population to distinguish between UN activities. In specific, UN relief and development workers were confused with UN peacekeepers, who had a bad reputation among many of the local communities.⁹¹

Designing a Civilian Intervention

While the UN is able to conduct a variety of different peacebuilding interventions, it is a very large organization and each activity is housed in a separate department. There are many needs in situations of violent conflict. Those responding to the call to “do something” may be tempted to play many of the diverse roles described in

87 Interview with David Radcliffe, Director of Church of the Brethren peace team

88 Interview with Gene Stolfus, Coordinator of Christian Peacemaker Teams

89 Interview with Tim Wallis, former director of PBI

90 Galtung, Johan, “Participants in Peacekeeping Forces.” p. 279

91 Interview with Frank O’Donnell, former Director of the United Nations Staff

the peacebuilding framework given in Chapter 1. All of the roles, from activism to peacekeeping, to development are necessary. But each role requires a separate, distinct set of skills. It is usually difficult, if not impossible, for one organization to meet all the needs of people in a violent conflict. Instead, organizations must choose, based on their own capacity and resources, how they will contribute to building peace in a violent context. Local leaders and organizations from within the context can provide guidance and help external organizations make decisions about how they should intervene.

In their 2004 report, PBI evaluators suggest the need for greater efforts to analyze the local context with a variety of different local people on an ongoing basis. This analysis could guide civilian peacekeeping in their decision-making about who to accompany and what types of peacekeeping tasks to do. In Colombia, this analysis led to the recognition that PBI was accompanying high-profile human rights activists that already were protected by international awareness of their work rather than smaller, less well-known organizations that perhaps had a needed PBI's protective presence more greatly.⁹²

PBI exploratory teams in Colombia and Chad, for example, met with dozens of individuals and groups in those countries in an attempt to discover the most appropriate goals for an intervention. The teams both tried to analyze the political situation and assess where PBI team members could work, how safe they would be, and the strength of the invitation from groups in the country. After these analyses, the PBI International Steering Committee discussed the proposals.⁹³

In most violent conflicts, a variety of peacebuilding actors and approaches take place simultaneously. Short-term, "in and out" interventions may achieve specific goals and be stepping stones for achieving sustainable transformation. Peacekeeping is a crisis intervention in that it attempts to stop the violence, so that long-term peacebuilding processes may take place. Since sustainable peacebuilding requires multi-leveled, coordinated strategies, peacekeepers need to establish solid relationships with other peacebuilding actors. In developing these relationships, civilian peacekeepers need to know how to articulate and explain their work to others. The next two chapters help readers understand the way civilian peacekeeping works.

92 Peace Brigades International. "Evaluation of Field Projects in Colombia, Guatemala, Indonesia, and Mexico." October 2004

93 Interview with Bob Siedle-Kahn, member of Peace Brigades International

4. How Civilian Peacekeeping Works

Military peacekeeping models rely on arms to deter violence. The underlying message of the armed peacekeeper is “don’t hurt us, or we’ll hurt you”, or in more robust forms of peacekeeping the message might even be “stop fighting or we’ll kill you”. While the presence of authorized peacekeepers also implies other possible consequences if they are hurt, such as judicial trials or international diplomatic or economic pressure brought upon the perpetrators, armed peacekeepers primarily get their power from their weapons and their skill in using them.

Civilian peacekeeping works with different sources of power. Instead of weapons, civilian peacekeepers rely on nonviolent forms of power including moral authority, the power in numbers of people, the power that comes through economic and political leverage, and the power embodied in different forms of identity, like those held by religious leaders or people with Western passports. Civilian peacekeepers communicate a different nonverbal message by their presence in potentially violent situations. They in effect say “you’ll have to kill us before you kill other civilians” and/or “we are watching you and we will tell the world what you are doing”.

The various forms of power available to be used by civilian peacekeepers are contextual. For example, in Central America, civilian peacekeeping groups such as Witness for Peace and Peace Brigades International used their North American connections and, in many cases, their U.S. passports and white skin color as a form of power to enable them to effectively protect the people and communities under siege by military and rebel groups funded by the U.S. government. In Rwanda, where the U.S. government had much less to do with the conflict, white skin and U.S. passports did not offer civilian peacekeepers a form of power or an ability to be effective civilian peacekeepers. In some areas, religious leaders may have the power to do civilian peacekeeping, while in other conflicts religious and moral power are much weaker. An extensive power analysis of each context is necessary to determine the leverage points that will allow civilian peacekeepers to do their work.

This chapter examines the variety of sources of power that allow civilian peacekeepers to be effective in their work to prevent or reduce levels of violence.

Moral Authority

Civilian peacekeepers embody international human rights concerns, providing a living witness to the widespread moral value in protecting unarmed civilians that is found in virtually all religions and cultures. Some researchers suggest that civilian peacekeeping provides a moral authority that induces armed groups to seek more constructive ways to address their concerns.

The existence of a third party at the scene of events makes it easier for the conflict groups to take a more constructive approach to behaviour and problem-solving. A reversal of the escalation becomes possible because the

conflict groups question their own conflict behaviour and are supported in their search for a different approach to the problem.⁹⁴

Civilian peacekeepers can have the power to protect civilians threatened by violence, if they can effectively remind the armed groups of the basic moral values of the international community and its rights and norms. Some people may be able to symbolize moral authority better than others. For example, religious leaders could serve as civilian peacekeepers in some contexts, as they could more effectively bring a message of the immorality of human rights violations against a perpetrator motivated or inspired by religious leaders or teachings.

Legal Authority

Civilian peacekeepers also embody international human rights and humanitarian law. While the international legal and judicial system does not yet have all the power it would need to effectively process human rights violations in all areas of the world, it does still have the legal authority to name and shame perpetrators. Civilian peacekeepers are the eyes and ears that collect the first-hand data needed to successfully use international legal tools and processes. By tapping into this legal authority, civilian peacekeepers also increase their own power to effectively deter perpetrators from committing crimes that could be documented.

Media Attention to Civilian Peacekeepers

The media can lend civilian peacekeepers both credibility and power to play their roles. In many situations, civilian peacekeepers gain credibility and an ability to be effective deterrents to violence by advertising their presence and role in newspapers, radio, and television. Their use of clear, concise language to frame their role is essential. They can use both moral arguments about the need to save lives, and strategic arguments about the effectiveness of civilian peacekeepers to deter violence in their communication strategies. In some situations, it would be beneficial to have an international film crew along with civilian peacekeeping teams to boost their ability to deter violence and communicate more vividly that “the world is watching”.

Political, Social, and Material Leverage through Emergency Alert Networks

Human rights groups have a strategy of “naming and shaming” those who break a cease-fire or target civilians in warfare. Naming and shaming strategies use international emergency alert networks and/or media to raise awareness of human rights violations and to mobilize pressure on the armed groups to change their unlawful behavior. Civilian peacekeeping enters into this human rights system by

94 Müller, Barbara and Buttner, Christian. “Optimizing Peacekeeping, Peacemaking and Peacebuilding through Nonviolent Intervention/ A methodological and systematic operationalisation.” Working Paper No. 6 of the Instituts für Friedensarbeit und Gewaltfreie Konfliktaustragung, Wahlenau 1998

providing, on the ground, eye-witness accounts of violence against civilians that allows for *more rapid* and *more legitimately informed* actions. Civilian peacekeepers provide a first-hand account of atrocities, and their reports are fed to the alert network to mobilize international outrage, phone calls, e-mails, and faxes to inform political leaders and the perpetrators themselves that there is awareness of the human rights violation. The alert networks show that “the world is watching” by connecting the team members with members of the international community. Alert networks are channels for communicating about specific threats against a civilian peacekeeper. The ability for civilian peacekeepers to quickly mobilize international pressure on potential perpetrators plays a central role in the ability of the peacekeepers to reduce violence and to prevent aggression.

Naming and shaming strategies are effective tools for helping civilian peacekeepers protect civilians, if the people making decisions about the use of violence care about how they are perceived internationally, and especially if they are dependent in some way on the international community for political, social or material support. Given the processes of globalization, there are few countries that still act like islands separated from their global neighbors. In places like Burma, for example, while the government is isolated diplomatically from other nations, multinational oil companies still have solid relationships and interests in the current power structure there. The reliance by the Burmese government on these oil contracts is a potential leverage point for groups wanting democratic change in Burma.

Accompaniment of civilians increases the perceived political, social, or material costs of attacking them. Many armed groups are expert in distancing themselves from human rights violations by deflecting the blame toward a few undisciplined individuals, destroying the credibility of the organization reporting the violations, or by instituting “buffers” or “smokescreens”, such as creating their own human rights ministries to condemn the violence and distance those with political power from the blame.

The decision-makers who order attacks on civilians can include non-state actors like rebel guerilla groups, state-based military personnel of all ranks, government officials of all ranks, private sector businessmen, religious leaders, or anyone with influence over armed groups. Peace Brigades International teams intentionally meet with and establish relationships with people at all levels in the hierarchy within government, military, and rebel groups, so that they are aware of PBI’s mission and goals and are more likely to feel accountable for violations under their control. This also in effect serves to warn potential perpetrators of the international consequences of targeting individuals or groups accompanied by PBI.⁹⁵

PBI staff Enrique Luis Eguren and Liam Mahony, who accompanied Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu in Guatemala, discuss the efficacy of the alert networks in getting the release of Menchu from Guatemalan police custody.

Three of us were waiting for her at the airport. Menchu is one of the most outspoken human rights activists-in-exile and a frequent recipient of death threats and accusations of collaboration with the rebels, including during the weeks preceding her visit. In addition to foreign accompaniment, she was met by hundreds of excited Guatemalans, and a force of 500 police, who immediately arrested her and whisked her away. Our first task at this point was to get to a telephone. We had already warned our office in Toronto to be prepared for an emergency. One phone call there activated hundreds of others. Guatemalan organizations and the other members of her international delegation were also immediately alerting their own networks. Within a few hours, the government was receiving hundreds of telegrams and phone calls from everyday citizens to Congressmen. She and her co-worker were freed before the end of the day, with no charges filed.⁹⁶

This example demonstrates how the first hand reports of civilian peacekeepers, partnered with an international alert network, mobilized public outcry against the detainment of an indigenous human rights leader like Menchu, and can be effective social and political leverage. The Guatemalan government relied heavily on U.S. good-will and support. Detaining Menchu led to unacceptable social and political costs to its international image. Accompaniment itself was not able to prevent Menchu's arrest. However, the alert network served as a backup deterrent to the use of force against her.

In situations where groups in the conflict rely on material development aid or favorable trading policies governed by other nations, they may also be susceptible to material leverage or the threat of withdrawing military or development aid if human rights abuses continue.

Willingness to Suffer and Die

Military personnel make a commitment to risk their lives for their work. Civilian peacekeepers make the same commitment. This commitment to not run away from the face of danger is a source of power, for when it is demonstrated to groups using violence, it communicates the inefficacy of intimidation or violence in stopping the mission of civilian peacekeepers.

During the civil war in Nicaragua, civilian peacekeepers working with the group Witness for Peace were threatened, and some members were kidnapped by contra rebel forces. The persistent presence of Witness for Peace staff in the country despite these threats communicated to the contra forces that threats and violence would not deter the civilian peacekeepers and their organization from their mission to protect civilians.

96 Excerpts from a book proposal by Liam Mahony and Quique Eguren "The Protective Role of Nonviolent International Accompaniment" in Beer, Michael. Ed. "A Peace Team Reader"

Training

Civilian peacekeeping organizations require that their teams undergo training in the effective use of nonviolent defense tactics and conflict resolution and communication skills that help them relate more effectively with local people and allow them to potentially facilitate communication between armed groups. While it can take years to develop the skill and art of diplomacy and conflict resolution processes, civilian peacekeepers can quell tensions and prevent violence with the short-term training they receive. The capacity to address conflict constructively that civilian peacekeepers receive in their preparatory training enables them to do their work more effectively.

Power in Numbers

In the last 30 years, most civilian peacekeeping efforts have been on a small scale with teams of 5-20 people. There are only a few documented stories in history of large groups of civilian peacekeepers separating groups in violent conflict through “interpositioning”, and many of these stories are not well documented. Some claim civilian peacekeeping by UN and civil society actors “failed” in the former Yugoslavia. Yet the failure to prevent violence likely was not because the civilian peacekeepers were unarmed. Rather, the failure was related to the fact that there were very few civilian peacekeepers. Some suspect that if there were thousands of international civilian peacekeepers monitoring and documenting human rights, they might have prevented much more of the violence that occurred.

Civilian peacekeepers will need to assess their ability to work in each violent conflict based on the numbers of people needed. This may take years of research before good, predictable calculations can be made. While numbers of civilian peacekeepers are one key variable in their ability to do their work effectively, the identity of civilian peacekeepers may have an even bigger impact on their efficacy.

Creative Nonviolent Strategies

Civilian interventions are often motivated by the principles of nonviolence, as articulated by historical strategists such as Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Henry Thoreau. Many believe there is always a nonviolent response to violence: the more difficult the circumstances, the more powerful the results of using nonviolence. If some people accept the risks of confronting conflict nonviolently, nonviolence strategists purport others will follow and say “I can do that”.

Nonviolent does not simply mean “unarmed”. The goal of nonviolence is the creative *transformation* of a conflict - addressing the underlying causes of conflict, including the perceptions each group has of the humanity of others. Civilian peacekeepers attempt to *model* or demonstrate these nonviolent principles to facilitate the transformation of a conflict. Nonviolent activist George Lakey defines modeling as body language, acts of service, listening to people, and assisting people to choose other-than-violent behaviors.⁹⁷ Any action a civilian intervener takes in a violent situation may be seen as modeling.

97 Lakey, George. “How to Develop Peace Teams: The Lightbulb Theory.” 1995

Nonviolent strategies respond creatively to conflict. In times of crisis, civilian peacekeepers can disrupt the ongoing cycle of violence by “doing the unexpected”. Creativity and spontaneity are a form of power for civilian peacekeepers, allowing them to act in unpredictable ways to change a situation and alter people’s perceptions of themselves and others in a way that prevents violence.

Civilian peacekeepers accompanying Guatemalan refugees returning from Mexico demonstrated this mechanism. As they approached a military roadblock, they suspected that the Guatemalan military would force them to return to Mexico or even open fire on them as they had done to other returning refugees. In coordination with a group of international civilian peacekeepers accompanying them, the group began playing their guitars, dancing, singing, and called out to the soldiers to join their fiesta. Defusing a potentially violent interaction, the refugees passed the soldiers peacefully.

The Identity of Civilian Peacekeepers

The identity of civilian peacekeepers is one of the most important and underestimated elements that impacts the effectiveness of civilian peacekeeping. They prevent violence by highlighting some aspect of their identity. Civilian peacekeepers with different identities may be more or less effective, depending on the specific context of the conflict and each intervention activity. Each context must be assessed and analyzed to determine which forms of identity will offer the most power to enable civilian peacekeepers to do their work.

UN peacekeepers derive some of their power from the authority of their role as agents of the United Nations. Civilian peacekeepers get their power from a variety of different forms of identity. The rest of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the role of identity in the effectiveness of civilian peacekeeping.

Unarmed civilians: First, civilian peacekeepers may be respected because they identify themselves as unarmed, innocent civilians, seeking only to protect the lives of other civilians. Where there are local traditions of protecting civilians and providing hospitality to outsiders, international civilian peacekeeping forces may be especially effective.

Symbolic markers: UN peacekeepers are identified by their blue helmets, potent symbols of institutional power. Many unarmed civilian peacekeepers wear special colored shirts or hats to symbolize their status. Special organizational symbols may also be placed on clothes and vehicles. These symbolic markers set the civilian peacekeepers apart from other civilian, governmental, or armed actors in a context and contribute to their ability to play a peacekeeping role.

Women: In some contexts, specific groups of people may be able to be successful at civilian peacekeeping. In countries where women are held up in traditional, if not

patriarchal, stereotypes as innocent and non-political mothers, for example, they may be able to stop or deter violence by their presence. As noted in Chapter 2, in many African countries women have been able to walk between armed groups and prevent aggression because of their culturally defined gender roles.

Elders, religious and spiritual leaders: Religious and spiritual leaders have a great deal of authority and respect in some countries. If the leaders of armed groups continue to respect religious leaders, these could be very effective peacekeepers. In cultures where elders still have moral authority and respect, they could be effective peacekeepers. In Philadelphia in 1970, Quakers were civilian peacekeepers for a conference of the Black Panthers, an organization advocating militant self-defense of minority communities against the U.S. government. These mostly white members of the Philadelphia community may have been effective and credible because of their moral authority as a religious community.⁹⁸

Symbolic animals, texts or objects: One can imagine the power that sacred animals, such as cows in some cultures, or religious texts like the Koran could play in deterring violence in a specific area or protecting people who walked beside or carried a sacred object, like a cross or flag.

Insiders: While many Westerners assume that outsiders are more credible peacekeepers than groups from within the conflict region, credibility is defined by the cultural, social, and political context. The definition of who is an “insider” and who is an “outsider” is subjective and vague. Despite the increasing popularity of community policing in the United States, which encourages hiring police in their home communities, Westerners are often skeptical of any insider or partisan third party interventions. Other cultures seem to be more open to this idea.

In Central America, conflict scholars Wehr and Lederach found that “insider partials”, interveners from within the conflict zone who have legitimacy, trust and relationships with the groups in conflict, are favored over “outsider impartial”, interveners from outside the conflict zone who are not known and have no relationship with the groups.⁹⁹ Insiders build credibility from connection with the groups rather than distance from them. They build a bridge from one party to another rather than trying to build the bridge from the middle. In Somalia, resource groups such as elders, women’s groups, and religious organizations from within the conflict region have proven to be effective peacebuilders.¹⁰⁰

98 Tatum, Lyle. “Friendly Presence: A Quaker Peacekeeping Project.” Philadelphia: Friends Peace Committee, 1970

99 Wehr, Paul and Lederach, John Paul. “Mediating Conflict in Central America.” *Journal of Peace Research*. Vol 28(1), 1991

100 Lederach, John Paul. *Mennonite Central Committee Efforts in Somalia/Somaliland: A Brief Overview*. Akron, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Central Committee, November, 1993

Many of the historical examples of civilian interventions have been conducted by people within the conflict in a spontaneous rather than planned manner. The Shanti Sena peacekeepers were made up of “insiders”, both Hindus and Muslims, who had local authority. This allowed them to be effective peacekeepers during local riots. For the Shanti Sena, long-term commitment, clear moral principles, and the experience and wisdom that age implies brought the credibility needed to interpose in conflict situations.¹⁰¹ Instead of pushing for the creation of an international Shanti Sena, which would conduct civilian peacekeeping projects around the world, some of its Indian leaders preferred the idea of creating model units of the Shanti Sena in other countries composed of “insiders”.¹⁰² Some argue that the idea of civilian peacekeeping teams will only command respect once they are enacted by local communities in their own conflicts.¹⁰³ In Central America, Mexican civilians helped accompany Guatemalan refugees back to their communities. Salvadorans, who themselves were once refugees and accompanied by North American civilian peacekeepers, also helped accompany Guatemalans returning from refugee camps in Honduras. These fellow Central Americans were effective interveners, perhaps because of their shared history and ability to give support from one movement to the other.¹⁰⁴

Insiders are also used by the UN who often recruit their volunteers from areas adjacent to the violent conflict. New volunteers sometimes come from refugee camps and other locations where previous volunteers have worked. While they still provide an international presence and are from an international sponsoring organization, they can better understand the cultural and social dynamics of the situations they are working in, and often have faced similar conditions and experiences themselves.¹⁰⁵

In the 1960s Congo peacekeeping operation, peacekeepers were specifically brought in from neighboring countries: Ghana, Liberia, Mali, and Nigeria. The inclusion of those troops was designed to give greater credibility to the force, as there was a desire to avoid the appearance of a peacekeeping force made up solely of white men from colonial powers.¹⁰⁶

In this situation, neighboring countries were seen as less biased and more credible than distant foreign countries that may have had more of a direct interest in the violent conflict.¹⁰⁷

Outsiders, white skin, and/or Western passports: In other places, outsiders may be more effective peacekeepers. For example, in Central America, U.S. citizens were largely successful in preventing violence in regions where they were present. If the civilian peacekeepers themselves or the people they were accompanying were

101 Interview with Hagan Berndt, nonviolence trainer

102 Ram, 1962, p. 499 in Weber, p. 55

103 Muste Papers. Box 41, Folder 3 in Weber, p. 53

104 Interview with Kurt Wands, director of National Coordinating Office on the Refugees and Displaced

105 Interview with Frank O'Donnell, former director of the United Nations Staff

106 Diehl, p. 65

107 Diehl, p. 105

targeted, the U.S. government could be held accountable for the documented human rights violations against unarmed civilians, given its extensive support of various groups that were fighting and perpetrating harm toward civilians in the region.

Today outsiders are often seen as more effective peacekeepers than insiders because of the power of their Western passports, their white skin, and/or their ability to be impartial. Some purport that the racist structure that values Caucasians over and above everyone else can provide safety to others. Civilian peacekeepers with Western passports and/or white skin may not be attacked, because their lives are perceived to be more valuable by local armed groups concerned about the power of Western countries over the groups in violent conflict.¹⁰⁸

In situations where a civilian peacekeeper's own country is directly involved in a war in another country, it may be more effective for citizens of that country to play civilian peacekeeping roles. For example, Witness for Peace staff in Nicaragua during the 1980s were mostly from the United States. The contras may have avoided attacking Nicaraguan towns where they were present because of the direct effects an American civilian death by one of their forces might have had on their funding from the U.S. government.

In other violent conflicts, experience suggests that Western passports provide additional safety for team members and allow them access to government officials that may not be open to local people. International peacekeepers may use their privilege and power to maintain contact with government officials regarding their activities to heighten the awareness of their presence.

A PBI team member claimed: "We try to cast our protective net as widely as possible, including using our diplomatic contacts. We inform and when necessary involve others in the [human rights] cases we are working on."¹⁰⁹ A Sri Lankan human rights worker who was accompanied by a PBI member noted: "There is no rule of law in Sri Lanka, but the government and the police respect the outsider, especially with white skin. It is not good; it is an imperialist attitude, but it is true here."¹¹⁰

In the 1980s, two PBI staff were put in prison by Salvadoran authorities for their activities. The two women, one Canadian and one Colombian, were treated differently. The Canadian was immediately released, while the Colombian was detained. The PBI alert network was utilized for both of them with hundreds of telexes and faxes sent to the U.S. embassy and Salvadoran military demanding their release, but the system worked more efficiently for the Canadian, likely because she came from a powerful country and had light skin. The Colombian woman lacked both. However, she too was eventually released because of her affiliation with the Canadian PBI volunteer and the power of PBI, an international organization which actively lobbied for her release.¹¹¹

108 Interview with Kurt Wands, director of National Coordinating Office on the Refugees and Displaced

109 Coy, Patrick. 1994. p. 12

110 Coy, 1994. pp. 15-16

111 Interview with Michael Beer, Nonviolence International staff

Others argue that racism can never be “effective”. If one uses a racist structure as a tool to protect, some argue that it is in effect playing along with a colonialist mindset.¹¹² While it may make people uncomfortable to admit that they are using a racist system and label it as such, some purport that the system in other countries is not ours to transform. Liam Mahony suggests that we can face the racism at home by confronting economic institutions and government policies that perpetuate the racism abroad. However, in another region and culture, the system can be used to make space for others by protecting them as they confront the very same racist system.¹¹³ The dilemma to peacekeepers is whether the use of racist attitudes, which may protect their lives, may also indirectly serve to maintain racist attitudes and dependency upon outsiders.

Despite the advantages of being a white, Western civilian peacekeeper in some contexts, in other places these same identities may actually endanger and prevent civilian peacekeepers from being effective deterrents of violence. Some armed groups are simply removed from any relationship with the West that would make them hesitant of hurting light-skinned people or Westerners. In some contexts, particularly given the current War on Terror and its impact around the world, Westerners, and Americans in particular, may actually be targets of one of the armed groups. In these situations, the identity of civilian peacekeepers may require careful and creative thought.

According to former accompanier Dan Dayle, during the 1989 FMLN offensive in El Salvador, North American accompaniers became targets for the Salvadoran military. The accompanying peacekeepers themselves went into hiding, were accompanied by Salvadorans, or left the country until the military’s state of emergency was lifted.¹¹⁴ In Haiti, the military lost regard for the shaming of the international community and openly conducted beatings in the presence of UN observers. Likewise, Serbian forces have ignored or targeted UN peacekeepers and humanitarian missions when they lost interest in placating the international community. In Israel/Palestine, American activist Rachel Corrie who was part of the International Solidarity Movement, was killed by an Israeli bulldozer while she was standing in front of a Palestinian house about to be demolished.

Mixed, diverse teams: In a situation where one or more groups are unresponsive to the presence of international civilian peacekeepers, mixed diverse teams of local people with authority and outsiders with diverse nationality, religion, sex, age, class, race and other identities may be effective. Team diversity is seen by many as more than just a politically correct idea: it is said to truly contribute to the betterment of the team.

For example, diversity of age was mentioned by several Peace Brigades International staff as a valuable team asset. Maturity, experience, and commitment

112 Shivers, Lynn. “Controversies in Nonviolent Action Theory,” Deptford, New Jersey, 1988

113 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

114 Interview with Dan Dayle, member of accompaniment team in El Salvador

are important resources often held by older persons.¹¹⁵ On the other hand, young people have energy and the stamina to endure difficult situations and may be able to “get away with” activities risky for older people.¹¹⁶

Gender diversity was also noted. In some areas, women team members are safer than their male counterparts. In some places unarmed women, especially older women, are more likely to be protected rather than harmed by the groups in conflict.¹¹⁷ However, in recent years the trend has been toward increased violence against women in times of war.

Tim Wallis argues that civilian peacekeeping teams should have ethnic diversity as a proactive statement that the world, not just the West, is concerned with the violent conflict.¹¹⁸ Narayan Desai from the Institute for Total Revolution in India argues that there should be “southern people” included in civilian teams as a matter of respect for the people of the regions in violent conflict [presuming these are in the Southern Hemisphere].¹¹⁹

Christian Peacemaker Team volunteer Rey Lopez, originally from the Philippines, found that he was able to understand, relate to, and advise Haitian organizers more effectively than his North American counterparts. He theorizes that they trusted him more, because he was also from a so-called Third World country and was part of the nonviolent social change movement in his own country.¹²⁰ A PBI team member from Japan working in Sri Lanka also communicated very well with the Sri Lankans despite being unable to speak their language.¹²¹

Particular identities may or may not be suitable for a particular violent conflict. PBI team members in Sri Lanka suggested that it would not be effective to have Indian team members because of the colonial relationship between India and Sri Lanka. In their final report, the PBI exploratory team to Chad stated that there should be at least one Muslim team member on a proposed PBI peace team to Chad. Even if the other team members do not define themselves as Christian, a Muslim team member would be necessary due to the relationship of Islam, politics, and Christianity in Chad. In addition, they stated that French staff would likely not be acceptable because of the colonial relationship between France and Chad.¹²²

In the Sjema Mira project, Coordinator Scott Schaefer-Duffy noted that the team members from Vets for Peace, an American veteran’s association, provided the team with an important perspective: that of the soldiers. These team members

115 Interview with George Willoughby, one of the founding members of PBI

116 Interview with Yeshua Moser-Phoungsuwan, staff member of Nonviolence International

117 Interview with Christine Schweitzer, former coordinator of Balkan Peace Team

118 Interview with Tim Wallis, former director of PBI

119 Transcript of interview with Narayan Desai obtained from Hagan Berndt, nonviolence trainer

120 Interview with Rey Lopez, member of Christian Peacemaker Teams

121 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

122 Buser, Lotti, Berndt, Hagan, Furger, Beat, Menozzi. Marie Catherine. “Report of the Exploratory Team in Chad: October 5-20, 1993.” December, 1993

were able to relate and convey sympathy to soldiers who were caught up in the war in Bosnia.¹²³

The specific context of each violent conflict needs to be assessed to determine the composition of the team. Likely, any type of diversity of identity may be helpful or a hindrance in some situations. Yet if civilian peacekeeping teams are mixed, including nonwhite members, the greater security needs and concerns of nonwhite members may need special attention. Emergency response networks are especially important for diverse teams with members whose physical appearance may not convey the power of their country or their sponsoring organization. Group or organizational identities may convey power and prestige that an individual identity may not.

This chapter explained many of the factors that increase the power of civilian peacekeepers, thus enabling them to do their work of reducing violence. The next chapter continues the exploration of how civilian peacekeeping works by focusing particularly on the interaction between civilian peacekeeping and human rights activism. This unique nexus of peacebuilding approaches impacts the ability of civilian peacekeeping to lead more effectively to broader social and structural change in support of human rights and democracy. Yet it also affects the perception of impartiality or “nonpartisanship” of civilian peacekeepers, and impacts the perceptions of the identity of civilian peacekeepers.

123 Interview with Scott Schaefer-Duffy

5. Civilian Peacekeeping's Impact and Relationship to Human Rights Activism

Human rights activists are an important component in peacebuilding processes. They work to challenge existing state and international structures that violate or fail to protect human rights. They use legal channels as well as community organizing strategies, demonstrations, petitions, sit-ins and a wide range of other tactics to increase public awareness about human rights and increase the power of those groups promoting alternative, democratic structures that more fully embrace and protect human rights.

Armed rebel groups often articulate a similar vision. However, they use violent methods of pursuing social change. Governments often link human rights activists and armed rebel movements together, as both pose a challenge to existing structures to their society's powerful elite, who are invested in perpetuating the status quo from which they benefit. Human rights activists are sometimes sympathetic to those who take up arms to change violent and unjust structures, as they consider the status quo as not worth preserving or more "evil" than the resulting direct violence waged by rebel movements. In other contexts, such as Colombia, rebel movements are gross violators of human rights and stand in opposition to both government and non-governmental human rights organizations. Regardless, human rights organizations are often targets for one or more armed groups in a conflict.

Civilian peacekeepers respond to the vulnerability of human rights organizations in several ways. Some join local human rights activists in demonstrations, participating fully in waging conflict nonviolently through political activism and advocacy. Others shy away from direct political activity and instead simply try to accompany vulnerable human rights leaders to enable them to work for change.

Blending Peacekeeping and Activism to Address Structural Violence

Peacekeeping usually refers to attempts to reduce the amount of direct physical violence and not the underlying structural violence of discriminatory policies and institutions – often referred to as structural violence – that result in the deaths and disabilities by people who are denied access to food, healthcare, education, or housing. Structural violence sometimes leads discriminated groups within a society to take up arms and wage violent conflict in an effort to achieve social justice. Efforts to stop direct violence may be perceived as unintentionally siding with those most interested in preserving the status quo by preventing the armed groups from using violence that might change it. Some civilian peacekeeping groups blend their work to reduce direct violence with activist strategies that aim to help raise awareness of the destructiveness of the structures that gave birth to the violent conflict and to increase the negotiating power of one or more of the groups, so they may reach an equitable solution.

Christian Peacemaker Teams believe that activism is an essential part of their civilian peacekeeping projects. In Israel/Palestine, CPT staff spend most of their

time with Palestinians citing the fact that the overwhelming amount of violence is committed by Israeli forces against Palestinian civilians. In addition, CPT and other civilian peacekeeping organizations in Israel/Palestine, such as the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) and the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), openly criticize Israel's occupation of Palestine as a form of structural violence.¹²⁴ They actively work with Palestinians and Israelis who seek to change the structure of the relationship between Israel and Palestine. Several CPT members have been arrested for clearing roads blocked by the Israeli Defence Forces with debris. Participants in the Walk for a Peaceful Future in Israel/Palestine used civil disobedience by placing their bodies in an Israeli army-controlled area where they knew they would be arrested. In the former Yugoslavia, several of the civilian peacekeeping teams also demonstrated for peace in the region.¹²⁵

Other civilian peacekeeping groups strictly refuse to participate in human rights activism themselves and refrain from making critiques of political structures. However, they may still accompany and provide protective presence for local human rights activists from within the conflict to do their work.

Providing a Safe Space for Local Activism

Groups such as Peace Brigades International describe their peacekeeping work as “making space” for nonviolent alternatives to address structural violence. Civilian peacekeepers can be a catalyst for social change by empowering local groups to begin or continue their nonviolent social change work by addressing structural violence and increasing democratic pursuit of human rights. PBI expert Liam Mahony claims that an international presence encourages civil society human rights activism by being “a source of hope” to local activists and assuring “them that they are not alone, that their work is important and that their suffering will not go unnoticed by the outside world”.¹²⁶

Other PBI evaluators claim: “International presence goes beyond protection and has an impact of encouraging local activism to overcome the hopelessness deliberately instilled by long-term, entrenched, low-level repression.”¹²⁷ No human rights activists accompanied one-on-one by a PBI accompanier has been killed in the last two decades.¹²⁸ Civilian peacekeeping creates the space for nonviolent activism and advocacy to balance power, raise awareness and ripen the conflict, so that dialogue and structural change become possible.

124 Åkerlund, Anna, Villanueva, Eduarado and Berg, Kari. “A as in Accompaniment” in *New Routes*. No 2, 2002 Uppsala, Sweden: Life & Peace Institute

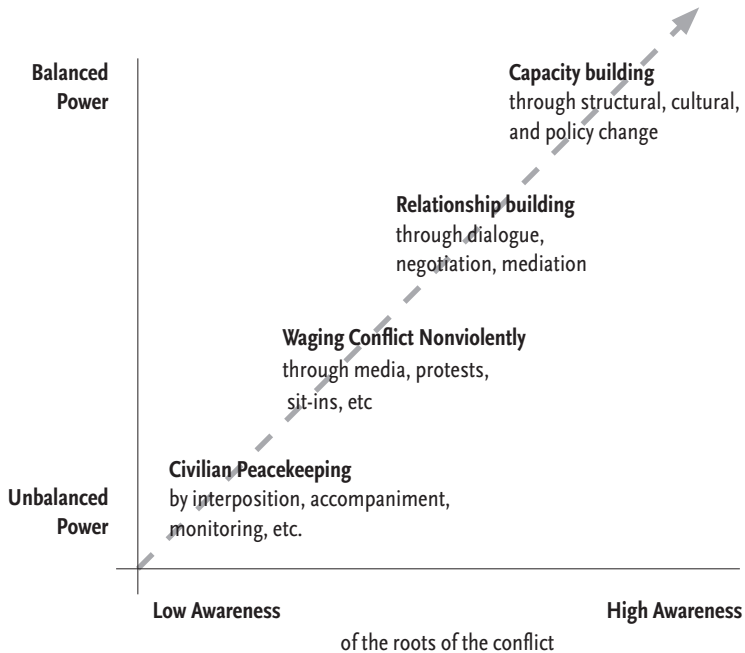
125 Interview with Lisa Clark and Don Albino Bizotto

126 Mahony, Liam. “Side by Side: Protecting and encouraging threatened activists with unarmed international accompaniment.” *New Tactics in Human Rights*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Center for Victims of Torture, 2004. p. 6

127 Peace Brigades International. “Evaluation of Field Projects in Colombia, Guatemala, Indonesia and Mexico.” October 2004

128 p. 7

Figure 3: Conflict Progression Diagram



ADAPTED FROM CURLE BY SCHIRCH

The diagram above, an adaptation of one by peacebuilding expert Adam Curle, shows a progression of peacebuilding approaches that aligns with the progression of conflict. When there is unbalanced power in a conflict and/or low awareness and understanding of the people involved and the roots of the conflict, advocacy and activism may be necessary to wage the conflict through nonviolent means.

In the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S., for example, white leaders refused to negotiate with African Americans on the issues of segregation and voting rights, until African Americans publicly dramatized the racial discrimination through activist strategies, such as protest marches, lunch counter sit-ins, and so on. In this context, civilian peacekeepers, many of whom were white religious leaders, accompanied African American activists in their struggle to make a safe space for their social change work. As power between the white and African Americans communities became more balanced, and as awareness of the plight of African Americans increased, white leadership in the U.S. became willing to dialogue and negotiate with African American leadership and eventually leading to public policy changes that ended segregation laws and changed voter registration policies.

Many people testify to the way that civilian peacekeepers make space for human rights activism by ensuring the personal security for activists. Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez, who was accompanied by PBI in El Salvador, states the effect PBI had on his work.

“Hope can only be kindled where there is solidarity. It is much easier to throw yourself into any commitment when you have someone with you, protecting you ... I can throw myself from a high place, if I know that there is someone there to make sure I am not destroyed by the fall. [PBI gives] us the force to be able to throw ourselves into our work.”¹²⁹

A Sri Lankan group claims that PBI's accompaniment “made them feel more safe, influenced the choices they made about how and whether to continue their work, and strengthened their resolve and the resolve of those with whom they worked at their centers”.¹³⁰ A member of the Sri Lankan Center for Conscientization claims:

When PBI is here with us, it decreases our fear and the fear of the people who come to the center ... The violence here has gotten inside people; it does not just operate on the outside ... it also operates on the inside through fear and kills the spirit of the people. But we see that we are not alone in our struggle, and that helps us overcome that fear ... The people see that this work is important and that others care about it ...¹³¹

The Sri Lankan Interfaith Fellowship for Peace and Development also credits PBI for their ability to continue their work:

PBI staff have visited most of our groups. We had to invite them for the safety of our leaders. Many deaths and disappearances could have been prevented if they were here long before ... at least now many are safe and activities of groups involved in social action can be continued.¹³²

While the presence of Witness for Peace staff started out with the purpose of increasing the safety of the Nicaraguan communities where they lived, some claimed that it became more of an opportunity to share in the pain of the war. WFP staff spent time with the families who experienced violence, just listening and comforting them. They also shared the risks of the Nicaraguan people by living in the war zones with them.¹³³

The Balkan Peace Team shows solidarity with groups in the former Yugoslavia by strengthening and encouraging Croatian peace and human rights activists to develop their own strategies.¹³⁴ The Christian Peacemaker Teams and Cry for Justice projects both included “showing solidarity with the Haitian people” in their goals.¹³⁵

129 Moser-Puangsuwan/Weber 2000: 148

130 Coy, 1994, p. 17

131 Coy, 1994, pp. 15-16

132 Peace Brigades International 1993 Annual Report and PBI pamphlet

133 Interview with Doug Schirch, former long term volunteer with Witness for Peace

134 Interview with Howard Clark

135 Publicity material from these organizations

In Washington, D.C., the Christian Peacemaker Teams engaged in a Project in Urban Peacemaking. This project attempted to “provide the political space to allow for human service providers to more effectively deliver their services to allow for that larger effort to begin unencumbered by the potential for violent conflict”. Arendt notes that while accompaniment activities accomplish this in an urban setting in Haiti, it takes the form of community organizing. The primary activities of this urban team involved “listening projects”. Based on a model project of this nature conducted by another organization, Rural Southern Voice for Peace, with military personnel in southern parts of the United States, the project in Washington, D.C., aimed to empower local neighbors of the team to talk about issues of concern to them.¹³⁶ The solidarity shown to local people facilitated the creation of a violence-free zone for residents and local children to celebrate Halloween and the closing down of a local crack cocaine house.¹³⁷

Some “consumers” of civilian accompaniment have noted that in hindsight they do not think the civilian peacekeeping accompaniment and presence saved their lives, because they realized later that they were not in as much danger as they had originally believed. However, they did note that the solidarity they felt allowed them to continue their work, regardless of whether or not they were truly at risk.¹³⁸

Mahony describes how both human rights activists and armed aggressors hold perceptions of acceptable and unacceptable costs based on their best guesses about the repercussions of their actions.

A dictator might not have attacked a certain organization if he had known that this would attract greater diplomatic support to the [human rights] organization and increase its international profile and credibility. Meanwhile the activists are also making mistakes: A young factory worker may think it would be dangerous to be an outspoken union leader. But she figures the odds are more in her favor if she is just a quiet rank-and-file member. Then she’s dead. At the factory next door, everyone is too scared to even talk about unionizing. Yet maybe there would be no repercussions at all. They don’t know. Nobody knows. Everyone learns by trial and error, and the errors are costly.¹³⁹

Activists assess the acceptable risks they feel able to make. Mahony argues that accompaniment can increase the political space that is perceived to be safe for activists, allowing them to travel to places, for example, that otherwise might have been perceived to be too dangerous or take a public stand on a human rights issue that they would not have taken without accompaniment.

136 Presentation to various Mennonite churches by Christian Peacemaker Teams member Cole Arendt entitled “Not Looking the Other Way”

137 “Nonviolent People Power Closes D.C. Crack House.” *Signs of the Times*. February 1995. Pp. 1-2

138 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

139 Mahony, 2004. p. 14

At the same time, accompaniment increases the perceived costs of harming human rights activists for armed aggressors, causing them to be more cautious in their use of direct aggression against them. Mahony claims accompaniment limits the sense of impunity that aggressors perceive, making them more fearful of repercussions by their immediate superiors who may have ordered them to commit the aggression, more wary of increased local unrest that may come about after an act of aggression toward civilian activists, or more pressured from the international community, who can bring to bear moral and economic pressure on governments that use terrorist tactics against unarmed activists.¹⁴⁰

The shift in perception of perceived costs for both activists and aggressors is significant in societies where armed groups use terrorist tactics to inspire widespread fear. In places where the state wages terror on its own citizens, human rights activities are greatly curtailed, as the perceived costs are great.

Activism and Impartiality

Impartiality is interpreted in different ways. Some claim impartiality means not having any relationship with any of the groups. It is assumed that outsiders are impartial because they have *no direct relationship* with the groups or stake in the outcome. There is a widely-held assumption that local people cannot be impartial. Impartiality could also mean maintaining *equal relationships* with all of the groups. Civilian peacekeepers need credibility in order to gain access to the conflict.

Diehl suggests that peacekeeper impartiality toward all armed and unarmed groups and possible political outcomes is necessary for two reasons. First, peacekeepers will likely be more acceptable to the groups in the conflict. Second, impartial peacekeepers will be more effective in their peacekeeping if their actions are not attributed to some interest of their nation of origin.¹⁴¹ In other words, impartiality is a means for increasing the credibility of peacekeepers and their ability to do their work. While these points may be relevant to official or state-based interventions, non-governmental civilian interventions seem to have more flexibility in defining the shape of their impartiality.

In a study of UN peacekeepers conducted in the 1970s, Johan Galtung found that the longer peacekeepers remained in a situation, the more biased and partial they became. "The closer one comes to a conflict scene, the more difficult it is to maintain any kind of 'balanced attitude'."¹⁴² Civilian peacekeepers have the same difficulties. If one or more groups rejected their proposal to intervene, or they began to feel sympathy for one party more than another, civilian peacekeepers are often left in the awkward position of being with only one side of the violent conflict while trying to be between both sides.

140 Mahony, 2004. p. 15

141 Diehl, p. 64

142 Galtung, Johan, with Helge Hveem. "Participants in Peacekeeping Forces" in *War, Peace and Defense: Essays in Peace Research Vol. II*. Ed. Christian Ejlert. Copenhagen: International Peace Research Institute, 1976. p. 272

Impartiality is considered a requirement by many civilian peacekeeping groups. Italian civilian peacekeeping organizer Lisa Clark expressed, "if you are on one side of the conflict, you contribute to it; you have to reach out to all sides and create something new".¹⁴³ Groups such as the Balkan Peace Team were adamant that they "will not plan, participate actively in, or carry out direct actions". Their mission is to observe actions organized by local organizations as non-partisan observers. This mission stems from their belief that foreigners should not intervene in internal politics as a way of respecting the autonomy of local people to find their own way of solving their problems.¹⁴⁴ Some groups, such as PBI, argue that the need for appearing impartial excludes the possibility of using nonviolent direct action to advocate for a particular outcome favoring the oppressed party in the conflict.

Witness for Peace struggled with the nature of its impartiality. The initial goal to interposition between the groups in conflict along the Nicaraguan/Honduran border changed when the conflict took the shape of low-intensity conflict waged throughout the Nicaraguan countryside. As with PBI, WFP sided with the less-powerful party in conflict: the Nicaraguan civilians who were being attacked by the US-supported contras. By being present with them in their towns and farming cooperatives, WFP team members lost some semblance of their impartiality. However, they did maintain some impartiality by being unarmed, foreign civilians who maintained political distance from the Sandinista government in power.

If the groups in a conflict have radically different levels and types of power or if unjust acts are clearly one-sided, some argue it is more appropriate for peacekeepers to focus their efforts on those individuals and groups who are disempowered. In addition, international human rights law should be applied impartially. But in practice, often one side in a conflict is committing human rights violations against another. Civilian peacekeeping groups may appear to outsiders to be focusing their efforts on protecting one group within the conflict, such as Palestinians or indigenous people in Guatemala. Since civilian peacekeepers are partial to the principles of international law, it may be difficult for them to appear impartial to all groups.

In Guatemala for example, a variety of different organizations sponsored projects to accompany and advocate for the rights of refugees who were returning from camps in Mexico to their communities which had suffered from their government's "scorched earth" policies during the 1980s. While government officials were also targets of political violence, they were not accompanied by peacekeepers, most likely because of the overwhelming military structures that were already protecting them.

They argue nonviolent action challenges all groups engaged in violence to hold to the impartial Christian principle of "loving one's enemies".

Other groups, such as Christian Peacemaker Teams and Witness for Peace, see the need for taking sides with oppressed groups. While they argue nonviolent action challenges all groups engaged in violence to hold to the impartial Christian

143 Interview with Lisa Clark, member of Blessed are the Peacemakers

144 Declaration of goals and principles of the Balkan Peace Team, February 1994

principle of “loving one’s enemies”, at the same time the allegiance to the principles of nonviolence prevents them from an alliance with or support of any armed actor in a conflict.¹⁴⁵ CPT articulates a nonpartisan stand in Israel/Palestine while living and working in solidarity with those they see as victims - Palestinians living under occupation and those harassed by Israeli settlers and the Israeli Defense Forces. They claim that since they would defend anyone who was threatened in this way, the work is not partisan. CPT did, in fact, ride the Number 18 bus in Jerusalem as protective accompaniment for Israeli citizens and others who rode on this frequent target of suicide bombings. In addition, like the International Solidarity Movement and EAPPI, they work closely with the Israeli peace movement and support their activities.

While many civilian peacekeeping groups say they are partial to the value of peace and not to one side of the conflict, their actions to stop perpetrators of violence through activist strategies actions such as protests, petitions, or media attention can jeopardize a group’s ability to claim they are impartial. Some Israelis and others criticize these civilian peacekeeping groups’ lack of equal attention to Israeli security needs.¹⁴⁶

Sometimes credibility is built through long-term relationships with many groups in the conflict region. Civilian peacekeeping projects without these well-developed relationships have run into problems. The We Share One Peace/Mir Sada project hoped to set up interpositionary peace camps in each of the three ethnic regions of Bosnia. However, the project never left Croatian-controlled territory and did not manage to show a critical stance toward this party. While there were rumors that the Bosnian troops had refrained from attacking the Croatian town where they were located, some members of the group were dismayed that they did nothing for the Muslim side, which was being shelled daily from a place three kilometers from the project’s campsite. Christine Schweitzer, a participant in the project, states that “this ‘half interposition’ is closer to taking sides”.¹⁴⁷

The Gulf Peace Team, which attempted to interposition between Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia by setting up peace camps along each of their borders, was only given permission by Iraq to set up a peace camp. Some members of the team wondered to what extent they were serving the interests of Iraq more than the interests of peace among all groups, since they were ostensibly only deterring violence on Iraqis.¹⁴⁸

Impartiality may also mean simply not advocating or actively supporting an *outcome*. Most civilian peacekeepers do have a preferred outcome to the conflict and actively seek to bring about peace, justice, democracy or other values. Most of the

145 Restoring the Balance

146 Gopin, Marc. *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. p. 159

147 Schweitzer, Christine. “We Divide One Peace” in *Peace News*. September 1993. p. 8

148 Interview with Kathy Kelly, member of several peace teams

individuals and groups that Peace Brigades International accompanies, for example, are actively involved in supporting human rights and social justice. In Colombia, PBI has strong relationships with these civil society actors looking for a third way out of the violence between the rebels and the government-supported paramilitary. However, because the human rights organizations that PBI accompanies are working to change government policy, the Colombian government has accused PBI of taking a partial stance.

While PBI staunchly defends its nonpartisan position, it is open in its support of enabling grassroots, nonviolent human rights groups to conduct their work. Longtime PBI supporter George Willoughby claims groups like PBI should be “nonpartisan to political groups, but partisan to justice, nonviolence, and the freedom of all people”. In reference to PBI’s need for impartiality, former director Tim Wallis notes “you have to work within the parameters, or you’ll get thrown out ... You can do more for people by being discreet about your work”.¹⁴⁹ While PBI offices and team members have been attacked for their actions, governments have allowed them to continue, precisely because they are nonpartisan.

Similarly, in Israel/Palestine, groups such as ISM, EAPPI and CPT are actively involved with Palestinian and Israeli groups working to end the occupation and the violence caused by the Israeli military and armed Palestinians. While these civilian peacekeeping groups affirm their impartiality to all the groups in the context, they take a very partial stance against Israeli occupation.

In this sense, civilian peacekeepers are impartial toward the groups in the conflict (they will protect everyone’s human rights), but not the outcome (they support an outcome of social justice and human rights for everyone). This understanding of impartiality is different from other civilian peacekeepers, particularly those in the humanitarian and development world. Many of these latter groups, while generally supporting the idea of human rights and social justice, tend to be much less political and to work much harder to demonstrate their equal relationships to all groups in a conflict.

There is no consensus among organizations regarding whether or not to engage in human rights activism, or how to balance the task of making space for activist groups while maintaining impartiality. The level or type of impartiality of civilian peacekeeping groups may vary according to the context. The next chapter explores the motivations of civilian peacekeepers to intervene in conflicts.

149 Interview with Tim Wallis, former director of PBI

6. When to use Civilian Peacekeeping

What prompts the cry “Something must be done!”? Many conflicts are destructive. Why do interveners choose to intervene in some conflicts and not in others? How should groups assess whether or not they should intervene in a conflict with a civilian peacekeeping project? This chapter examines the complexities of thinking through invitations from groups to intervene in a conflict, the responsibility to protect civilians with civilian peacekeeping in violent contexts, how “ripe” or ready a conflict is for a civilian peacekeeping project, and whether there are sufficient resources and individual motivation.

Responding to Invitations

Most, if not all, civilian peacekeeping organizations acknowledge the need for some type of invitation or contact with *at least* one group from the violent conflict region. This could come in the form of a joint call from two groups on the verge of hostilities or a call from a beleaguered group, an oppressed minority, or a secessionist group.¹⁵⁰ Some civilian peacekeeping groups have requested an invitation from the groups.

A number of questions persist pertaining to the necessity of having an invitation before beginning an intervention. What is an authentic invitation? What implications does an invitation have on the team’s impartiality in a conflict?

When groups from within the conflict call on peacekeepers, their invitation is often considered a legitimate reason to intervene. Some non-governmental organizations meet with the difficult decision of accepting or denying requests for intervention and determining the legitimacy of the requesting group. While the nature or directness of the invitation is important, it may not always come in a form amenable to Western standards.

Christian Peacemaker Teams Coordinator Gene Stolfus claims one can almost always find someone to say what you want them to say. An official invitation can be coaxed from the groups or just be inaccurate. In some cultures, it is impolite to say “no” to an offer or request from a foreigner.¹⁵¹ Many past civilian peacekeeping missions have not received any invitation from the groups in the conflict. Organizers did, however, try to contact and establish relationships with some of the groups in each of the respective conflicts.

Receiving invitations from governments is particularly complicated. Witness for Peace asked for and received a formal invitation from the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. As WFP discerned what role it could or should play in Haiti, they recognized that their invitation to intervene did not come from the government in power. In fact, that government was directly opposed to their work.

¹⁵⁰ Walker, p. 13

¹⁵¹ Interview with Gene Stolfus, Coordinator of Christian Peacemaker Teams

The Christian Peacemaker Team project in Haiti gained entrée into Haiti via personal connections with groups in Haiti who gave them a sense that they could do something useful there to move peace forward. The Cry for Justice project in Haiti received an invitation from the Reverend Antoine Adrien, the former head of the Presidential Commission in Haiti. His invitation included hopes for the outcome of their presence: "What we are expecting from the presence of international observers is to spread information about violent situations. We hope their presence will help deter violence which threatens to reach very high levels before, during and after the [then-hoped for] return of President Aristide on October 30, 1993."¹⁵²

This clear invitation gave some stability and ongoing purpose to the work of Cry for Justice and provided credibility for their presence.

Sometimes invitations prove to be an obstacle to impartiality. The Italian and French groups who organized Mir Sada/We Share One Peace requested and received an invitation from the Sarajevo-based International Peace Center. When the Peace Center criticized the organizer's plans to have camps in Croatian, Serbian and Muslim areas, it was clear that their invitation had more to do with self-interest than concern for violence among all sides.

The Responsibility to Protect

Is intervention appropriate even if all the groups have not consented to it? If no invitation is received or if the peacekeepers are not welcomed by some of the groups in conflict, their ability to function will likely be hampered. Official interventions into conflicts are increasingly calling into question state sovereignty, the ability of a country to control activities within its borders. The UN Charter and all other treaties setting up regional organizations protect state sovereignty by prohibiting them from intervening in domestic matters and assuring that states have the right to self-determine their future without interference. Yet UN peacekeepers are increasingly involved in situations in which one or more groups do not consent to the intervention: many UN peacekeeping projects begun since 1988 have been in civil wars.¹⁵³ In these cases, the ideals of a peacekeeping intervention sanctioned and invited by the groups in conflict are put on trial. "Peace-enforcement" or uninvited peacekeeping is highly criticized by those seeking nonviolent solutions and those concerned with protecting state sovereignty.

A number of recent international reports and agreements call for the international community to intervene in situations of violent conflict and massive human abuses more quickly. The Canadian-initiated Responsibility to Protect, often referred to as the R2P report, for example, is increasingly cited as a document that can provide guidance for future UN peacekeeping missions and for helping the international

152 CPT update, November 1994

153 Renner, Michael. *Critical Juncture: The Future of Peacekeeping*. Washington, D.C.: Worldwatch Institute, 1993. p. 37

community decide when to intervene in a conflict to protect civilians and prevent violence.¹⁵⁴

The report advocates a contingency framework in which certain types of conflicts or situations would require intervention, regardless of whether there has been an invitation from a group within the conflict. Some argue that a contingency model could make UN intervention a “virtual certainty under well-defined circumstances” and possibly deter some acts of aggression and violence.¹⁵⁵ In addition, a formal, impartial forum to hear grievances could help determine when peacekeeping or any other type of international intervention is appropriate.¹⁵⁶

Yet while saving lives and protecting human rights are reasons to intervene, definitions of human rights and violence can differ. Some claim sovereignty is unjustifiable if it allows human rights violations or violence to occur within states, when the same crimes between states would bring intervention.¹⁵⁷ In a world of increasing interdependency, internal affairs often have international ramifications, i.e., refugees, economic trends, etc. In situations such as Somalia, TV news programs showing mass starvation also press the international community to intervene. In this sense, intervention is seen more as “rescue” than “invasion”.¹⁵⁸ It seems humanity rather than sovereignty is to be protected at any cost. Yet many Third World countries, the most frequent subjects of uninvited conflict interventions, are warning the UN not to get involved in missions that do not have the consent of all groups. They claim recent unilateral, quick fix missions have failed due to the lack of consent and planning.¹⁵⁹

There is no universally accepted definition of human rights, and even if there were, the assumptions of what type of intervention is appropriate in response will likely vary widely according to different cultural contexts. Some developing countries point out that the motives of many official peacekeeping operations are based less on principles, such as protecting human rights, than on the self-interest of the intervening countries.¹⁶⁰ Human rights lawyer Julie Mertus’ research shows that the U.S., for example, ignores human rights violations in countries such as El Salvador or Haiti, because it is convenient and in their interest to do so, while emphasizing the importance of protecting human rights in places like Iraq.¹⁶¹

The UN also does not respond equally to all conflict situations. In Haiti, the UN sent and withdrew an observer mission. In Iraq in 1990, they launched a peace-

154 *The Responsibility to Protect*. Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. Ottawa, Canada: International Development Resource Center. December 2001

155 Renner, p. 39

156 Renner, p. 42

157 Renner, p. 35

158 Renner, p. 35

159 “Third World Warns UN on Interventions.” *Life and Peace Review*. February, 1994. p. 7

160 “Third World Warns UN on Interventions.” *Life and Peace Review*. February, 1994. p. 7

161 Mertus, Julie A. *Bait and Switch: Human Rights and U.S. Foreign Policy*. New York: Routledge, 2004

enforcement mission to protect Kuwait. Intervention on behalf of Iraqi Kurds was done in the spirit of human rights. Yet Turkish Kurds, who also endure human rights violations, have received little attention.

Civilian peacekeeping missions are less likely to violate the principles of sovereignty, because their numbers are usually fewer, they hold no official power, and they are unarmed. In their book on the protective role of international peacekeeping accompaniment, authors Liam Mahony and Quique Eguren note that in El Salvador, the UN's unarmed human rights observer force could not function until the government acquiesced to this official, foreign presence. As an independent non-governmental organization, Peace Brigades International was not seen as a threat to Salvadoran sovereignty and therefore was able to conduct a similar human rights function on a smaller scale at an earlier stage in the conflict.¹⁶² Yet, PBI had received an invitation from grassroots groups to intervene.

Research on the ethics of intervention suggests that intervention is appropriate wherever there is "unacceptable denial or violation of human rights, actual or threatened". The aim should be the "impartial promotion of sustained human flourishing".¹⁶³ Some scholars recommend asking this question: Is doing nothing worse than the prospects for intervention? If an attempt to limit the violence through civilian peacekeeping is not likely to have negative effects on the conflict, this type of intervention may be justified.¹⁶⁴

Assessing the Ripeness for Civilian Peacekeeping

The timing for a civilian peacekeeping project impacts its ability to succeed in reducing violence. While Nagler purports that "groups may be awakened to their own desire for peace by intervention",¹⁶⁵ many others claim peacekeeping operations will "fail or be severely damaged if peace is not initially desired by all relevant groups", if the groups are not motivated to resolve the conflict, or if they are simply looking to a third party to temporarily stop a "hurting stalemate".¹⁶⁶

Conflict scholar Christopher Mitchell describes the stages of conflicts. Conflict usually begins with peaceful contention between two or more groups and may escalate to coercion and violence. If there is no clear victor and neither party is destroyed, the groups may develop a "cost consciousness" of the losses each side is incurring. When this "hurting stalemate" is reached, groups are more likely to welcome civilian peacekeeping and begin earnestly looking for a negotiated solution

162 Mahony and Eguren

163 Lewer, Nick and Ramsbotham, Oliver. *Towards an Ethical Framework for Humanitarian Intervention in International Social Conflict*. England: University of Bradford, 1993. p. 98

164 Wehr, p. 50

165 Written comments on a draft of this paper by Michael Nagler

166 Diehl, p. 89

to the conflict. If a settlement is reached, the groups then need to build on it and move toward a resolution or transformation of the conflict.¹⁶⁷

The diagram below illustrates the type of peacebuilding activities that are *most likely* to be appropriate and effective according to the stage of the conflict at hand.¹⁶⁸ All peacebuilding activities may be helpful at any time of conflict, but some activities may be more helpful than others when initiated at different times in the conflict.

Figure 4: **Conflict Continuum**

Stages of Conflict	Peaceful contention	Violent coercion	Cost awareness	Formal negotiation
Activities				
Advocacy and Activism	●	●		
Humanitarian aid		●	●	●
Negotiation, Mediation, Dialogue	●			●
Development	●			●
Buffer Zones	●	●	●	
Peace Zones		●	●	
Interpositioning	●	●	●	
Accompaniment and Presence	●	●	●	●
Monitoring	●	●	●	●

In the early stages of conflict, a number of activities may be appropriate. Many development groups work in areas where violent conflict may occur. Some development groups provide an early warning to alert the international community that violent conflict may erupt in these areas. Conflict prevention and reconciliation strategies such as negotiation, mediation, and dialogue can be used before violence occurs alongside the use of the “preventive deployment” of peacekeeping troops, who interpose themselves between the groups or maintain “demilitarized zones” to prevent violent conflict. If violence is predicted, some experts theorize that peacekeepers could act as a “trip-wire” to prevent the onset of conflicts.¹⁶⁹

167 Interview with Christopher Mitchell, professor at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University

168 Interview with John Paul Lederach, Director of International Mennonite Conciliation Services

169 Diehl, pp. 144-165

Buffer zones or peace zones could be used throughout the many stages of conflict to separate the groups and prevent violence from reaching civilians. Civilian peacekeepers ideally act in a preventive capacity to deter violence. They may help lower the levels of violence by accompanying or providing a presence with endangered groups, individuals or communities or help create safe spaces for conflict resolution processes like dialogue to take place. The use of advocacy and activism during various pre-settlement stages may also increase the negotiating power of one of the groups and help the settlement to be more durable in the long run, as more of the issues and interests of a disempowered group will be addressed.

Peace Brigades International and Witness for Peace both began their interventions in Nicaragua near the beginning of the violent confrontations between the Sandinistas and the U.S.-backed contras. At this stage of the conflict, their primary aim was to prevent or stop the violence. As time passed, and the armed groups in the conflict began to develop a cost consciousness of the war, Witness for Peace focused on monitoring and documenting contra atrocities and increasing an awareness of the Nicaraguan conflict in the United States. These activities were designed to pressure the U.S. to stop supporting the contras and encourage a nonviolent resolution of the conflict at the negotiating table. In recent years, WFP has focused on changing the U.S. economic policy toward Nicaragua, which continues to spur sometimes violent conflict between the political factions in Nicaragua.

Zartman, Kriesberg and Thorson theorize that a conflict may not be ripe for peacekeeping interventions if high expectations for a peace settlement are not met. Local people may withdraw their support and join others who were disadvantaged by the agreement to work against it. If the agreement is conciliatory on one side only, it may cause aggression by other groups or withdrawal later.¹⁷⁰ The ability of the moderate camps to exercise control over each side's hardliners may impact how peacekeepers are received in conflicts.

For example, Israel's right-wing settlers and the Palestinian Hamas organization are both obstacles to achieving a lasting peace. While many in Israel/Palestine desire peace with their neighbors, civilian peacekeepers would likely be met with opposition from extremist groups.¹⁷¹ Moreover, a conflict may not be ripe for intervention if the groups differ greatly in power or resources, and a settlement simply reinforces the inequalities. In this situation, the weaker party and perhaps some third groups may urge an escalation of the conflict before seeking its de-escalation.

Each of the intervention activities may be more or less appropriate and effective, depending on the stages of conflict when an intervention takes place and the ripeness of the conflict. Conflict analysis helps to determine the stage of a conflict and if

170 See Kriesberg, Louis and Thorson, Stuart J., eds. *Timing the De-escalation of International Conflicts*. Syracuse University Press, 1991, and Zartman, William. *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985

171 Frankel, Glenn. "The Real War Between Arabs, Israelis: Moderates vs. Extremists," *Washington Post*. February 26, 1994. p. A21

intervention is appropriate. The course of a conflict may have periods of time that are comparatively “ripe” for civilian peacekeeping and times when other peacebuilding strategies may be more helpful.

Local Assessment

There are a variety of questions to ask about the conflict itself. First, there is a need for information about the local human rights community. Do local activists need a protective presence in order to do their work more effectively? Do they have other means of protection? Are they isolated and in need of solidarity?¹⁷²

Next, there are questions about the potential perpetrators in the conflict. Are they likely to be deterred by the presence of civilian peacekeepers? Are the potential perpetrators influenced by international political or social opinion or the threat of economic sanctions? These types of questions help organizations determine whether civilian peacekeeping has a chance of being successful at deterring violence.

Available Resources and Logistics

In assessing when and in which conflicts to intervene, civilian peacekeepers should also assess their available resources. Groups may need to obtain more or different resources before their peacekeeping efforts will be effective and worthwhile. They may need more time to plan ahead and train team members, or they may need more financial resources to ensure that their teams can stay in the location where they are placed long enough to make a difference.

If resources are limited, organizations may assess if they could intervene in only one city of the country, or accompany only one organization rather than many. A limited, test civilian peacekeeping project may be feasible in one area or region of the conflict.¹⁷³

In addition, it is important to assess local logistics. Is it even possible to get international civilian peacekeepers into the country? What kinds of resources are available for transportation, food, and healthcare for the civilian peacekeepers within the region?

Personal Motivations

Individual civilian peacekeepers have their own personal motivations for intervening in violent conflicts. Both Witness for Peace and Christian Peacemaker Teams attract staff who are motivated out of a spiritual desire to confront violence nonviolently. Many U.S. citizens felt they had the moral obligation to stop their government from waging war on the Nicaraguan people during the 1980s. This nonviolent mandate to address violence compelled some to form Witness for Peace to intervene in Nicaragua.

Yet the mandate to intervene *wherever* there is violence still seems to be selective, for civilian peacekeeping interventions have not occurred in all violent conflicts.

¹⁷² Mahony, 2004. p. 20

¹⁷³ Wehr, Paul. *Conflict Regulation*. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1979. p. 50

Historically, organizations that conduct civilian peacekeeping have shown a preference for working outside of their own countries, rather than addressing urban and domestic violence within their own country. A returning member of Christian Peacemaker Team's Haiti team, Cole Arendt, began CPT's current project in urban peacemaking after personally experiencing urban violence in Washington, D.C. He concluded that it was "ludicrous that Haiti turned out to be safer than my own neighborhood and that too many of us as activists have to walk over bodies in our front yards to get into a cab, to go to the airport, to go far away, to 'make' peace for someone else".¹⁷⁴

All of these factors influence the decision about when civilian peacekeeping may be effective. There is always some form of peacebuilding activity appropriate for a conflict, but some peacebuilding strategies are better suited for some types and stages of conflict than others.

174 Presentation to various Mennonite churches by Christian Peacemaker Teams member Cole Arendt entitled "Not Looking the Other Way," March 1995

7. Organizational and Decision-Making Structure in Civilian Peacekeeping Teams

There are many practical matters an organization must consider in planning a civilian peacekeeping mission. Organizational structures, selection and training of team members, and logistical details greatly affect the ability of civilian peacekeepers to be effective in their activities.

Forming Coalitions

Civilian interventions are often undertaken by coalitions between groups of international NGOs, and between international groups with local groups in the violent conflict. Coalitions are composed of groups with diverse philosophies and objectives. It is no wonder, then, that coalitions often experience conflict when trying to bring together many different objectives and philosophies into a common project. Often, coalitions are “marriages of convenience”. When they are not convenient, they fall apart.¹⁷⁵ Coalition work takes additional time to make decisions. They may also threaten the mandates of some groups, as their energy and philosophical focus gets swallowed up in the goals of the coalition. Groups in coalition often need to spend time building trust, understanding the needs, expectations and philosophies of all the groups, differentiating what each group will or will not do, and designing clear goal-making and decision-making structures. Despite these tasks, the benefits and successes of highly-structured coalitions seem to make the ventures worthwhile in some cases.

Coalitions between International NGOs

There are several examples of coalitions among foreign civilian organizations. Some argue that the peace movement in general needs to work in loose coalitions with each other more often, rather than having multiple organizations conducting similar types of projects with little contact with each other. While many argue that different types of peacebuilding approaches require different organizations, coordination between groups is essential. There are several examples of how peace organizations have worked in loose coalitions with each other already. While some of these coalitions experienced difficulties, their experiences may help future groups to work out organizational structures that allow coalitions to run smoothly before an intervention takes place.

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation and War Resisters International worked together to give birth to the idea of a nonpolitical organization, Peace Brigades International, to conduct work that required more political neutrality than either of the former organizations held.¹⁷⁶ PBI has passed on documentation

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Tim Wallis, former director of PBI

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Tim Wallis, Howard Clark, and Bob Seidle-Kahn

on human rights violations to Amnesty International. In Sri Lanka, PBI and the Quaker Peace and Service Committee divided the roles of doing accompaniment and reconciliation work. In Central America, Witness for Peace was openly trying to change U.S. policy, while PBI was working with a low political profile and purely involving itself in accompaniment work.

The Mir Sada/We Share One Peace action was organized by a coalition made up of the French relief group Equilibre and the Italian Catholic group Beati i Costruttori di Pace. These two groups had different goals for the project. The former was attempting to bring relief supplies into the former Yugoslavia. The latter wanted to interposition themselves between warring factions. Not surprisingly, Equilibre felt that Beati was taking too many risks. In addition, there were many conflicts between different national groups. In particular, the affinity group from the U.S. was seen as stronger in their commitment to nonviolent direct action than some of the other nation-based affinity groups. The decision-making structure of this coalition fell apart early on in the project.¹⁷⁷

The Cry for Justice coalition in Haiti experienced similar problems. The different organizations involved in the coalition came together with different experiences: some had no international experience, others had a lot of experience with projects in other countries, and still others had been working in Haiti already. In addition, the groups had different philosophies about what type of activities the group conducts. Christian Peacemaker Teams wanted to play a more activist role by demonstrating and rallying. Other groups felt this type of role was inappropriate.¹⁷⁸ While the coalition was successful in many of its goals, some felt the coalition was not feasible for a long-term project. The expense of making decisions via conference calls and the lack of face-to-face meetings made developing trust-filled relationships difficult.¹⁷⁹

The Balkan Peace Team (BPT) Coalition also experienced their share of conflict. David Atwood, the coalition's representative from the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, claims the coalition acknowledges the value of struggling through issues that stem from the various points of view and experiences of the different groups. They see that their coalition work benefits all of the groups who want to respond to the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, but could not intervene alone. Atwood notes, "The creation of this has taken many months of elaboration and often tough negotiation among the organizations themselves to reach a shape and basis for work acceptable to all."¹⁸⁰ Other difficulties in the development of the BPT stemmed from the speed at which the project was undertaken. Some of the group wanted to send

177 McCarthy, Tim. "Peace Crumbles on the Way to Sarajevo." and interview with Kathy Kelly

178 Interviews with Gene Stolfus, Rey Lopez and Liam Mahony

179 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

180 Atwood, David. "Non-governmental Conflict Intervention: Some Observations on Two Current Experiments." A Paper Prepared for the Conference Peaceful Settlement of Conflict - A Task for Civil Society II. Evangelische Akademie Loccum, 16-18 March 1994, p. 10, and interview with David Atwood, former director of International Fellowship of Reconciliation

people as soon as possible. Others wanted to go slower and take more exploratory and deliberate measures with the project.¹⁸¹

The BPT has successfully documented the roles and decision-making processes it will use. The BPT coalition “project members” were responsible for signing the project declaration and committing themselves to participate actively in the project by feeling financially responsible for the project by raising donations etc., committing to material support like paying for office room, paying a staff person, paying for the mailings, organizing the trainings, and finding staff, participating in the international emergency alarm network, publishing articles and advertisements on project issues in their newsletters, and participating in the general assemblies and delegating someone to its coordination.¹⁸²

There was also an “outer circle” of supporting organizations that were in favor of the project but did not want to or could not play a more active role. The amount of work, need for resources and desire to inform as many people as possible in the work of peacekeeping teams seems to point to the many benefits of working in coalition. This highly-structured coalition may be able to set an example for how other coalitions could work.

Coalitions between International and Local NGOs

The experiences of international groups working with groups in the conflict region are also enlightening. For example, Mir Sada's Equilibre and Beati coalition formed an alliance with the Sarajevo-based International Peace Center. This caused problems for some members of the project, since the Peace Center convinced the organizers to give up their plan to place three camps in all three parts of Bosnia. In doing so, the project lost its impartial nature. In addition, some of the peace groups from the other parts of Bosnia were not contacted, perhaps because of the strength of this one relationship.¹⁸³

This absence of contact with other peace groups led to the writing of an “Open Letter to Peace Movements” from over half a dozen peace groups in the former Yugoslavia. In the letter, the authors make the following points:

1. We believe that peace activists who come to us need to be well-prepared and informed about the situation in the countries they visit. To prepare for their stay, they need to cooperate with activists who have experience in this area, and with domestic anti-war groups and organizations working here. Actions based on arbitrary assumptions and without analysis and preparation can create effects contrary to those desired.
2. Our common stand is that mass actions of visiting these territories ... are ineffective and a waste of energy. During a short period, a large number of

181 Interviews with Christine Schweitzer, Howard Clark and Tim Wallis

182 Declaration of Goals and Principles for the Balkan Peace Team. February, 1994

183 Schweitzer, Christine. “Mir Sada - the Story of a Nonviolent Intervention that Failed.” Unpublished report

participants can't really understand what has happened, nor articulate any political message except general opposition to war, which is commonplace. Those who come individually or in small groups and who cooperate with us on concrete projects help us much more. Hard long-term work is understood. Delusions that fast and easy solutions are possible must be rejected.

3. The economic situation is bad in all new countries. In spite of this, peace and antiwar groups and organizations for human rights, women's groups, etc. work on many projects. They need financial and material support for their activities, as well as independent, progressive media ...

4. ...We believe that our struggle for the principles of tolerance and nonviolence are important for Europe, while the work of peace and similar movements against this plague in Europe, in their countries and on a local level, is also a big help for our struggle.

5. ... This experience [of war and nonviolence in Bosnia-Herzegovina] is instructive enough for us to conclude that pleading for peace is not the same as making peace, pleading for nonviolence is not the same as creating nonviolence, but that pleading for peace and nonviolence can be one effective bar to creating war and violence.

6. ... The effects of war, destruction and suffering are strongly present, causing negative emotions that are easy to manipulate. Nonviolent action is possible and desirable in these circumstances. Peace and similar activists working in these states need support in their everyday political struggles and in long-term programs of peace education, nonviolent conflict resolution, human rights protection, aid for war victims, etc. The support of our friends who worked in similar circumstances is valuable.

7. In the Republic of Macedonia, peace groups have been working to develop dialogue between ethnic groups inside the country as well as with neighboring countries. This movement is of great importance and it needs support in its efforts to prevent violence and war. Peace movements from the world have an extraordinary chance to help these preventive activities.¹⁸⁴

This letter strongly suggests that building relationships with organizations within the conflict region is imperative for civilian peacekeeping teams originating in a foreign country. In addition, it warns any third party against the idea that outsiders can know what is best for the groups in conflict.

184 Cuckova, T., Tomovski, M., Orascanin, V., Trifunovic, Z. and Gazmend, P. "An Open Letter to Peace Movements." February 1993

The Christian Peacemaker Team's Project in Urban Peacemaking set up a list of criteria it uses to judge whether it will undertake a project with a local group. Included in this list is that a local partner with credibility in the community clearly invites and participates with CPT to address violence through nonviolent means.¹⁸⁵

There are dangers and consequent limitations on objectivity and independence when working too tightly in coalitions with groups or individuals in the region of conflict.¹⁸⁶ Some Haitians gave direct leadership to the project conducted by the Cry for Justice (CFJ) coalition. Yet CFJ trainer Liam Mahony described the frustration of not knowing the objectivity of the people one is working with in a coalition. There may be many internal divisions that outsiders will not grasp. Other members of the CFJ coalition thought that "if a Haitian said it, it must be right".

Christian Peacemaker Team's Gene Stolfus warns that coalitions with people and groups in the region can easily slip into "too chummy of a relationship". Some North American members of the coalition wanted to start a dialogue with the military to actively engage and work to transform the military. They found that even the moderate Haitians they were working with felt betrayed by the idea of attempting to dialogue with the military.¹⁸⁷

In addition, Stolfus argues that outsiders can and should make the decision about the amount of risk they are willing to face. One of the goals held by Haitian coalition members was to simply get the peacekeepers there and back home to talk about it. Stolfus claims the Haitians tried to "take care of the North Americans rather than put them in situations where they might be at risk". The Haitian military had already tried to intimidate the UN by beating people in front of UN observers, etc.¹⁸⁸

Whether working in coalition with local groups or not, the issue of including people from the country in the decision-making process is controversial. Some civilian peacekeeping groups were adamant that they should remain as impartial as possible in the region and therefore no indigenous persons should be included in the decision-making structure. However, the desire and need to include the perspectives and knowledge of persons from the region makes their exclusion problematic.

Relating to the United Nations

The topic of working in coalition with the UN has only recently received attention within civilian intervention groups. Civilian peacekeepers hesitate in responding to questions about the most desirable relationship they could have with the United Nations. David Atwood notes there are three positions regarding this relationship: 1) work in opposition, 2) work knowingly in parallel, or 3) work in deliberate cooperation. He adds that he believes it is important "for any non-official actor,

185 "Project in Urban Peacemaking: A Project of the Christian Peacemaker Teams" brochure

186 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

187 Interview with Gene Stolfus, Coordinator of Christian Peacemaker Teams

188 Interview with Gene Stolfus, Coordinator of Christian Peacemaker Teams

prior to any active form of conflict intervention, to consciously articulate how its activity fits in relation to “official” efforts”.¹⁸⁹ Civilian peacekeepers interviewed for this book expressed some caution relating to military peacekeeping authorities.¹⁹⁰ While coordination between military and civilian peacekeeping efforts is necessary, many non-governmental civilian peacekeeping programs will want to keep their independence, so that they can maintain impartiality and their own internal decision-making structures, regardless of whether international organizations like the UN decide to pull out of a region. Yet many scholars such as John Paul Lederach¹⁹¹ and Michael Nagler urge cooperation.¹⁹²

Nagler claims the UN should include civilian peacekeeping in the range of its activities for the following reasons: First, it is less expensive than classical peacekeeping, as civilian teams are usually composed of less than a dozen people who do not require technological equipment. Second, it is politically viable, because it does not threaten national sovereignty to the same degree as an armed force.¹⁹³ Third, Nagler argues it uses persuasive nonviolent techniques rather than coercive violence.

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) have actively advocated the inclusion of civilian peacekeeping and peacemaking activities within their organization. Former UNV Director, Frank O'Donnell, addressed a gathering of civilian peacekeepers in the fall of 1993 with a set of ideas regarding The Concept and Promotion of Global Peace Service.¹⁹⁴ In May 1994, UNV staff proposed a collaborative, complementary, community-oriented partnership for peacebuilding in Burundi. “This approach is a unique experiment in bringing together a pool of such NGO resources, and applying them to UN-supported peace efforts, through the channel of the UNV programme.”¹⁹⁵

Team Roles and Decision-making Structure

In his research on peacekeeping, Diehl found that UN staff claimed that the “single most important factor in the success or failure of a peacekeeping operation” is operational or structural factors in decision-making. Diehl hypothesizes that peacekeeping operations that are under the control of one commander rather than a decentralized power sharing arrangement, will be more successful, because less political maneuvering is involved and there is less opportunity for inconsistency.¹⁹⁶

189 Arwood, p. 16

190 Interview with Gene Stolzhus, Coordinator of Christian Peacemaker Teams

191 Lederach, John Paul. “Proposal for International Nonviolent Peacekeepers.” *Peaceworks* Vol. 11 (5), Nov. 1993

192 Nagler, Michael. “Peacemaking Through Nonviolence.” Testimony presented to the United States Commission on Improving the Effectiveness of the United Nations. San Francisco, Ca. February 2, 1993

193 Nagler, p. 9

194 O'Donnell, Frank. “The Concept and Promotion of Global Peace Service: Some Casual Personal Reflections on Elements, Implications, and Agendas.” United Nations Staff, Geneva. November 1993

195 Discussion documents obtained from David Hartsough, Director of Peaceworks

196 Diehl, p. 67

While coalitions may experience more decision-making difficulties due to the sheer number of decision makers and different organizational philosophies, debates over team structure and decision-making processes are frequent among all civilian peacekeeping organizations and teams. While the ideals of reaching consensus and using democratic processes are highly valued, the efficiency, speed and consistency needed in stressful situations make some feel the need for clearer lines of authority and smaller decision-making groups.

There are usually three tiers of decision-making: on the ground, in the country office, and in the head office, which is usually in Europe or North America. Some decisions require all parts of the organization to be involved. Other decisions need to be made by just one tier of the structure. The amount of trust and authority assigned to each level varies.

Most civilian peacekeepers agree that a division of roles and deciding who gets to make different types of decisions and how they will be made at different tiers is important for the team's ability to function.

The following logistical roles were identified:

- daily log-keeper to keep track of the activities of the group;
- logistics coordinator to arrange travel, sleeping, eating, health care, etc.;
- technical specialist to manage computers, e-mail, faxes, telephones, cars, etc.;
- communications coordinator to maintain contact with sponsoring organization(s), other NGOs operating in the context, government, military, and UN actors;
- media relations specialist to write press releases, give or take interviews, etc.;
- financial coordinator to manage money;
- exploratory team to research new activity options for the team; and
- spiritual and/or group dynamic coordinators to nurture relationships among the team.

These logistical roles can be combined into one person's job description, divided equally among team members, or divided among committees, if the team is large. There are examples from the field for all three models.

Witness for Peace's long-term project in Nicaragua has a coordinator who performs many of the roles listed above. Peace Brigades International and Christian Peacemaker Teams also usually divide these roles among team members. Gene Stolfus of CPT claims that people fall into these roles naturally, as they see what needs to be done.¹⁹⁷ Most groups have out-of-country coordinating offices that help the team make decisions and to provide a safe place to talk and for staff to go to if they are deported. Ideally, these out-of-country offices would be relatively near to the country.

197 Interview with Gene Stolfus, Coordinator of Christian Peacemaker Teams

Some of the larger actions, such as *Mir Sada/We Share One Peace*, divided the roles into committees. Lisa Clark described the four committees who were to organize the peace camp. The Logistics Committee was responsible for camp administration, finding homes for staff to stay, provisions, transportation (entries/exits/circulation of people and goods), coordinating all the committees, and contacts with local supporters (interpreters, drivers, technicians, etc.) The Diplomatic Committee's responsibilities included mediation between the groups involved, including the UN forces, and gathering information on the political and military situation in collaboration with the Liaison Committee. The Liaison Committee maintained contacts between the camp and the local population, facilitated communication, if desired, between the civilian population and other places. The Aid Committee coordinated and set priorities for solidarity actions.

In addition to these committees, *Mir Sada/We Share One Peace* team members were divided into "affinity groups" according to their home country. Each of these groups of 12-20 people had a representative that reported to a "speakers' council". The organizers of the project, *Beati i Costruttori di Pace* and *Equilibre*, also had their own committee, and there was a separate international coordination team that, in theory, consisted of one delegate per country plus the organizers. This confusing structure made decision-making difficult and eventually led to the withdrawal of the French group *Equilibre* and many of the participants.¹⁹⁸

Many civilian peacekeeping teams want to conduct truly grass-roots, democratic decision-making through a process of consensus, where every team member participates in all decisions. The process is an exercise in democracy. While this decision-making process leads to high quality decisions with a mandate for implementation from everyone involved, they can also be slow and exhausting, thus draining energy from other team activities.

Tim Wallis expressed frustration at PBI's difficulty in making decisions. The lengthy process PBI undertakes to make decisions involves some costs. A large international steering committee works by consensus to respond to the invitations PBI receives from groups around the world. The first step is making a decision to send an exploratory team to make contacts and evaluate the context of the conflict. It may take up to three years for the PBI structure to receive a request, send an exploratory team that writes a report, and then for all of the international steering committee members to read the report and decide through consensus what to do. Wallis believes this is too long and that the PBI structure could and should be decentralized to allow for faster, independent decisions made by country groups.¹⁹⁹

198 Schweitzer, Christine. "Mir Sada - the Story of a Nonviolent Intervention that Failed." Cologne, Germany. Unpublished report.

199 Interview with Tim Wallis, former director of PBI

Conflict is a normal part of all relationships. Hence it is no surprise that conflict occurs between team members, between organizations in coalitions with each other, and every other relationship involved in civilian peacekeeping. The more skills people have to handle conflict constructively through active listening, negotiation, and problem-solving, the more likely it is that conflict can be a positive experience rather than a destructive one. When possible, e-mail should be avoided to address conflict, as it tends to escalate conflict because people are unable to see each other's expressions and hear each other's tone of voice. Creating healthy, constructive relationships is a task not only for civilian peacekeepers to encourage within the context where they work; it is something they can practice and model every day in their interactions with each other.

8. Selection and Training of Civilian Peacekeepers

Screening and selecting potential staff for civilian peace teams is a difficult process. Civilian peacekeeping organizations report that they reject many people who apply to volunteer with them, because they fail to meet the criteria set by the organizations. They do this despite the difficulty finding enough staff. In general civilian peacekeeping organizations prefer to have large teams of people to increase the number of people and groups they can protect. Large teams of internationals also increase the number of people who return to their home context and can report and educate others on the human rights situation in the country so as to increase the global emergency alert network of people who understand and take action, if and when human rights violations occur. Yet the success of the project is directly related to the characteristics, motives, and skills of the staff. While quality is crucial to avoid blunders and potentially deadly mistakes, quantity is also a concern. Many groups struggle with the difficult process of balancing these two concerns. This chapter surveys the selection and training process for civilian peacekeepers.²⁰⁰

Personal Motives

Why do people want to participate in civilian peacekeeping missions? A survey of UN soldiers found that the main reasons for participating in peacekeeping projects were to “get to see far-away places” followed by “because the salary was good”.²⁰¹ While most civilian peacekeeping projects are conducted by volunteers, several groups warned that people motivated to participate in civilian peacekeeping because of the travel involved are not suited for this type of work. “War tourists”, “loose canons”, and “cowboy attitudes” were mentioned specifically as inappropriate motives and characteristics. Those who want to take risks, enjoy the idea of being wounded, and/or seek to be martyrs in a conflict situation will likely put both themselves and others at risk. Since the purpose of civilian peacekeeping is to prevent violence, people with these types of motives for participating are not helpful to the overall goals of the projects.²⁰²

Many Witness for Peace, Christian Peacemaker Teams and EAPPI volunteers, for example, are motivated out of religious or spiritual calling to this type of work. These organizations are sponsored by Christian churches, although there is an attempt to include people of non-Christian faith backgrounds. Groups such as PBI found that a majority of their staff were motivated by interest in a particular region, such as Central America. Other groups cite humanitarian motives, the general desire to help people who are in need. Some staff felt a particular affinity or solidarity with

200 Interview with Arno Truger, Director of the International Civilian Peace-Keeping and Peace-Building Training Program

201 Galtung, J. “Participants in peacekeeping forces”, ed. C. Eljers, *Peace, War, and Defense* (PRIO: Copenhagen 1976) p. 266

202 Interview with Dan Dayle, member of accompaniment team in El Salvador

one or more of the groups in a conflict and wanted to find a way to be supportive of their work.

In selecting team members, groups carefully consider the personal motivations of each individual to determine if they are suitable for the type of hardships they may face and are prepared to face the danger that civilian peacekeeping entails. In addition to discovering the personal motivations, there is a list of characteristics that may be helpful in selecting appropriate team members.

Personal Characteristics

Civilian peacekeeping organizations look for a variety of general characteristics in their staff. These include a self-critical attitude, awareness of their personal limitations and abilities, an ability to evaluate them, give feedback to others and being open to assess feedback from others. Staff ideally have a professional attitude and ability to work and think in a systematic and meticulous fashion. They are self-starters and show personal initiative, flexibility and adaptability to unforeseen major changes and an ability to sustain motivation in conditions of adversity and stress. Civilian peacekeepers need ability to act in intense situations, a tolerance for ambiguity, a seasoned approach to human relations and problem-solving and a sense of humor. They need to be able to live and work within a team setting and, with some organizations, be committed to a spiritual, faith-based approach.

Many organizations expressed a need for an age requirement, such as over 20 or 25. This is highly debated. Some argue that young people do not have the maturity and experience for this type of work. Others argue that they are particularly suited to it, because they do not have commitments like family or work and they can “get away with” asking difficult questions that older people will not ask.²⁰³

Civilian peacekeeping organizations also look for their staff to hold certain principles. They want to see a commitment to the ideals and philosophy of the group, particularly to the principles of nonviolence, impartiality, willingness to dialogue with all groups in the conflict, and a belief that change can come from people at all levels of society.

Staff need to have some familiarity with the country or region involved, language ability or the willingness to learn a language quickly, respect for cultural differences and preferably some prior overseas experience. In some contexts, the gender, age, or cultural background of the civilian peacekeepers could create trust or discomfort. Staff need cultural sensitivity and an ability to recognize when there may be cultural rules that would sanction interaction with foreign people in some situations. In addition, staff should refrain from engaging in gossip or spreading information or rumors that could decrease the trust of local partners. Civilian peacekeepers should show humility and respect the confidentiality of what people tell them or what they overhear.

203 Interview with Howard Clark

Staff should be in excellent physical condition and be willing to live and work in the physically demanding conditions of a developing country and in psychologically stressful circumstances, being highly mobile, using temporary shelters and facing difficult travel. They must be psychologically and emotionally stable.

Particular skills are also necessary for staff. While some of these can be learned through training, others are developed in people over a longer period of time. For example, staff benefit from having prior experience in nonviolent activism and advocacy, journalism and photography experience, an ability to deal with conflict constructively, creativity and an ability to improvise, an ability to rapidly develop new relationships, inspire confidence, and develop personal and institutional contacts to enhance professional effectiveness.

Other factors also play into the selection of staff. Some organizations look for people with particular citizenship, or try to maintain a diverse balance of citizenship among team members. The Osijek Peace Team for example, included both Serbian and Croatian members on the team. Age, gender, ethnicity, and class diversity are also sometimes taken into consideration. Staff are usually asked about their schedule availability and are asked to commit to a civilian peacekeeping project for the specified time period (two weeks - one year). Staff need an updated passport, international driving license, international vaccination certificates and other needed papers. Staff in some organizations are required to find a community of supporters in their home country who will cover part of their costs and act as a support to the volunteer.

Screening

Screening of staff can take place in several ways. Many organizations have standard application forms. These forms contain difficult questions and require the applicants to write down what motivates them to want to participate in this type of work. Two or more recommendations from people who know the applicant are also frequently required. Phone or in-person interviews are conducted as well.

Many staff are asked to think about and discuss questions in screening interviews. For example, PBI has four sections of questions their applicants and trainees must answer:

Emotional Preparation for Service:

- Have you tried to confront your personal prejudices, violence and intolerance? How?
- What are your greatest fears?
- How do you respond under stress?
- How do you deal with conflict, both individually on a personal level and as an outsider or third party?

Nonviolence, Conflict Resolution and Related Skills

- How are you prepared for the need to deal openly and without bias or violence with people with whom you may not agree? Do you find it difficult? In what way?
- How have you confronted your own potential for violence?
- Have you ever trained for nonviolent action, mediation or conflict resolution?
- Have you had experience training others?
- Describe any other relevant training you have received or given.
- Describe nonviolent actions, projects and demonstrations you have supported.
- In what ways have you participated (organizing, publicity, marshaling, speaking, etc)?
- Describe any other work or projects you feel relevant.
- In just a sentence or two, discuss what you think it means to be non-partisan.

Community and Culture

- What experience do you have living and/or working closely as part of a group?
- Do you like living and/or working closely as part of a group? What role do you usually take? Give examples.
- Discuss your weaknesses and strengths for living communally without much privacy.
- Discuss your ability to handle personal criticism.
- What personal skills do you bring to a community that you feel good about (sense of humor, group skills, cooking, music, etc.)?
- How do you deal with conflict (avoid, confront, compromise, compete, negotiate ...)?
- What other skills or knowledge do you have? Please include practical skills (carpentry, accounting, photography, writing reports, librarian ...)
- List any other hobbies or recreational interests that you could share with the team.
- What has been your experience of living or working with people of another culture? What did you learn from it?

Country Specific Questions

- Why do you want to work with PBI in this region at this time?
- Describe what you know about this region and where your interest originated.

- What areas of study are you working on?
- Is there anything else you would like us to know?
- With as many as 60 armed conflicts happening in various spots in the world, why is it important to you to focus on the conflict in this country?²⁰⁴

Training

A variety of groups conduct training for civilian peacekeepers. The context of the training varies greatly, as non-governmental civilian peacekeepers use techniques such as accompaniment, which is different than some of the methods used by UN civilian peacekeepers. In the 2004 *Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change*, experts recommend the co-training of civilian and military personnel and exchange of personnel within peace operations to increase the level of coordination and communication networks between groups working in peace and stability operations.²⁰⁵ While NGOs may not agree with or support an armed, military peacekeeping presence in a conflict region, they will still need to acknowledge the presence of these forces within a conflict region. Both military and NGO staff need to understand the organizational culture, communication styles, and approach to their work in the conflict context. Training between these groups is not an endorsement of each other's methods. Rather it is a necessary step in preparing for the real world.

The Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in Canada and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana both have training for civilian roles in UN peacekeeping missions. The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes offers civilian peacekeeping and peacebuilding courses, including a range of topics from monitoring human rights to engaging in conflict resolution.

The International Civilian Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Training Program in Austria seeks to meet the training needs of the UN, governmental, and non-governmental organizations, who engage in civilian, nonviolent peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities in conflict situations. Sponsored by the Austrian government to increase the number of Austrians participating in UN peacekeeping operations, the program is based on the premise that "civilian experts who possess the necessary knowledge and skills will be needed for the great variety of civilian goals and challenges that will be required to insure a more pacific world under the new conditions that have followed the end of the Cold War".²⁰⁶ Month-long programs include both the theory and practice of conflict analysis and transformation strategies, models and activities, intercultural understanding, communication skills, and specialization

204 Interview with Kathy Kelly, member of several peace teams

205 A More Secure World. P. 85

206 Brochure on the International Civilian Peace-Keeping and Peace-Building Training Program. Schlaining, Austria

courses in specific functions of civilian peacekeeping and peacebuilding, e.g. election monitoring, human rights protection, etc.²⁰⁷

Individual civilian peacekeeping organizations also have their own trainings. Witness for Peace and Peace Brigades International have several training segments. They include a training in the home country, and then another extensive three-week country training program, where staff visit various parts of the country, meet people, live with families from the region, and check in daily with a trainer.²⁰⁸ Ideally, teams that are trained together should operate together in the field. The bonding between team members and issues that are worked through during training sessions set helpful patterns of relating to other team members in more stressful situations. In addition, the team members learn to know and trust one another in the trainings.

Part of the selection process happens in the training for the staff as well. Many of the questions identified above are asked again in the training sessions. The trainers may interview each person individually or ask small groups to discuss the questions.²⁰⁹ Many groups reserve the right to reject staff after they have gone through the training, if it is evident that they are not prepared for the project in some way. According to trainer Hagan Berndt, over 50 percent of his trainees discover that the training and the activities it prepares them for, are not what they expected.²¹⁰

Training of civilian peacekeepers began at the request of staff who were placed in the field with little preparation. While many groups have built in a training component for their staff, many still sense the need for more training and discussions around the content and length of the trainings. In 2002-2003, in coordination with the Nonviolent Peaceforce, Training for Change staff, George Lakey and Daniel Hunter wrote a training manual for civilian peacekeepers called *Opening Space for Democracy*.²¹¹ Other organizations around the world are also offering new trainings for civilian peacekeepers.

It is impossible to teach a group everything they need to know in the short time allotted to most trainings. PBI trainer Liam Mahony claims that much of the political knowledge of the area and the organizational background and philosophy can be sent out to staff before the training. Questions on these topics can then be addressed without having to present the material. The most important role of the trainings, according to Mahony, is that the group learns to assess its own resources.²¹²

207 Interview with Arno Truger, Director of the International Civilian Peace-Keeping and Peace-Building Training Program. Schlaining, Austria

208 Interview with Judith Weir, trainer and staff for Witness for Peace

209 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

210 Presentation by Hagan Berndt at Life and Peace Consultation, October 1994

211 Hunter, Daniel and Lakey, George. *Opening Space for Democracy: Third-Party Nonviolent Intervention Curriculum and Trainer's Manual*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Training for Change, 2004

212 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

There is a variety of different ways of getting experience and training.²¹³ Elise Boulding suggests that groups should begin by conducting civilian peacekeeping projects in their own countries before attempting to do them in a foreign country.²¹⁴ This work is less complicated logistically and culturally, and provides an excellent training ground for international work.

Trainings for civilian peacekeepers should include the following elements:²¹⁵

Motivation

Trainees are encouraged to focus on their personal reasons for wanting to participate in the civilian intervention. They are invited to share personal journeys and motivation, discuss spirituality, deal with the possibility of death and/or suffering, and discuss global dynamics such as North-South issues.

Conflict Resolution and Advocacy Skills

The art and science of how to communicate in the face of conflict and how to defuse anger and aggression are taught widely in universities and training workshops. These skills take a lifetime of practice and ongoing learning. Training workshops for civilian peacekeepers often include the history and theory of nonviolent direct activism and how civilian peacekeeping falls in the tradition of using nonviolent forms of power to address violence. They also include concrete skills, such as how to interact with armed groups, how to defuse an angry crowd, disarm an attacker, and handling harassment. The theory and practice of conflict resolution and transformation, which includes facilitation, mediation, negotiation, dialogue, communication and active listening skills are also important. Conflict resolution skills are necessary for smooth relationships within civilian peacekeeping teams and for building constructive relationships with other armed and civilian groups in the context. These skills help civilian peacekeepers constructively address conflict within their teams and with other groups, de-escalate crisis situations, and increase their confidence in interacting with people.

Conflict Analysis Skills

Understanding the overall conflict is imperative to choosing the appropriate type of activities. Conflict analysis skills include observation, interviewing, research and gathering information on the various groups in the conflict, their interests and political positions on issues, and the strategies they each use to obtain their goals. These research skills help civilian peacekeepers evaluate information, provide a more objective account of a conflict which may help dispel rumors, help clarify the

213 Interview with Tim Wallis, former director of PBI

214 Interview with Elise Boulding, peace researcher

215 This list of training components is pulled from the Christopher Moore article on training, interviews with Hagan Berndt, Kathy Kelly, Liam Mahony, Judith Weir and training material used by Witness for Peace, Peace Brigades International, Christian Peacemaker Teams, and the Balkan Peace Team

groups' positions, identify real issues and power relationships between the groups, and perhaps lay the groundwork for identifying solutions to the conflict.²¹⁶

In general, civilian peacekeepers need an analysis of conflict that includes an understanding of the perceptions of all people and groups in the conflict, and how these perceptions shape their understanding of the conflict and their goals or needs within the context. In many conflicts, people on all sides are struggling for a sense of respect, dignity, participation in decisions that affect their lives, and an ability to assert their identity and practice their religion without interference from others.

Country-Specific

Each training should have a component that looks specifically at the country-specific knowledge and skills needed by the civilian peacekeepers. An effective way of doing this is to have veteran peacekeepers share stories of past experiences in the region to relay successes and failures of past projects, how staff dealt with culture clash, repression and daily life in the country.²¹⁷ Other topics to discuss and skills to learn may include learning to draw out cultural resources for dealing with conflict and discussing how much to assimilate.

Team and Organization Skills

Civilian peacekeepers should have a good understanding of the history structure, mandate of the organization and the project. Each civilian peacekeeper should practice explaining the basic goals and activities of the organization, so that they learn how to consistently and effectively communicate these to others.

Team Unity

As in any team project, dynamics within the group will play an important role in their ability to work together and effectively implement their projects. Team building and exercises in facing fears, empowering each other, stress reduction and relaxation techniques, embracing diversity of group and giving and receiving criticism are often incorporated into each aspect of the training. Eventually teams take responsibility for on-going training, reflecting each day on personal emotions, living with direct violence, and self-evaluation on their progress.

Logistics

A tedious but very necessary aspect of training is making sure each team member is equipped with papers and skills needed for basic survival in the situation. This may include required paperwork (passport, copy of passport for main office, extra passport photos, a press pass if possible, vaccinations, personal identification, group identification, information sheet on the group, telephone cards, e-mail addresses of major international peace groups, carbon paper, pen, paper, dictionary, ID badge,

216 Moore, p. 3

217 Interview with Liam Mahony, PBI trainer and researcher

etc.). It also includes how to write a press release, how the emergency response network functions, and health care issues.

Fears and Dangers

Dealing with the risks and dangers facing potential team members is an important component in the training and preparation of team members. A former Witness for Peace volunteer stated that he rewrote his will each time he embarked on a journey in Nicaragua.²¹⁸ In preparation for the Solidarity for Peace in Sarajevo project, American organizers came up with the following list of questions to ask potential staff:

- What are your feelings about the possibility that you might be seriously injured or killed?
- How do you think you might respond to the possible death or injury of a fellow team member?
- Can you imagine concrete possibilities of what you would do in a life-threatening situation?
- How would you communicate, cross-culturally, in a hostile or life-threatening situation?

These questions address the realities facing staff willing to place themselves between conflicting groups. In addition to these questions, the Solidarity for Peace in Sarajevo application included the following statement:

For participants it is important to realize that the people of Sarajevo have become used to shelling. A large percentage of the population has been wounded and almost the entire population has experienced bombs or sniper fire very close to them. While participants should respect the courage the local people may show, they should also expect to become frightened themselves. Consequently participants should think about how they will deal with fear in this situation.²¹⁹

The coordinator of the Sjema Mira project, Scott Schaefer-Duffy, emphasized the need for staff to prepare themselves for going into a war situation. He found that many people in Mir Sada were scuttled when they heard shelling. He argues staff can prepare themselves for entering militarized zones by going to military parades, shooting ranges, talking to military people, reading combat books, and in general getting into a military perspective before they go on a project.²²⁰

The Italian organizers for Mir Sada/We Share One Peace asked participants to formally declare that they “do not want the death or injury of camp participants to be used as a pretext for reprisals involving the use of force and that they assumed

218 Interview with David Bremer, former member of Witness for Peace

219 Solidarity for Peace in Sarajevo preparation packet. December 1992

220 Interview with Scott Schaefer-Duffy

full responsibility for their presence there". In addition, participants were asked to prepare public opinion in their own countries by publicizing the aims of the camp and its emphasis on nonviolence.²²¹

A set of guidelines was developed by the U.S. committee preparing for *We Share One Peace* in case of emergency situations:

1. If you hear bullets or bombs nearby, quickly seek shelter inside a sturdy building;
2. If a bomb or shell explodes near you, and there is no nearby shelter, lie down, and crawl into any depressions that may be near you, such as a ditch or shell hole;
3. If explosions take place near you, keep your mouth open to lessen the harmful effects of sudden changes in air pressure;
4. If you are with someone, and the person is shot by a sniper, do not go to the person's aid. You probably would be shot, too. Seek shelter, and summon a medical aid team.
5. Watch what the local people are doing. If they seek cover, you seek cover. If they come out from cover, and seem to resume their normal activities, it is likely that the situation has become safer.²²²

In addition to these general guidelines, it is beneficial for each group to consider the criteria for their evacuation ahead of time. Under what circumstances would they stop the project? What would happen if a cease-fire broke?

The Gulf Peace Team in Iraq had to face these questions at 4:00 am in the morning. The Iraqis came with two buses to take the group away. Some team members refused to go at first. Others worried that the Iraqis may not understand the philosophy and practice of that type of nonviolent action. While eventually the entire group was evacuated, the considerable stress of the situation made decisions especially difficult.²²³

Lakey and other trainers use role plays to help team members prepare for situations they might encounter. For example, in the *Cry for Justice* training, potential team members acted out the following situations:

- soldiers forcing team members to move on while beating a local person
- a roadblock with soldiers interrogating and taking away the Haitian driver of the team vehicle
- facing chaos at the airport
- meeting with a Haitian organizer who could not give as much information as the team members wanted for security reasons

221 Interview with Lisa Clark and Don Albino Bizotto

222 *We Share One Peace* Preparation and Reflection Packet for U.S. team members

223 Interview with Peggy Preston

- being shunned by Haitians because of their well-founded feelings of abandonment by the international community

Some groups went beyond role plays to use real life experiences in the training. A group in training experienced 24 hour homelessness on the streets of Chicago. Other groups participated in nonviolent actions in the U.S., where they practiced writing press releases and organizing skills.

Rules and Guidelines

In addition to training, most groups gave their team members a set of rules or guidelines. The Balkan Peace Team included rules about working in pairs, always having one person at the home base, and telling other team members where you are and how long you will be gone. They also include rules that guide the projection of impartiality, including not spending too much time in the offices of other groups, or translating letters or making telephone calls for them. It also includes not making political statements in public and stressing independence.²²⁴

The length and content of the selection and training process for civilian peacekeeping rest on a variety of factors, including the urgency of the need within the conflict, the availability of funds, the prior skill-level of staff, and the length of time which staff will spend in the conflict context. A number of civilian peacekeeping organizations balance the need for the quality of their staff with the desire for higher numbers of people who can return to build the human rights network in their home country by sending short-term delegations of people with less training.

224 Declaration of goals and principles of the Balkan Peace Team, February 1994

9. The Logistics of Civilian Peacekeeping Teams

Civilian peacekeeping teams require a wide range of decisions. Working out the logistical details is a major task. In particular, finding financial support, daily food and shelter, communication and transportation are lengthy processes. Christine Schweitzer advises groups to work on logistics and possible problems in advance. Role plays and simulations in trainings may help the group discover what they will need. Logistics may also be modeled after other groups working in the area.

Deciding on the Level of Visibility

The degree of visibility the team needs is another factor in deciding how to intervene. The visibility of peacekeepers varies according to the nature of the intervention. In conflict regions where the government or groups in power were cooperative with the peacekeepers, visibility proved helpful in past teams. Attempts were made to meet with government officials, and opportunities were taken to publicize their presence in the region. In locations such as Haiti or Kosovo, where the government in power was not supportive of the civilian intervention, team members had to pass as tourists or missionaries.²²⁵

Michael Beer suggests that civilian peacekeeping groups should strive for the minimum amount of visibility necessary to get the job done. Over-exposure may provide the opportunity for a political attack or a slide into dependency. Under-exposure nullifies the benefits of peacekeepers to a conflict²²⁶ and may decrease their credibility.

Charles Walker claims credibility and legitimacy are gained through physical signs such as “insignia, movement, paraphernalia, public occasions, unique functions and the usual incidents and positive interactions”.²²⁷ For example, UN forces wear blue berets or helmets. The Shanti Sena wore saffron scarves. Other groups have used armbands or special shirts, hats, or buttons that identify them as part of the team. One team used a white jeep to signify their presence.²²⁸

Visibility is also gained, according to Walker, through repetitious or ritualized movements, such as regular patrols or ceremonial functions. The Shanti Sena regularly held processions or public displays of their presence to reassert the need and the value of their mission.²²⁹ Other teams have included and/or would like to include public figures in their teams. For example, folk singer Cat Stevens helped finance the Gulf Peace Team project.²³⁰ However, others argue that including high

225 Interviews with Liam Mahony and Christine Schweitzer

226 Interview with Michael Beer, Nonviolence International staff

227 Walker, Charles. “A World Peace Guard: An Unarmed Agency for Peacekeeping.” *Academy of Gandhian Studies* Hyderabad. March 1981. p. 16

228 Walker, p. 17

229 Walker, p. 17

230 Interview with Kathy Kelly, member of several peace teams

profile team members may disempower the other team members or may lessen the feeling that true change comes from the grassroots.²³¹

Visibility may relate to questions of diversity among team members and obvious physical differences between the team and the groups in conflict, such as skin color, height, etc. In some cases, skin color is enough to announce the presence of the peacekeepers. In other cases, skin color may connote a variety of different roles. For example, in Somalia, people with light skin could have been taking part in any number of relief or military operations there.

Setting up Emergency Response Networks

The effectiveness of civilian peacekeeping relies heavily on having an effective emergency response network that is reliable, fast, and includes either people in positions of government or authority, or includes vast numbers of citizens from around the world. Increasingly, civilian peacekeeping organizations make specific requests to an embassy, or they form coordinated campaigns with other NGOs using staff in their headquarters office in the host country, as well as in capital cities in North America and Europe to lobby government authorities about particular human rights situations.

Peace Brigades International has formed two emergency response networks. One is composed of thousands of grassroots citizens around the world. The other is made up of parliamentarians, embassy staff and other people in official positions. PBI uses this “high-level contact network” more frequently, as they have found it to work faster and more effectively.

Civilian peacekeeping teams have a variety of criteria for deciding to use their emergency response networks. The criteria include physical attacks, arrests, or threats to citizens, human rights activists, or civilian peacekeepers themselves. When the Colombia Uribe government was actively criticizing and condemning the work of PBI, the team used the emergency response network to have international organizations and government officials in other countries call the Uribe government and tell them about the important human rights work PBI was doing in the country. The threats against PBI stopped soon after using the emergency alert network.²³²

If any one of these situations occurs, the civilian peacekeepers take steps to inform and ask for intervention from embassies, influential governments, foreign agencies like the European Union or Organization of American States, NGOs like the Red Cross, religious leaders and organizations, and highly influential persons in the country and citizens of other countries. Everyone is asked to write protest letters, e-mails or faxes. Groups may also contact the media and ask them to cover the story to raise awareness of the situation.

There are additional criteria to the decision to begin using the emergency alert network. First, it is important to know what other organizations are working on

231 Interview with Rey Lopez, member of Christian Peacemaker Teams

232 Interview with PBI-USA Director Barbara February 18, 2005

the case and what they are doing. It is important to coordinate actions with them if possible. An assessment of the severity and nature of the situation is also important. Information about the situation should be checked for accuracy from at least two or three independent, reliable sources. The individual or group that is threatened should be consulted, if possible, to determine whether they want the emergency response network to be used. Team members often hesitate to use the network for themselves, so they can save it for others. Outsiders may need to convince them to use it for themselves. But it is also important to determine if taking action might endanger other people, or if there could be negative consequences to publicizing the situation. In order to be effective, the emergency response networks should be a last resort. Emergency response networks lose their effectiveness if they are used too frequently.²³³

Communication

As mentioned above, each team member should have a media person to coordinate their media. It may be helpful to have a manual or written instructions for media communication, such as the mail, faxes, e-mail, ham radio, satellite communications, a video recorder for monitoring, etc. The level of logistical and technical support will depend on the length and goals of the project. Some activities, such as monitoring and documenting, may require a great deal of technical equipment.

The information gathered through these activities can be distributed internationally as soon as possible. Reports on human rights violations that are several months old are not very useful. International news networks could be asked to send their own people to cover the team's activities to increase global awareness of civilian peacekeeping efforts and contribute to raising awareness of the conflict itself. In addition to drawing attention to the conflict and the civilian peacekeepers, this may be a way of preventing violence and may greatly increase the effectiveness of just a few civilian peacekeepers.²³⁴ Others argue that manual typewriters are superior to more sophisticated technology in situations where electricity or solar power collectors are not available, and an abundance of technology would set the peacekeeping team apart from the local population.

Caution is necessary with any media strategies. The wrong kind of media attention can discredit peacekeeping activities.²³⁵

Transportation

The types of transportation available to civilian teams have important ramifications on the type and quality of their work. While cars, vans, trucks, jeeps, etc. enable teams to be highly mobile and react to crises quickly, they also are expensive, require

233 Declaration of Goals and Principles for the Balkan Peace Team. February, 1994

234 Presentation by John Paul Lederach at Consultation on Interpositioning held by the Life & Peace Institute, October, 1994

235 Wallis and Samayoa. 2005

fuel, which is often scarce in war situations, and may set the team apart from the local population.

Walking or biking, while slower, may allow for more communication with other civilians in the conflict and are easier to obtain and less expensive than motorized alternatives. While working in Haiti with Christian Peacemaker Teams, Kathy Kelly found that walking to the places she needed to go was an important time for her to both show solidarity with the people of Haiti and listen to them and their concerns.²³⁶

Food and Shelter

Self-sufficiency is a key value for most civilian peacekeeping teams. The more reliant a team is on the local population to supply food, medical supplies, space for offices or shelter, etc., the more likely the team will be a burden on them. Some teams ask each participant to furnish their own supplies for the whole period of their stay, and some food to share with their host families.

Most civilian teams are composed of groups from 3 to 15 people, although the larger, one-time actions like the Gulf Peace Team and Mir Sada/We Share One Peace contained 75 – 2 500 team members. In each case, an exploratory person or team arranged for housing or tent space for the group before the other team members arrived. Often the location of the housing was not ideal, because it did not allow for equal access to all groups, or it was under-equipped for the number of people it had to support (e.g. Mir Sada did not have enough restroom facilities). If the team hopes to interposition between two or more groups, the location of their shelter is important and should allow an appropriate distance from the groups.²³⁷

Financial Support

Many civilian peacekeeping groups have difficulty financing their projects. Funding usually comes from private foundations, other NGOs who may want to work in coalition, individual support groups formed by and for each individual team member, UN or government programs, businesses, churches, or individuals who cannot participate directly, but want to support the work. Coordinating and encouraging each of these groups to give money to projects takes time and money.

Support for Team Members

Most, if not all, civilian teams are composed of volunteers. While the organizing group often pays for the training, room and board, and a small stipend, the volunteers are responsible for paying transportation costs and raising money to cover their expenses. Well-established civilian peacekeeping groups also provide insurance for their volunteers and psychological counseling when they return to their home countries.²³⁸

236 Interview with Kathy Kelly, member of several peace teams

237 Diehl, p. 70

238 Interview with Judith Weir, staff and trainer for Witness for Peace

Evaluation

The success or failure of a civilian peacekeeping project can only be analyzed in a long-term time frame. In most contexts, peacebuilding takes decades. Evaluation of success or failure is particularly difficult in peacekeeping projects, because determining the number of “saved lives” or the degree to which a conflict has “transformed” is difficult. Who is to say if someone’s life is saved, when it is impossible to know whether it was endangered if a peacekeeper was not there? How does one attribute the successful transformation of a conflict if there are multiple interventions of peacekeepers, development workers, or conflict resolution specialists? And how is it possible to assess the effectiveness of civilian peacekeeping, if during the evaluation period external actors greatly increase their funding of one or more of the armed groups?

The determination of whether a peacekeeping project has been a success or failure depends highly upon the criteria one is using to make such judgments. Christine Schweitzer of the Balkan Peace Teams and Nonviolent Peaceforce claims that each action of the Balkan Peace Team is a success: each trial observed, each house eviction halted, etc.²³⁹

Criteria should focus on specific indicators, such as a reduction in the number of attacks on civilians protected by civilian peacekeeping teams, an increase in the amount of work done by local human rights activists protected by civilian peacekeepers, or the number of people in other countries who have learned about the human rights situation and taken action to stop abuses after reading the observation reports of civilian peacekeepers.

If civilian peacekeepers are able to increase world attention on human rights violations and rally others to get involved in helping to resolve the conflict, their effectiveness may not depend on the level or existence of violence between the groups. Likewise, if even one of the groups in a conflict feels safer and more able to function in working to resolve their conflict nonviolently, the presence of civilian peacekeepers is effective. Others claim the only failure of a civilian team would be in causing the violence to increase.²⁴⁰

239 Interview with Christine Schweitzer, former coordinator of Balkan Peace Team

240 Interview with Kathy Kelly, member of several peace teams

10. The Future of Civilian Peacekeeping

The successes of civilian peacekeeping in reducing violence and making space for democracy offer a compelling case for the establishment of a standing Civil Peacekeeping Corps of thousands of trained professionals ready to use their bodies as deterrents against violence. Ongoing violence in the Sudan, Congo, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Iraq, Colombia and dozens of other violent conflicts raging around the world call for a response. Delicate political situations in Guatemala, Indonesia, and Pakistan also deserve attention. The goal of establishing a standing “army” of civilian peacekeepers has been a recurrent vision over the last century. To date, the political will to fund and implement a large-scale civilian peacekeeping force is not strong enough.

Charles Walker notes that, “The basic idea of a World Peace Guard is indeed a resilient one, cropping up particularly in times of crisis. It is then left stranded for lack of money, organizational and political support, or impetus from peacekeeping specialists.”²⁴¹ However, there is some movement in that direction, as efforts from NGO groups like the Nonviolent Peaceforce and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict and UN efforts like the expansion CIVPOL and the UN Volunteers and policing units indicate that there is movement toward this vision. However, challenges, opportunities and questions regarding the widespread and large-scale use of civilian peacekeepers remain.

Intercessionary vs. Accompaniment

Several scholars believe that interpositioning in today’s form of highly technological warfare would entail high risk to the civilian peacekeepers. Schweitzer notes that it is doubtful if civilians could even enter into the frontlines of a combat zone in today’s warfare. In fact, several of the organizations that tried to interposition during the first Gulf War and the war in the former Yugoslavia were not able to gain access to the areas where they hoped to place themselves between the armed groups.²⁴² Moser-Puangsuwan and Weber conclude that, “An assessment of the viability of nonviolent unarmed strategic large-scale interpositionary peacekeeping, based on an analysis of previous attempts, and measured in terms of physical effectiveness, seems to suggest that the concept is not a viable one.” They conclude that civilian peacekeeping should focus on small-scale tactical intervention through nonviolent witness and accompaniment initiatives.²⁴³

There are no recent examples of the effectiveness of civilian peacekeeping in wars of high intensity, with large-scale weaponry, massive numbers of troops, widespread and decentralized fighting. It is hard to imagine how civilian

241 Walker, Charles. *A World Peace Guard: An unarmed Agency for Peacekeeping*. Hyderabad (AP): Academy of Gandhian Studies, 1981. p. 54

242 Nonviolent Peaceforce Feasibility Study, p. 173

243 Moser-Puangsuwan and Weber 2000: 324

peacekeeping would have worked once overt and widespread violence began in Rwanda, for example. The few international groups that did try to maintain a presence and intervene to stop violence were essentially ineffective, as the groups engaged in the violence had little concern for international outrage or the Western passports of the civilians. The leverage available to the civilian peacekeepers within this context was insufficient.

The most recent civilian peacekeeping successes have been in situations of sporadic fighting, in situations where there are human rights violations against people or groups that can be accompanied, or in a situation of a ceasefire where the violence can be prevented rather than stopped. Some members of current civilian peacekeeping projects warn that their small interventions have taken years to refine and that, until more experience is gained, larger projects may be destined to fail from sheer lack of experience in organizing, conducting, and strategizing activities for larger groups. Moreover, they point to the extreme financial crises facing many of these small organizations currently involved in civilian peacekeeping. The first task would seem to be to strengthen current organizations with added financial and human resources as well as explore, document, and evaluate the experiences of these groups, so that future groups will not remake mistakes made by past civilian peacekeeping projects.

Professionals vs. Volunteers

Many civilian peacekeeping organizations have low-paid or volunteer staff. Many peacekeeping organizations operate on low budgets, with restrictions on the amount of training they can offer their staff. The Nonviolent Peaceforce aims to create well-trained, professional and paid teams of hundreds or even thousands of people.

As civilian peacekeeping groups continue their development, they need to make a number of choices. If they want to engage in other peacebuilding activities, such as mediation, dialogue or peace education, they will need much more training than they currently receive. If they want to have a professional staff, they will need to find much greater funding. Alternatively, they could continue to use staff and stick to the limited but important goals of accompaniment of vulnerable individuals and groups and providing a nonviolent presence to deter violence. Civilian peacekeeping is an important task in and of itself and should be valued for its goal of reducing violence.

Choosing where to send civilian peacekeepers

Choosing where to place the limited resources of current civilian peacekeeping organizations is a challenge. The lack of a clear pattern of a response to conflicts and the ad hoc-nature of the intervention choices leaves questions regarding why some conflicts are chosen and not others. Civilian peacekeeping seems most effective in situations where international pressure is influential, where civilian peacekeepers operate to prevent rather than react to violent conflict, and where the armed groups

are ready for or clearly desire a political solution to the conflict.²⁴⁴ The challenge to confront violence in urban areas in the home countries of many civilian peacekeepers also suggests the need for further analysis of the motives of peacekeepers.

Activism and Impartiality

Chapter 5 in this book discussed the unique relationship between civilian peacekeeping, activism and the principle of impartiality. Since the members of many civilian peacekeeping groups hold a progressive worldview that holds firmly to human rights and democracy, team members are frequently tempted to step out of an impartial role to take a public, political stand on the issues in a conflict and to support those groups that are oppressed. This activist role can interfere with their ability to be seen as impartial by other groups in the conflict and thus also their ability to be accepted by governments and armed groups within the country. Civilian peacekeeping groups need to continue the discussion on these topics along with other peacebuilding actors who can offer advice and give feedback to the ways civilian peacekeepers conduct or interact with human rights activism.

Sovereignty and Interacting with Governments

Official peacekeeping and stability operations, such as the war in Iraq, are often criticized for their self-interested motives and violations of state sovereignty. While unarmed, civilian peacekeepers may pose less of a threat to governments than their official counterparts, opposition to larger or more active civilian peacekeeping teams may draw critical attention. How do state actors respond to civilian peacekeeping? Further research examining the responses of government and military officials to civilian peace teams may give civilian peacekeepers a better sense of their effectiveness in deterring or stopping violence and may increase the officials' understanding of the purpose and activities of civilian peacekeepers.

Developing the use of identity-based civilian peacekeeping

The role of outsiders in a conflict is debatable. Many civilian peacekeepers are Westerners and assume their presence as internationals prohibits violence because of the deterrent ramifications of hurting the third party. While this may be a factor, their effectiveness is lessened if aggressors do not fear international condemnation or repercussions of their actions. While not explored here in detail, some of the largest and most successful attempts to interposition between armed groups have been conducted with little planning by individuals with particular identities from within the conflict. Examples in India, the Philippines, Algeria and other conflicts could be documented and explored as spontaneous, yet effective, large-scale civilian peacekeeping interventions that reduced the violence happening within their own country. Theorists and civilian peacekeepers themselves should continue to develop the idea and test out the use of identity-based civilian peacekeepers, such as sending in

teams of religious leaders, women, or teams made up of specific respected ethnic groups that may be able to reduce levels of violence through their presence in a context.

The use of symbolic objects and texts to deter violence may also be tried out. For example, a civilian peacekeeping team made up of religious leaders carrying sacred texts as their source of power (an equivalent symbol to the power of carrying a gun) may be effective in a region such as Northern Uganda, where the violent Lord's Resistance Army is devotedly religious, yet commits massive human rights violations against the local civilian population.

Coordination with other Peacebuilding Actors

Civilian peacekeeping groups strengthen the effectiveness of their work and methods by increasing their communication and coordination with other peacebuilding actors. Increasing numbers of UN staff and government officials in a number of countries are interested in the idea of employing civilian peacekeepers in their conflict interventions. Caution is needed in developing close partnerships between both armed and unarmed peacekeepers involved in the same project. As some veteran civilian peacekeeping staff point out, the nonviolent principles which guide their work may be sacrificed, if they are included in larger military structures. Research focusing on how civilian peacekeeping may fit into official UN structures or how UN forces may be able to learn from and use the theory and practice developed by civilian peacekeepers may spark ideas on creative collaboration between the two.

Proactive planning, strategizing, and collaborating between various intervening groups could help prepare a more comprehensive intervention program composed of various intervening groups conducting various activities in different stages of the conflict. They can become involved in official peacekeeping coordination and policy groups, such as the US-based Partnership for Effective Peace Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and other coordinating forums that seek to increase the awareness of, and understanding between, groups working in conflict zones and in peace operations.

Civilian peacekeeping organizations can offer training to CIVPOL, UN Volunteers, and other official civilian policing and peacekeeping staff that are currently placed in the field with little or no training about how to deal with conflicts nonviolently and who could greatly benefit from basic conflict resolution training to help them interact more positively with local populations.

At the same time, the UN, regional organizations and governments should more actively support non-governmental civilian peacekeeping organizations through information-sharing, funding, and technical assistance.

It is well worth the time and effort spent examining and developing solid theories and practices regarding interventions, so that when crises arise, we can say more than "Something must be done!" Civilian peacekeeping offers an important gift to vulnerable people everywhere: the opportunity to carry on with their lives with the knowledge that someone else cares about their safety and security.

Appendix A

List of those interviewed for this research

Cole Arendt, Christian Peacemaker Teams

David Atwood, former Director of International Fellowship of Reconciliation

Michael Beer, Nonviolence International staff

Hagan Berndt, Bildungs- und Begegnungsstätte für Gewaltfreie Aktion

Elise Boulding, peace scholar

Howard Clark, War Resisters International

Lisa Clark/Don Albino Bizotto, Coordinators of Beati i Costruttori di Pace
(Blessed are the Peacemakers)

Dan Dayle, Lutheran Accompaniment Team in El Salvador

David Hartsough, Director of Peaceworkers

Kathy Kelly, peace team participant and organizer

Joel Klassen, Christian Peacemaker Teams

George Lakey, trainer

John Paul Lederach, International Conciliation Service

Liam Mahony, Peace Brigades International

Frank O'Donnell, former Director of United Nations Volunteers

Peggy Preston, Gulf Peace Team member

David Radcliff, Church of the Brethren, Peace Coordinator

John Reuwer, Christian Peacemaker Teams

Doug Schirch, former Witness for Peace volunteer

Scott Schaefer-Duffy, Sjema Mira

Christine Schweitzer, Balkan Peace Team

Bob Siedle-Khan, Peace Brigades International

Gene Stolfus/Rey Lopez, Christian Peacemaker Teams

Arno Truger, Director of the International Civilian Peacekeeping and
Peacebuilding Training Program

Tim Wallis, former director of Peace Brigades International

Kurt Wands, National Coordinating Office on the Refugees and Displaced of
Guatemala

Barbara Wien, Director, Peace Brigades International US

Judith Weir, Witness for Peace staff and trainer

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About the author

Lisa Schirch is an associate professor of peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University, U.S. She earned a B.A. from the University of Waterloo in Political Science and International Relations and her M.S. and Ph.D. from George Mason University in Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

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