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- [KOFF Gender and Peacebuilding website](#)
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Further information:  
KOFF [Cordula Reimann](#)  
KOFF [Jonathan Sisson](#)

### KOFF Mission Abroad

KOFF's Cordula Reimann accompanied Political Affairs Division IV (PA IV) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) on a working visit to Burundi at the beginning of July. The purpose of the visit was to identify measures that can help to further develop PA IV's present efforts in Burundi in such key areas as Dialogue, Dealing with the Past, Small Arms, and an approach to human rights that is gender-sensitive and consistent with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Jonathan Sisson, Senior Program Officer responsible for Dealing with the Past, travelled in July to Kosovo in connection with KOFF's mandate with the PA IV. The focus of the mission was an investigation of current activities of state and non-state actors in Kosovo on the issue of missing persons. In particular, meetings took place with representatives of both Kosovo Albanian and Serbian associations of families of missing persons.

01.08.2008

### Links

- [MSP](#)
- [CSS](#)
- [FDFA](#)
- [CECORE Uganda](#)

Further information:  
MSP swisspeace  
[Matthias Siegfried](#)

### Training Workshop on Conflict Resolution for Darfur Movement

Based on a mandate from the Political Affairs Division IV of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), the Mediation Support Project (MSP), a joint venture of swisspeace and the Center for Security Studies (CSS), ETH Zurich, was involved in the organization of a training workshop on conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Entebbe, Uganda. 40 members of one faction of the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) took part in the training, which took place from July 6-15, 2008.

The main goal of the training was to contribute to the Darfur peace process by strengthening the political leadership as a preparation for a possible unification among the SLM and other Darfur movements. It also sought to enhance the primacy of political and peaceful means to deal with conflicts.

MSP acted as a partner of the Swiss FDFA and was in charge of the administration, planning, coordination, and co-facilitation of the workshop. In this endeavour, MSP closely collaborated with a local partner, the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CECORE) in Kampala, as well as the main facilitator, Dr. Mohamed Suliman, one of Sudan's most renowned scholars and expert on issues of environment and conflict.

15.07.2008

## Links

- [KOFF member organisations](#)

Further information:

KOFF [Anita Müller](#)

KOFF-Steering Committee

[Sabine Ziegler](#)

## Gathering of KOFF members from French-speaking Switzerland

Non-governmental organisations from French-speaking Switzerland, affiliated to KOFF, were invited by the Center for Peacebuilding to a special meeting in Geneva in August to discuss their specific concerns, as well as how to increase KOFF's presence in „International Geneva“. Noting KOFF's importance in Switzerland's national peacebuilding network the NGOs of Geneva looked forward to a day when KOFF will help Swiss peacebuilding to achieve greater visibility in Geneva's international community.

At this meeting, as previously at a similar meeting in Bern, Sabine Ziegler, as a newly elected member of the KOFF Steering Committee, exchanged views with members of the „peace organisations“ category how they would like to see KOFF's strategy developing over the medium term. 21.08.2008

## Links

- [KOFF Trainings](#)

Further information:

KOFF [Jonathan Sisson](#)

## KOFF Training in Trauma Work

The physical and mental rehabilitation of a population that has suffered mass violence is one of the most difficult challenges in war-torn societies. It is an important task that must be addressed if victims are to be able to start afresh after such traumatic experiences. Only by coming to terms with such traumas can societies that have experienced violence on a massive scale learn to function properly again and help the victims.

KOFF conducted a training session on „Trauma work in societies affected by mass violence“ on 27 and 28 August. The participants were taught the psychosocial dynamics of mass violence and its consequences. The theoretical content was illustrated and developed with the help of actual case studies, mainly from the region of the African Great Lakes. Examples of „Best Practices“ in trauma transformation at the level of an entire society were presented in the form of additional case studies. The participants learned new skills for dealing with the psychosocial dynamics created by mass violence and destruction, skills that will help them in their own fields.

The session was conducted by Dr. Simone Lindorfer, an independent consultant in psychosocial trauma work in Africa, and Dr. Simon Gasibirege, Director of the „Centre des Blessures de la Vie“ in Kigali.

The course was the first in this year's KOFF training series. Upcoming training sessions, devoted to „Reflecting on Peace Practice“, „Do No Harm“ and „Dialogue Facilitation“, are already fully booked. 28.08.2008

## Focus

### Links

- [Jubilee brochure](#)
- [Jubilee press release](#)

### 20 years of swisspeace: „Peace research has its price!“

**The long road to the creation of swisspeace was fraught with political resistance and financial difficulties. The organization has just celebrated its first 20 years of existence. Today peace research is no longer controversial and Switzerland's first independent institute for conflict research and peacebuilding can count on widespread political support. The financial situation however remains a cause for concern.**

„Peace research would be superfluous if it were to limit itself to telling government, parties, peace groups and associations what they want to hear“ as Alexandre Hay, first President of the Swiss Peace Foundation Council, told the Founders Meeting of 18 August 1988. Peace research can only produce results by keeping an equal distance between an administrative function and being a peace movement, developing its own unique approach. Former ICRC President Hay was alluding to the variegated political opposition against which the founders had to fight prior to the creation of the Swiss Peace Foundation, today known as swisspeace.

#### **Stony road to success**

A widely supported parliamentary postulate called for the creation of a Swiss institute for conflict research and peacebuilding as early as 1966. At the time, in the midst of the Cold War, the concept of peace had strong ideological overtones. Official Switzerland was entirely focused on security policy instruments in the framework of a general defense concept. In 1973 the Federal Department of Home Affairs sent parliament a message for the creation of an institute for conflict research and peacebuilding. However, although it amounted to less than one thousandth the cost of military spending the sum was nonetheless considered excessive. „SFr600,000 for a bubble blowing festival“ was the contemptuous comment of the Federal Military Department of the day. Only after several failed attempts, and thanks to the support of 100 prominent individuals from the various parties and from academia, the church and the Federal Administration, was it possible to go ahead with the founding of swisspeace in 1988. At the time the founders could scarcely foresee just how big and strong their baby would grow up to be. Twenty years ago the first Chief Executive Office Günther Bächler and his assistant Maren Haartje did their best to achieve political legitimacy and financial security with a start-up capital of just SFr35,000. Today the Foundation has a staff of around 30 who do their best to provide support for the peacebuilding programs of the Confederation as well as for international and Swiss non-governmental organizations. In addition to research into environmental and resource-related conflicts, gender and also mediation in international conflicts, other important projects have included a political early warning system and the role of the private sector in crisis regions, plus operational projects in Afghanistan and Chechnya. Annual turnover has now grown to SFr6 million.

#### **The crux: the distance between research and application**

Peace is no longer a concept with ideological overtones, and the once fierce political opposition to peace research has eased off considerably. One thing has

remained unchanged however: the difficult question of finance. It is true that the Foundation was recognized in 1996 as an institution worthy of support in the framework of the federal law on research, and each year since 2000 has received a contribution from the Federal Department of Home Affairs. In the meantime the contribution has increased to SFr 500,000 or 8 per cent of the annual budget. Compared to the sums earned mainly through mandates from the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), this contribution is small however. Nonetheless, since it is not tied to any specific activity the funds can be used for independent research.

According to the current swisspeace Director Laurent Goetschel one reason for the difficulty of obtaining finance for research in this field is „application orientation“. In his contribution to the Jubilee brochure Goetschel writes: „Research funding institutions tend to mistake the action orientation of peace research for a lack of scientific objectivity. As for the actors in the field, they see no reason to finance research“. So peace researchers are left to look for funding in the same thematic fields, both for scientific projects and for those of a more practical nature. This is the only way to ensure an exchange between these two areas.

In the past swisspeace has had to explain and demonstrate time and again to the State's promotional organs that its efforts are fundamentally scientific, and why Foreign Affairs should not finance research directly, since it has much more demand for the services of swisspeace than does Home Affairs. Goetschel considers this an absurd argument: „In that case the whole of medical research would have to be financed by the Federal Office of Public Health.“ Even so, the interdisciplinary nature of peace research is a hindrance when it comes to the allocation of research funds. The requests for funds cannot be neatly slotted into the standard scientific categories and are therefore rejected. There is however a glimmer of hope: the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF) has a special division to which applications for interdisciplinary research funds can be submitted, for which peace research is also eligible.

### **Maintaining independence**

In recent years swisspeace has had to constantly stress the importance of having its own research institution, rather than farming research out to a university chair. If this were to happen, then it would not be just the interdisciplinary aspect that would suffer but also the institutionalized reference and exchanges with a variety of actors in the field. It is particularly with the actors in the field that peace research must not fail to defend its all important image: „The actions of the actors must be monitored not only in relation to the objectives, but also in terms of their actual impact“, says Goetschel. Today peace research increasingly relies on partnerships with researchers from the countries targeted for peace-building, so as to benefit from their understanding of the context and from the local networks. In the case of swisspeace the answer has been to work with the NCCR (North-South) research program, which is co-financed 50-50 by the SNF and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). In any case as Goetschel points out the SDC has its own agenda, and the projects it finances have to be adapted to its own areas of development-related knowledge. So there is a definite need to promote independent research into the impact that

Further information:  
swisspeace [Christa Dold](#)

„well-meant“ development policies can actually have on peace. And that has its price. The credos of Goetschel and Hays are the same: „To maintain independence of thinking and acting.“

#### Jubilee Brochure

A 60-page Jubilee brochure has been published to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of swisspeace. It contains a rich historical section, portraits of prominent personalities from the earliest days, and input from our clients as well as articles on various aspects of peace research and peacebuilding.

Online [www.swisspeace.org](http://www.swisspeace.org) Orders [info@swisspeace.ch](mailto:info@swisspeace.ch)

## News from Swiss NGOs

### Links

- [Geneva Peacebuilding Platform](#)

Further information:  
GPP [Frédérique Guerin](#)

### Geneva Peacebuilding Platform gets underway

After two years of preparatory work, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform (GPP) was officially launched in March of this year with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by the three principal partner organizations for this welcome new initiative. The partner organizations are the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, the Centre on Conflict, Development, and Peacebuilding of the Graduate Institute, and the Quaker United Nations Office.

The chief aims of the GPP are threefold. First it will serve as a neutral forum for dialogue, exchange, and action-oriented cooperation among Geneva-based stakeholders involved in peacebuilding around the world. Secondly, it will act as a knowledge platform aimed at advancing practical understanding of the key issues in peacebuilding, and in facilitating the sharing of expertise, field experience and research findings the Platform will seek to promote best practices, providing advice and services to peacebuilding stakeholders in Geneva and beyond. Finally, the GPP will serve as an interface, helping to build bridges between those in the field and the political actors at the United Nations in New York, including the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as the organizational agencies in Geneva.

The GPP has an Advisory Board made up of a broad range of Geneva-based actors who help to shape the programs. Platform Coordinator Frédérique Guerin began work on 1 June.

19.08.2008

#### Geneva Peacebuilding Guide

The launching of the GPP was preceded by various activities in 2006 and 2007. Most important among these was the undertaking of a major „mapping“ exercise in 2007 to determine the scope and capacity of Geneva-based inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations in peacebuilding fields. The [International Geneva Peacebuilding Guide](#) is an on-line database cataloguing the peacebuilding commitments of more than 70 organizations. The Guide will be an important tool in the work of the GPP.

## Links

- [IFF](#)
- [Conference on Minority Rights](#)

Further information:  
IFF [Lidija Basta](#)

## Beijing Conference on Minority Rights

From 20 to 22 May, 2008, the „Theory and Practices of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights“ (ICCPR) were discussed in Beijing by more than twenty Chinese scholars, together with ten experts coming from Germany, Ireland, Norway, Serbia, Spain and Switzerland. It was the third international conference that the Institute of Federalism in Fribourg (IFF) organized with the Institute of Law of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) during ten years of fruitful and manifold co-operation.

The conference focused more closely on the issues covered by articles 26 and 27 of the ICCPR, notably national and ethnic minorities. The inclusive approach embraced the following three key levels of minority protection: Theoretical and conceptual aspects; International legal standards, and constitutional and legislation policies; and Practice.

19.08.2008

## Links

- [IICP Switzerland](#)
- [Transcend Process](#)
- [Interview with Johan Galtung in „Der Bund“](#)

## International Summer Academy: „The Art of Conflict Transformation“

The Institute for Integrative Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding (IICP) held its first five-day summer academy in July, dedicated to „The art of conflict transformation“. Ueli Mäder of the University of Basel delivered the keynote address on „The art of conflict transformation in the context of social inequality“, followed by a panel discussion on the current state of Swiss conflict transformation, and its scope in which Ueli Mäder was joined by Cordula Reimann (KOFF) and Martin Stürzinger (Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, FDFA)). Each morning of the remaining four days experts introduced a different method of nonviolent conflict transformation: nonviolent communication, mediation, systemic conflict transformation and „transcend“, a conflict transformation process which brings the underlying structural and cultural (violence) dimensions of conflicts into the equation. In the afternoons participants were able to choose between a variety of fields in which to carry out specific tasks including: conflict transformation in peace processes, in private sector mediation, in peace pedagogy, in religion, non-governmental organizations, transnational conflict transformation and conflict sensitivity. Cordula Reimann conducted a workshop on „Conflict sensitivity in development cooperation: Learning from concrete examples“. Over 60 participants attended the sessions, which were rounded off in the evenings with plenty of opportunities for exchanging, for participants' project presentations and for networking.

Due to the general interest and the positive feedback the organizers are considering making the summer academy an annual event.

17.07.2008

## Links

- [Caritas Switzerland](#)

Further information:  
Caritas Switzerland  
[Gabriela Fuchs](#)

## Peacebuilding and Community Development in Bosnia-Herzegovina

A peacebuilding project sponsored by Caritas of Switzerland and Luxembourg has been in operation since 2005 in eight villages of mixed ethnicity in the municipalities of Srebrenica and Bratunac, conducted by the women's organization Priroda. Multi-ethnic teams chosen from the villages have provided support for a number of small Priroda projects that will benefit the whole population, such as the organization of a milk collection point, a sports ground and street lighting. These projects help to build trust between former rivals in war and at the same time help the citizens to become involved in the development of local strategy and planning of budgets. Workshops have provided expertise on fund-raising, team work, communication, gender issues and the preparation of project applications. Priroda together with Mozaik, an organization specialized in community work, help defuse growing tensions in the community and to strengthen people's identification with the community as a whole.

At the end of 2007 the focus of the project was extended, with the support of the government of Liechtenstein, to include „good governance“. The Centers of Civil Initiatives (CCI) of Tuzla link the village communities with each other and with the local political authorities. At the same time CCI supports the two municipalities in efforts to involve citizens in the administrative and financial decision-making process in a meaningful way. Representatives of the village communities are taught how to become involved in community politics and how to assert their civil rights. This enables them for example to insist on greater transparency on the part of the local authorities, either through the institutionalization of information about council decisions or by playing a role in budget planning. This participation of civil society also helps to make the peacebuilding and community development project of Caritas Switzerland more sustainable.

A two-day workshop for all local partner organizations of Caritas Switzerland, on the subjects of Do No Harm and Local Capacities for Peace, is due to take place in October, the ultimate aim being to develop greater conflict sensitivity in the daily affairs of the community. 01.08.2008

## Links

- [CASIN](#)
- [CASIN Final Report](#)

Further information:  
CASIN [Ximena Escobar](#)

## CASIN: Passing the Torch

For many years the Centre for Applied Studies in International Negotiations (CASIN) created value in the form of capacity building programs for officials from developing countries, seminars on entrepreneurship and negotiations, as well as research on global issues and corporate dialogues. Regrettably, in 2007 CASIN's principal sponsor suddenly pulled out. Despite the efforts to reposition the institution it has been unable to survive and has now stopped all activities. However a number of its programs have been successfully transferred to the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID). CASIN staffers have moved on to new challenges, some joining IHEID. The 1500 who worked closely with CASIN in more than 155 countries are certain to continue to have a positive impact in one way or another, helping to build better societies. CASIN thanks all who have supported them over the years - speakers, trainees, trainers, sponsors, and friends. 21.08.2008

## News from Swiss Government Agencies

### Links

- [ICTJ](#)
- [BMZ](#)
- [Frient](#)
- [COPRET](#)
- [FDFA](#)

Further information:  
PA IV [Luca Venturi](#)

### Seminar on Transitional Justice and Development

A seminar on „Transitional Justice and Development“ was held on 17-18 June in an effort to identify areas of convergence and possible synergies at the strategic and operational levels. It was organized by the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) in collaboration with the German Working Group on Development and Peace (Frient/BMZ), Political Affairs Division IV (PA IV) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation's Conflict Prevention and Transformation Division (COPRET).

The seminar brought together some 20 international experts who have carried out various studies in the areas of good governance, the rule of law, security sector reform (SSR), agrarian reform, education, healthcare and institutional reforms. They are particularly interested in the ways in which development and transitional justice reinforce one another in these different areas.

The discussions also covered such important aspects as the structural dimension of conflicts, the mechanisms of transitional justice, the long-term consequences of mass violence, the objectives of good governance, and sustainable development.

A report is due to be published at the beginning of 2009 once the research activities have been completed.

18.06.2008

### Links

- [FDFA Human Security](#)
- [Initiatives of Change International](#)
- [CAUX-Initiatives of Change](#)

### Workshop on „Mediation in French-speaking Africa“

Political Affairs Division IV (PA IV) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), together with Initiatives of Change International, organised a workshop on „Mediation in French-speaking Africa“ July 16-17 at the Caux conference centre high above Lake Geneva. The workshop brought together for the first time some 20 African practitioners for an exchange of views about their experiences and their needs. The great variety of the experiences of those concerned and the possibilities for complementary roles and approaches to conflict transformation in French-speaking Africa were made clear at the workshop.

Particular emphasis was laid on the personal qualities required by mediators, and also on the importance of closely accompanying the peace process - before, during and after the mediation stage. As well as the applied research centres, the civilian population has an important role to play for early warning of the emergence of a situation of conflict, making it possible to deal with such a situation in all its complexity. In many cases the „mediators“ are more like „facilitators“, who throughout the entire peace process must maintain vigilance so that parties to the conflict do not stray too far from the central issues of negotiation. Experience has shown that while regional mediators in French-speaking Africa have a „local advantage“, by accompanying the process from the

Further information:  
PA IV [Carol Mottet](#)

very beginning outside mediators can help to stabilise the fragile balance of peace negotiations and ensure implementation of the agreements.

In so far as Switzerland's peace policy and commitments in French-speaking Africa are concerned, the workshop provided a unique opportunity to get to know African practitioners who are directly involved in peace processes in one way or another and can show us how to provide support more effectively.

The workshop was held on the eve of the first Forum on Human Security in Caux - which also had the support of PA IV - enabling the practitioners from French-speaking Africa to play an active role. 17.07.2008

## Links

- [2008 UN Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms](#)

Further information:  
PA IV [Jean-Marc Flükiger](#)

## Third Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms

At the Third Biennial Meeting of States (BMS III) in New York last July participants discussed the progress made so far in implementing the „United Nations Programme of Action for preventing and combating illicit trade in small arms“.

The outcome document contained much information together with recommendations on how implementation of the Programme can be improved. Since the Iranian delegation refused to accept the working methods and procedures, it was not possible to adopt the conference report by consensus and when it came to a vote 134 member states were in favor, while Iran and Zimbabwe abstained.

The chairman of BMS III, Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis of Lithuania, focused discussion on four main topics: containing trade in small arms at the international level, improving the security of small arms stockpiles, destroying surplus or obsolete weapons, stepping up international cooperation, and developing instruments for marking and tracing small arms. Discussion groups were formed for each topic, and facilitators reported their findings back to the member states. The conclusions and recommendations were included in the outcome document. Ambassador Jürg Streuli, who is Switzerland's Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, played a key role as facilitator on the topic of stockpile management and the destruction of surplus weapons.

Thanks to the positive outcome, due not least to the preparatory work of the two centres of excellence in Geneva and New York, it should be possible to make further progress on the four main topics at the next meeting in two years time (BMS IV). 18.07.2008

## International Partner Organizations

### Info

News from the 9 international KOFF partner organizations.

- [Berghof-Center](#)
- [CDA Collaborative Learning Projects](#)
- [Conciliation Resources](#)
- [European Centre for Conflict Prevention](#)
- [European Peacebuilding Liaison Office \(EPLO\)](#)
- [Gruppe Friedensentwicklung \(FriEnt\)](#)
- [International Alert](#)
- [Plattform Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung](#)
- [SPICE/GTZ](#)

### CDA

- CDA has distributed the first issue of its new quarterly electronic newsletter. It will provide updates on various activities and publications and include papers on current learning projects. [Subscription](#).

### Berghof

- Berghof has launched a new [series of publications](#) on experiences with systemic conflict transformation with the following: „Berghof Handbook Dialogue No. 6 A Systemic Approach to Conflict Transformation. Exploring Strengths and Weaknesses.“. Norbert Ropers' lead article lays out a rich array of systemic ideas originating from both research and practice, applied in the context of Sri Lanka. Respondents are Friedrich Glasl, Günther Baechler, Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, Dekha Ibrahim Abdi and Dan Smith. They reflect, among other things, on additional tools and techniques, comparative experiences in Nepal and Kenya and the added value and utility of systemic conflict transformation.

### Conciliation Resources

- The Conciliation Resources West Africa program has published its latest Peace, Security and Development [Update](#), which focuses on the challenges related to youth and security issues in Sierra Leone. Dealing with the needs of a large number of economically and politically marginalized youths is essential to ensure Sierra Leone remains at peace.

### Akademie für Konflikttransformation

- The new [virtual academy](#) online service of the Academy for conflict transformation is now available. It provides easy access to information, services and adds remote „e-learning“ to its existing services.
- In spring 2009 the Academy for Conflict Transformation will be offering an additional 9-week [Qualification Course](#) in English. It is possible to book single one- to five-day „Trainings for Peace“.

## Events

### Info

This section gives pointers to selected events in Switzerland pertaining to civil peace building.

- [Peace Brigades International Schweiz](#) and [Peace Watch Switzerland](#) are conducting an information session on the afternoon of 6 September. The event, organized in the framework of the Cinfo Forum, is in Biel/Bienne at the Maison St Paul, Crêt-des-Fleur 24, 14.00 – 17.00.
- There are still vacancies for the next Peace Watch Switzerland [training sessions](#) to prepare candidates for human rights missions in Palestine/Israel (18-21 September and 9-12 October) and Guatemala/Mexico (2-5 October and 16-19 October). Each session begins on Friday at 18.00 and ends Sunday at 16.00.
- The „Lucerne Initiative for Peace and Security“ (LIPS) is staging an International Conference on Diversity Management 9-10 October 2008 in Lucerne. Federal Councillor Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf will be among a number of prominent speakers from the political and private sectors in a program that includes workshops and other activities. The conference is the first in a series of events devoted to the subject of diversity. The ultimate aim is to create a Diversity/Integration Network. [Full text](#). LIPS [Linus Oertli](#) or Tel 041 269 51 51.
- The theme of this year's [Annual Conference](#) of Political Affairs Division IV Human Security (Federal Department of Foreign Affairs) is „Conflict Mediation in Africa“. Leading personalities, mediators and experts from Africa and Switzerland will provide information relating in particular to conflicts in East Africa, the Region of the Great Lakes and Sudan, together with insights into the approach to mediation typical of this part of the world. The conference is being held in the Stade de Suisse in Bern, 14 October. [Contact](#).
- The Institute for Integrative Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding (IICP) is offering an [advanced training](#) course in „Integrative Conflict Transformation“ leading to a degree certified by the University of Basel. This course for professionals begins in October 2008 and ends in July 2009.
- cfd Switzerland, in collaboration with other organizations is launching a campaign entitled „[16 days combating violence against women](#)“, focusing on the link between gender and violence. Between International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25.11.08) and International Human Rights Day (10.12.08) more than 30 events are planned which deal with a variety of topics including employment, health, structural violence and violence in the home, peacebuilding and gender roles. Information and opportunities for participation: [Amanda Weibel](#) or Tel 031 300 50 66.

Other pointers to events and training courses are available through the [KOFF-Infomarket](#).

- As part of the above-mentioned campaign cfd is organizing a [conference](#) on „Women, Men and Gender Relations during and after Conflicts“. Peace researchers and project leaders put the predominant role models and concepts of masculinity under the microscope and develop strategies for changing these in the context of gender-sensitive project work and peace policy. Friday, 28 November/13.00 / Le Cap, Bern. Information: [Ursula Keller](#) or Tel. 031 300 50 60.

## Publications

### Info

[Peace Mediation Essentials](#)

Further information:  
MSP [Matthias Siegfried](#)

### Peace Mediation Essentials

The Mediation Support Project (MSP) has published its first edition of „Peace Mediation Essentials“ on the subject of Gender and Peace Mediation. This brief study looks at the relevance of gender for mediators and sums up the key questions and principles that can help in the planning and implementation of concrete mediation activities. Future editions of „Peace Mediation Essentials“ will focus on equally important themes such as decentralization and federalism. 14.08.2008

### Info

[Available](#) in German, English and Spanish

### Human rights defenders in Guerrero

The Peace Brigades International Mexico Project has published a report on „Human Rights Defenders in the State of Guerrero. Cases of resistance and initiatives from Mexican civil society regarding the promotion and defense of fundamental rights in Mexico“. The report presents a variety of civil society organizations that are attempting to defend human rights in the State of Guerrero, southern Mexico, and explains the major problems they face: access to justice, impunity, militarization, State repression, defending the rights of indigenous populations, and the distribution of natural resources in an increasingly globalised world. The report shows how these organizations, which are mainly indigenous and campesino movements, thanks to their great commitment are constantly able to come up with new initiatives that they hope will have a positive influence on the everyday reality. 01.08.2008

**Info**[Strategies for Peace](#)

Orders:

[Barbara Budrich Verlag](#)

## Strategies for Peace

In April 2006 the German foundation for Peace research organized an International Symposium on „Strategies for Peace: Contributions of International Organizations, States, and Non-State Actors“. The various contributions have now been published in an anthology of the same name by Volker Rittberger and Martina Fischer.

As well as articles that deal with the role of various State, supranational and Non-State actors who play an active part in peace processes, there are others that look at strategies for dealing with the problems and dilemmas of international peacebuilding.

The book has four parts: the first part tries to summarize the situation of the international system, with particular reference to current questions and challenges in the area of peace and security, and contains reflections on international peacebuilding. Then the authors discuss the contributions made by interstate and supranational organizations, in particular the achievements and areas of weakness of UN peacekeeping missions and ways in which these can be reformed. Also considered is the role of the European Union and of regional organizations like the African Union in stabilizing fragile States. The third part is devoted to the question of the relevance of States as actors in peacebuilding, alternatively what the role of civil society should be. The final section, which deals with the overall challenges to peacebuilding, looks at such central issues as understanding the causes of conflicts, the culture of violence, good governance, safeguarding human security, dealing with the past, and local ownership of peace processes.

26.08.2008

## Web tip

**Info**■ [Global Peace Index](#)

## Global Peace Index

The Global Peace Index (GPI) ranks the nations of the world according to a scale of peacefulness based on no less than 24 indicators. These indicators of a country's peacefulness, internal and external, range from data on military spending to relations with neighboring countries and the degree of respect for human rights. In this context peace is understood not merely as the absence of war but as a whole series of positive factors which together add up to a more meaningful concept. The indicators, which were extended considerably in 2008, were decided upon by an international panel of representatives from academia, the private sector, philanthropy and peace institutions. The list has also been extended, from the original 121 countries to 140. The data on which the GPI is based is prepared by the Economist Intelligence Unit. One of the purposes of the Index is to show the world of business that there is a positive correlation between peace and economic development, and thus to win the support of the private sector for

peacebuilding initiatives. According to its creators the GPI can also help to measure the success of peacebuilding programs and perhaps to discover factors as yet unknown that influence peace. The validity of the GPI depends on accepting that peace is indeed measurable in this way. As for the list of countries the GPI is not always coherent with similar indices. These aspects expose it to a certain amount of criticism, as does the fact that none of the indicators take into account violence against women and children. The GPI is nonetheless useful for the ranking of specific countries, and also helps to follow their development from year to year and in this way to discover what factors are particularly relevant to peacebuilding. Therein indeed lies its strength. [Steve Killelea](#), Australian businessman and philanthropist is founder of the GPI. On 12 September 2008, he will speak at swisspeace in a brown-bag [seminar](#) about his activities and ideas how the private business sector, governmental and non-governmental organizations can collaborate in the field on peace and security issues. 19.08.2008

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