



## ACCORD PROGRAMME

### Informing and strengthening peace processes

For peace agreements to be durable, peace processes need to involve the people with most to win or lose from the outcomes. This includes not just governments and armed groups but ordinary people living in the affected societies.

This lesson from CR's work on documenting peace initiatives in its Accord publication series needs to be better applied and in 2005 we continued to challenge and provoke debate about how to improve peacemaking practice and policy.

#### Promoting engagement with armed groups

The year saw the climax of work on the hotly debated topic of engagement with armed groups. We launched our second thematic Accord issue, *Choosing to engage: armed groups and peace processes*, amid international policy contradictions. Despite the rhetoric of the 'war on terror' and increasing emphasis on military sanctions, there is growing realization of the need to talk with armed groups.

Our publication documents armed groups' experiences in peace processes around the world. With articles authored by government officials, armed groups and

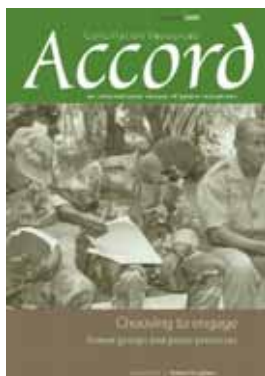
intermediaries, it highlights valuable lessons that could shape future practice and improve current policymaking.

We worked with the Stimson Centre and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs to share these findings at events for policymakers in Washington and New York. Working with Club de Madrid we also convened a panel at the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security in March, and co-organized an international conference in December with Wilton Park in the UK. In the aftermath of the July London bombings, we also co-organized a seminar on 'engaging with terror' with the Royal Court Theatre and Peace Direct.

#### Identifying the limits of leadership

Many years have passed since the Nagorny Karabakh peace process brought any benefits to the people most affected by the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over this territory in the South Caucasus. Published in English and Russian, *The limits of leadership: elites and societies in the Nagorny Karabakh peace process*, analyses the current impasse.

*Photo: Commanders of the Patriotic Movement of Cote D'Ivoire take part in a meeting with the Economic Community of West African States contact group at Bouake in 2002. (Source: PA Photos / EPA)*



We continued to challenge and provoke debate about how to improve peacemaking practice and policy.

Produced with CR's Caucasus programme, the publication reveals the limits of top-down approaches to peacemaking. Articles by Armenian and Azeri authors – individually and together – make it a challenging, unique resource.

The publication highlights the shortcomings of a peace process that has focused on securing agreements between narrow circles of political leaders and failed to involve Armenian and Azerbaijani societies. It questions the current strategy of minimal engagement with the leaders and people of Nagorno Karabakh and stresses the need for a multi-faceted approach to bring together wider constituencies and find mutually acceptable solutions.

### Consolidating peace

Consolidating peace agreements is a long-term task. In Bougainville, Papua New Guinea we published a 'critical literacy kit' on the peace process with our partner the Bougainville Inter-Church Women's Forum. This resource for rural education programmes is being used to promote discussion and improve understanding about the recent peace process's outcomes.

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Sudan also brings the challenge of putting it into practice while conflict continues in the east and west of the country. We are now working with Concordis International, a UK-based organization working in Sudan, to explore how an Accord project could contribute to this process in 2006.

### Looking ahead

From 2006 the Accord programme will work within a newly-created Policy, Communications and Comparative Learning team. This will integrate existing work in these areas and increase CR's capacity for policy development and advocacy based on our practical peacebuilding work. We will publish a new Accord publication on Sudan and begin our third thematic project, on 'sanctions, conditionalities and incentives'. Work will continue on the comparative learning project in Colombia and the Philippines.

*For more information about our work see our website: [www.c-r.org](http://www.c-r.org)*



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## Sharing lessons from peace processes

“Despite a huge range of peacebuilding activities taking place in Colombia, people have very little opportunity to learn from similar experiences elsewhere,” according to Camilo Gonzalez Posso from the Colombian Institute for the Study of Development and Peace (INDEPAZ).

“We need access to information and occasions when we can enrich our understanding together.”

CR believes everyone involved in peace processes can learn from the lessons drawn from successes and difficulties of other situations, and from reflecting upon their own experiences.

Our new comparative learning project allows such learning to be shared interactively. Working with our partners INDEPAZ and the Centre for Integrative and Development Studies of the University of the Philippines (UP-CIDS) we have taken the reflections and lessons learned from our Accord publications directly to people involved in both these countries' peace processes.

Initial activities in Colombia and the Philippines in 2005 focused on questions and dilemmas about engaging with armed groups in peace processes. Accord publications on this highly relevant topic were translated into Spanish and three Filipino languages (Tagalog, Ilocano and Cebuano).

Forums and discussions in both countries involved participants including government officials, foreign diplomats, armed groups and civil society representatives.

Such meetings were often important for those who came along to hear each other's views and learn about experiences from other parts of the world.

“Our meeting created an environment where a range of people involved in negotiations could interact with each other,” explained Filipino partner Professor Miriam Coronel Ferrer, convenor of the Programme on Peace and Democratization and Human Rights at UP-CIDS.

“They were able to consider the relevance of findings from Accord and offer extra insights gained through experience from the Philippines.”

The rich and different perspectives that emerged during these activities will be collected and published by CR in a reflections paper for practitioners and policymakers in 2006.

*Photo: Mr Von Al Haq, representative of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front gives his views on the Accord publication at a 2005 workshop on engaging armed groups in peace processes in the Philippines.*