

Conciliation Resources works to prevent violence, promote justice and transform conflict into opportunities for development

Our goals are to:

- **support people** working at local, national and international levels to develop effective solutions to social, economic and political problems related to violent conflicts
- **provide opportunities for dialogue** and improved relationships within communities and across conflict divides at all social and political levels
- **influence governments** and other decision makers to employ conflict transformation policies that promote alternatives to violence
- **improve peacemaking practice** and policies by promoting learning from peace processes around the world
- **challenge stereotypes** and increase public awareness of human rights, conflict and peace issues in divided societies

Who we are

Conciliation Resources (CR) is a non-governmental organization with over 15 years of experience working internationally to prevent and resolve violent conflict. Our practical and policy work is informed by people living in countries affected or threatened by war.

We work with partners in the Caucasus, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Fiji, Guinea, India, Liberia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Southern Sudan and Uganda. We also publish the journal *Accord: an international review of peace initiatives* and seek to influence government peacemaking policies. Our funding is through grants from governments, multilateral agencies, independent trusts and foundations.

CR is registered in the UK as a charity (1055436).

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Cover: A member of a local self-defence group in Bangadi, northeastern Congo, where villagers arm themselves with handmade weapons to protect against attacks and massacres by the Lord's Resistance Army. © FINBARR O'REILLY/REUTERS



A year of successes and setbacks

“Are we back to square one?” This was the question posed by our friend and partner Archbishop John Baptist Odama, Chair of the Acholi Religious Leaders’ Peace Initiative, following the recent collapse of the peace process between the Lord’s Resistance Army and Ugandan government.

The explosion of long-simmering tensions into full-scale war in the South Caucasus last August led our partners there to pause for similar reflection.

Yet in both regions our colleagues took deep breaths and began making plans for the way forward. Their determination to continue is testimony to their resilience and strength.

If there is one certainty in the work to transform conflicts it is that there will be setbacks. We need to ask ourselves whether we saw these events coming, and whether we, and our partners, worked actively to prevent them. In both Uganda and the Caucasus the answer is an emphatic “yes.”

International diplomacy regularly overlooks the complexities of change coming from within societies as well as regional cross-border dynamics. It also greatly undervalues the impact on civilians caught up in the violence. These omissions only confirm for us the importance of taking a people-centred approach to peacebuilding.

Unfortunately, although best placed to respond to the challenges of their own conflicts, locally organized peacebuilders are often the worst equipped.

This review of our work in 2008 highlights how Conciliation Resources continues to support partners working for a more peaceful future.

With the trust of communities across conflict divides we have provided opportunities to improve broken relationships through dialogue, from young Georgians and Abkhaz to community leaders in eastern Congo, northern Uganda and Southern Sudan.

We also have helped to resource activists worldwide to meet their urgent peacemaking challenges by learning from comparable experiences through our flagship Accord series.

This practical experience has enabled us to influence governments, including the British, to adopt more effective strategies to support peace processes.

Our work is evidence that internationally supported local initiatives can be meaningful ways to help transform conflicts peacefully. And the setbacks we face emphasize that much remains to be done to find better non-violent responses to the global challenges of armed conflicts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Carl'.

Andy Carl
Executive Director
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