

Dear Reader

This issue of the Review is mainly devoted to the work of practitioners. Marian Liebmann describes her work on Restorative Justice in Serbia and Montenegro, sponsored by UNICEF and the Swedish government. This involves training criminal justice professionals in restorative justice and victim-offender mediation for three pilot projects, two in Serbia, one in Montenegro. Alan Pleydell of Quaker Peace and Social Witness discusses their programme on 'Dealing with the Past' in Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia. Finally, in a break with our normal practice, we publish a piece not written specially for the Review – namely a statement by the Cypriot women's NGO, Hands Across the Divide (HAD), on the Gender Dimension of Working for a post-Solution Cyprus. This ties in so closely with the theme of our last seminar and Review that we felt readers would find it of special interest and are grateful to HAD for their permission to print it.

Restorative Justice Training in Serbia and Montenegro

by Marian Liebmann, freelance consultant and former Probation Officer

At first glance 'Restorative Justice' and 'Serbia' are not words to spring to mind together. But all over the world governments and voluntary organisations are looking at the possibility of using restorative justice (RJ) to re-make their youth justice systems. In Serbia's case, the youth justice system has fallen into disrepair through the war in which NATO bombed Belgrade, and the ten-year period of sanctions when they were isolated from all other countries. Serbs still can't travel without great difficulty as they need visas for almost every country, and criminal justice professionals feel they have an enormous amount of catching up to do in their field.

My work has been sponsored by UNICEF and is currently funded by a three year grant from the Swedish Government. It involves training criminal justice professionals in restorative justice and victim-offender mediation for three pilot projects – one in Nis, a city of 400,000 in the south of Serbia, one in a juvenile correctional institution in Krusevac in central Serbia and one in Montenegro. I delivered a basic victim-offender mediation course to the Nis group in March 2003, to the Krusevac institution in September and to the Montenegro group in November. I have also run a refresher course and cultural diversity training for the Nis group and the Krusevac group, with the Montenegro group still to come. The groups have been very different from each other.

Community based group in Nis

The Nis group was very well prepared by Carol Conragan, an American legal consultant who worked in the Balkans for several years. She did

a thorough survey, for UNICEF, of all the youth justice agencies and institutions in Serbia, found them starved of resources and isolated from recent European developments, and engaged the group in Nis in discussing ways forward. Out of this came their wish to look at restorative justice

as a more humane yet accountable way of working with young people, at a time of rising concern about youth crime. My invitation to undertake this assignment came via the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking of the University of Minnesota.

The training was enthusiastically received, a tribute to all the work Carol had done with the group. Care had been taken to include all the local agencies, the university and also young people – students of law and psychology, and two young people living in children's homes (one a young ex-offender). This group has since done a lot of work towards setting up a mediation centre and some individuals (especially the police) have undertaken some successful mediations. The refresher course resulted in some more participants saying, 'I can see myself doing this work for real now.'

One of the legal issues in Serbia is the age at which such measures can be used. The age of criminal responsibility is 14 but, up to now, there has been no provision for RJ or victim-offender mediation. So in Nis in March, we confined our case scenarios to those involving young people under 14. Despite the stories of youth crime escalating in volume and seriousness (e.g. street children performing many violent street robberies), the case scenarios offered by the group seemed quite low key and similar to those one might hear of in a British urban environment.

The cultural diversity training was seen as necessary because Serbia has quite a diverse population from all the countries surrounding it (Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania as well as the ex-Yugoslavian countries), and Nis especially has a large Roma population, most of whom are very poor and are discriminated against almost as a matter of course. Many of the young offenders who will be involved in restorative justice are from the Roma community. I was quite apprehensive about this training, given the events of the last ten years in the Balkans, but it seemed possible to discuss prejudice and ways of working with it. Most participants thought the course had helped them to recognise their prejudices, the first step on the road in this field.

Juvenile Correctional Institution Krusevac

The training in the juvenile correctional institution in Krusevac took a different turn. The

group had been prepared by Jasna Hrcic, an experienced forensic psychologist, and care had been taken to include members of the three staff groups working there: 'personal officers' (with a mentoring role), teachers and guards. One of the aims of the training was to get these groups working together in a more constructive way. Although they had asked for victim-offender mediation training (and I thought they were looking to implement this in respect of the crimes committed by offenders in the community), they were keener to look at how they could resolve offences and disputes within the institution itself. The physical facilities were very poor and run down, with dormitories and other areas open to bullying and gang fights, and the staff very much wanted to introduce a constructive way of handling these incidents. Despite their poor conditions, all the staff seemed very dedicated to the young people in their care (aged 14-23). At the end of the week's training, they had already made plans for setting up the mediation service in a set of quiet rooms above the education block. Jasna also arranged further in-service training and scheduled a refresher course and diversity training for March 2004.

When I returned to run this course, I was impressed with the progress made. Jasna had run monthly educational seminars on criminal justice and held regular meetings with the group of mediators. Out of this had come a complete organisational structure (referrals team, rota of mediators, system for following up mediation agreements made, etc) and a full set of literature, from leaflets in simple language for inmates to posters of ground rules for mediation sessions; also information for other staff. The Mediation Service had a set of two rooms in the education block, newly redecorated, and had already completed two cases successfully. The refresher course was able to engage with some quite challenging issues, especially the power imbalances implicit in bullying. Working on cultural diversity issues seemed particularly poignant the week after the renewed problems in Kosovo and the burning of mosques in Nis and Belgrade.

Montenegro

The training in Montenegro was different again. Montenegro (population 600,000) is the last of the Yugoslav republics to remain in federation with Serbia, and it has almost the same justice

system but not quite. They were awaiting a new youth justice law providing for alternatives for the age group up to 21, so the case scenarios concerned 14-21 year olds. They were even more keen than their Serb counterparts to gain entry into Europe (they use Euros already whereas Serbia still uses dinars for currency), and saw the course as a step along the European route.

However, one big difference lies in the way in which Montenegrin officialdom handles such courses. Whereas in Serbia people were selected/invited for their known interest in the training and the philosophy of RJ, in Montenegro the government ministries chose the participants. This meant that no preparation was possible, as the choice was made only shortly before the course. For instance, two senior teachers in high schools were telephoned on the Friday evening and simply told to report to the hotel on the Sunday evening – they had no idea what for. Naturally the UNICEF staff member in Montenegro found this difficult and so did I! We spent the first two days overcoming natural resistance to being ‘volunteered’ and helping people to work out why they were there. Fortunately enthusiasm grew over the week, as the role plays demonstrated the possibilities.

One of the Montenegro participants told me of a traditional use of mediation there. When someone is killed in a traffic accident or crime, members of the local peace council go to the bereaved family to check if they will accept the perpetrator and family at the funeral, then to the latter to persuade them to attend. This custom was started to help heal the hurt and to prevent vengeance killings.

Problems for the project

I may have given the impression that all of this had been accomplished with the greatest of ease – far from it! In Serbia resources are in short supply, politics influence everything and changes are frequent and shrugged off. So the Nis pilot ran into difficulties concerning accommodation for the Mediation Service, originally promised by the council – which then rented out the rooms to earn much-needed commercial revenue to shore up its shortfall. Then the mediators asked to be paid, but this had not been budgeted for. Vesalinka Cuk at UNICEF has taken over responsibility for the Nis project, and is trying to resolve this issue.

In the Juvenile Correctional Institution at Krusevac, while we were training in October, the governor was being removed and replaced, as the new Minister of Justice did not like him. Jasna put a lot of work into getting to know the new governor and eliciting his support for the Mediation Service, only to find the former governor reinstated after the recent elections and change of government.

In Montenegro there is still discussion about where to set up a pilot mediation service. One of the places proposed sounds very promising, although quite small – but no-one from there was included on the basic training course! I am waiting to see what the outcome is before doing the refresher course there – maybe I will need to repeat the basic course instead. Or maybe another pilot site will be chosen.

Meanwhile the funding body sent a consultant to visit who did not have much knowledge of restorative justice, and queried the emphasis on it, requiring Vesalinka to gather information on its effectiveness. This seemed strange to me, as the grant was originally made for a restorative justice project.

Criminal justice issues

UNICEF has been lobbying the Serbian ministry of justice to include restorative justice and mediation in the new draft law, and it looks as if this will soon go through. If it does, it will be one of a list of alternatives in a strengthened community supervision provision. Montenegro is working on its own slightly different version. Interestingly, I read this draft law just after reading the UK ‘Youth Justice – Next Steps’ which included a very similar proposal for an enhanced Action Plan Order with a list of options, including RJ and victim-offender mediation. One wonders who has been copying whom – but this is what is fascinating in the now global network.

Training issues

Of course I have to work through an interpreter, on whom I am totally reliant. I have been lucky to work with three different interpreters, all excellent. Their knowledge of criminal justice jargon is really important. On one occasion I discovered that, whereas the British word ‘crime’ encompasses all illegal acts, there are two words in Serbian – ‘contraventions’ for

lesser crimes and 'crimes' for more serious ones. One of the interpreters had used the Serbian word for serious crime, which left participants rather doubtful about mediation. I have also learnt a (very) few words in Serbian by now. Just 'dobro dan' ('good day') goes a long way towards building rapport.

The case studies we have worked on come from the participants – so that they can be realistic for their situation. Of course these have been very different in the community and in the Juvenile Correctional Institution.

I have also been helped greatly by organisers with training skills, able to write up group feedback directly on to a flipchart in Serbian. And they have helped me to organise the role plays and manage the numbers – usually 20 (the maximum number I ask for) but on occasion as many as 37 (the Nis group). For the most part the training venues have been quite suitable (off-season hotels) but one venue had a huge and immovably heavy U-shaped board table that was a trainer's nightmare!

There have been times when I have wondered who I am to be exporting knowledge. Criminal justice professionals in Serbia were amazed how punitive the UK is towards young offenders in terms of prison, and surprised that many of the problems they are working with are also problems in the UK (for instance, lack of

support for young people leaving care). Although many facilities there are still not working very well, I reflected that they don't work that well in the UK either.

A final word

There is still huge hurt from past events, in Serbia especially – with reminders in the form of unrestored bombed buildings – and resentment about the way they are reliant on foreign aid. There is also fear that this aid will dry up under the pressure of the fresher needs in Iraq. But there is also enthusiasm to rebuild the country and the institutions within it – and the groups involved in restorative justice training see this as one very hopeful way forward.

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Dealing with the Past in Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia

by Alan Pleydell, Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW) Programme Manager for the Post-Yugoslav Countries

Recent violence

Compared with the worst phases of the wars in the 1990s, these days you almost never see any headlines from the post-Yugoslav countries, let alone TV pictures. The exception was two days in mid-March this year, when major rioting broke out in Kosovo and spread like wildfire, resulting in 19 deaths and the violent displacement of over 4,000 Serbs from their homes, many of which were burnt to the ground.

The attacks were orchestrated and inflicted by members of the majority Albanian population. Once the Albanians were seen as the underdog, forced to flee the reality of Serbian government oppression in their tens of thousands, but the NATO bombing campaign and invasion of summer 1999 dramatically restored their fortunes and the tables were turned. Now they decisively have the upper hand – except that the ‘international community’, for fear of wider regional repercussions, refuses to discuss with them their one unified political goal, total and internationally recognised independence from Serbia. On the other hand, the plight of the remaining Serbs in Kosovo provokes a once-more radicalised anti-western majority population and government in the rest of Serbia to react by demanding formal partition, or some equivalent, and the effective unification of the remaining Serb-controlled areas around Mitrovica with Serbia. The Serbian government of today has recently been described as ‘Milosevic without Milosevic’¹.

Five years on from that bombing campaign, hailed to this day by our own government as the first efficacious case of Tony Blair’s newly proclaimed doctrine of humanitarian military intervention, the two sides are as implacably opposed as ever, with no sign of a way out. Most informed analysts judge that the social, economic and political prospects for Kosovo are bleak and that the UN administration, which was supposed to hold the balance and edge the opposed populations of the province closer to some sort of mutual accommodation, has now lost the plot, perhaps for good. There is the added fear, as yet mercifully unrealised, that the violence will spread anew to other parts of the Balkans.

Politics

That is one kind of upset. Another is that recent elections in Croatia in November and Serbia in December have produced governments closely allied to the ultra-nationalist forces on each side that started the 1991-5 war in the first place. They have done so after a period during which

many politicians in the west had persuaded themselves that the days of the hardliners were decisively over. Meanwhile in Bosnia, the continuing intransigence towards one another of hard-line parties representing the different ethnic factions – Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim), Serb and Croat – has pushed the UN High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, into tougher and tougher measures to try to force some sort of progress before he leaves. These measures include sacking those ministers suspected of obstructing the as yet unachieved arrest of Radovan Karadzic, the wartime leader of the Bosnian Serbs, and his delivery to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. The tragic paradox is that the harder and more sincerely Ashdown pushes to achieve necessary short-term progress, the more it appears to detract from the solid development of any serious, working inter-ethnic political cooperation towards a viable political future. Whilst the cat is there, the mice play.

Ashdown is the last High Representative, and by the end of this year military responsibility for Bosnia – currently a 12,000 strong NATO force

¹ International Crisis Group Report – Serbia’s U-turn, 26th March 2004, Executive Summary – ‘In politics and policies, Serbia increasingly resembles the Milosevic-era without Milosevic’.

– will be handed over to a much smaller European Union presence. The great fear is that without any solid achievement before these changes, little reform or progress will be possible afterwards and the country will be condemned to poverty and uncontrolled crime, sliding downhill towards endemic violence.

At least in Croatia there is a ray of hope, even if there continues to be concern for the human rights of the returning Serb population and other minorities. The new centre-right nationalist government has played a highly successful diplomatic hand in recently delivering a number of its own suspected war criminals to The Hague, whilst not finding or delivering the most wanted suspect, Ante Gotovina. Thus they have avoided antagonising the high proportion of their natural supporters within the population who regard him as a war hero – exactly as the Serbs in Bosnia regard Karadzic. The result is that Croatia has now gained permission to proceed to formal negotiations for entry to the European Union, the prize towards which all the post-Yugoslav governments are aiming.

Slovenia, ‘the one that got away’ in 1991, is already there with the other accession states from 1st May. But Serbia and Bosnia, the other two protagonists of the wars of 1991-5 on which the QPSW programme has focused, remain mired in economic and political crisis and instability and apparently are as far as ever from achieving or indeed approaching such a status. In Serbia, the depth of resentment towards the west and its demands fuels a disbelief in many of the general population that they or their government ever had anything to do with the wars or atrocities, despite the appearance of more and more incontrovertible evidence of the deepest implication of the state apparatus and many of the people.

That is roughly how things look now from the bird’s eye political and economic perspective. On the whole it is not at all a rosy picture.

The continuing work of Quaker Peace and Social Witness

Meanwhile, however, Quaker Peace and Social Witness continues its small-scale work to assist in creating a climate in which facing up to ‘dealing with’ the complexities of the varying roles played in the wars of 1991-5 will be more possible. We persist with our long-term efforts to draw together and enhance the work of a

scattering of brave and visionary local groups and individuals in each of the three countries. Between them they are seeking to turn the tide by insisting on the importance of realistically revisiting the experience of violence of the 1990s. That will involve examining the parts that all communities played, to a greater or lesser degree, in the descent into chaos and bloodshed – together also with the little-acknowledged presence of pockets of innocence, bravery and common humanity on all sides. Part of what needs to be brought out is that a few people did their utmost to maintain human decency and refused to be drawn into the mounting hatred, insisting on finding ways to protest and, where possible, to assist their threatened neighbours, sometimes by tipping them off about coming dangers.

Fostering a climate of common recognition that those on the other side suffered too is long-term, delicate, behind the scenes work. The aim is to empower the local populations most marginalized by their particular suffering and denied any significance in social or public agendas, assisting them to achieve greater influence and recognition. These include the relatives of missing war victims in isolated localities; refugees and internally displaced people and former soldiers whose real experience of the cruelties of war has led them to reject the simple slogans of heroism which still sustain many of their former comrades and the wider population. The alienation of these different groups leads to the denial and blanking out of what needs to be addressed. Facing up to the messy, true complexity of things is a much rockier road but, ultimately, dealing with the past and bringing it into the public arena is part of the liberation of mind that some local people believe is necessary if they are to live more openly and creatively with their neighbours in the present and future.

Public processes towards truth and reconciliation are certainly desirable, but also controversial. And there is a big difference between this case and, for instance, that of South Africa, where a total change in the regime made possible the famous offer of immunity in exchange for truthful testimony. It enabled people to see this as a politically necessary compromise – part of the price of securing a negotiated, peaceful and complete handover of power. But in the post-Yugoslav situation there has been no real regime change. Mostly the same people as before, or their close allies, are still or newly again in power. For instance in Bosnia not only do each

of the parties currently in power represent an uninterrupted continuation of the same intransigent forces which prosecuted the war against one another but they are more or less secured in that position as the long-term consequence of the diplomatic settlement at Dayton, Ohio, in 1995. This accepted and reinforced the partition and mutually offensive and defensive positions of the leaderships of the respective ethnic communities. It disposes still fearful populations, reacting against the feeling of being blamed and humiliated by foreigners, to continue to look to often-bombastic models of physical strength for their protection at local level and to avoid supporting minority parties attempting to reach towards newer, more cooperative dialogue at state level. But the effect of leaving these parties untouched and also substantially in power is to deepen the humiliation and isolation of their remaining victims and to entrench the fragmentation of society in the longer term.

Given that the post-war settlements have so far cemented most of these realities in place, the job of those working to let in some light to an often threatening and rumour-ridden public arena requires courage, persistence, ingenuity, subtlety and a commitment to solidarity over the long term. We have four highly experienced representatives in the field, long-term workers for decency, peace and human rights with a deep and intimate knowledge of local realities – Goran Bubalo and Sladjana Rakonjac in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Goran Bozicevic in Croatia and Zorica Trifunovic in Serbia, who has joined the team since February.

Last year the staff in all three countries engaged in a thorough process of researching the perceptions of need relating to Dealing with the Past amongst different groups with a professed commitment to opening up the subject. Equipped with this knowledge, the staffs are now proactively engaged in working out the details of the educational and networking support that they can undertake with specific groups over the next three years and more. In Croatia last December and in Bosnia in March, they held major consultation meetings with some key respondents and others to develop their ideas and activities further.

In Serbia QPSW will co-organise a meeting in early summer with a group of young people aged 18-30 called Youth Initiative who are already committed to working on Dealing with the Past among the young, not only within Serbia, but within the wider region. One of the least known difficulties of the situation is that whereas you might expect most young people to be more accepting of a commitment to peace and reconciliation than their elders who were implicated in the violence, in fact the reverse is true. Recent experience has shown that it is often young people who are the most indoctrinated and the most active and vocal in violence and intimidation against minorities. Reaching them is a challenge which is more likely to be met by their contemporaries.

Enhancing the effectiveness of those committed to this work involves both working alongside them individually to help them develop their confidence, ideas and approaches, and bringing them together in local, country and regional meetings to exchange and develop their ideas, experience and expertise.

In July, QPSW will organise a regional meeting with young people from all three countries, to help to spread and strengthen the network. What we are learning is that these processes cannot be led from the centre. Though part of the overall aim is to foster regional reconciliation and cooperation, this is dependent on the central inclusion and leadership of those closest to the deepest personal loss and suffering, scattered and isolated in many different localities of each country – away from the capitals. We need, throughout, to help to keep the process of dealing with the past authentic by avoiding elite domination by well-heeled metropolitan intellectuals. Though the efforts of the latter have sometimes been well-intentioned, they are often the subject of deep mistrust from victims' groups and other small players. Part of our developing role is to work on trust-building between groups from different social strata who purport to be advancing the cause of dealing with the past but are too alienated from one another to be politically effective. By doing this work we hope step-by-step to improve cooperation and collaboration towards more effective and united action at country and regional levels.

Imagining a post-Solution Cyprus: the Gender Dimension

by 'Hands Across the Divide', Women's NGO

This statement was made by the women's NGO 'Hands Across the Divide' while the future of Cyprus was subject to tense negotiations, as leaders attempted a last-minute peace deal ahead of the Republic's accession to the European Union on May 1. In the words of the introduction to this statement: 'Women, who for thirty years were absent from political negotiations to reconnect Turkish Cyprus and Greek Cyprus, have their own ideas about why a 'solution to the Cyprus problem' is urgently needed, and the benefits peace might bring to everyday life on the island.' The Statement was delivered to all parties to the negotiations, including the United Nations.

The Annan Plan for Cyprus uses the words 'a new state of affairs'. What is intended is clearly a transformed relationship between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, one which, after many years of conflict, becomes: *equal, respectful, communicative and non-violent*. In this paper we put forward a thought never expressed by the entirely male teams of politicians negotiating peace: may we not at this self-same moment, when change is in the air for ethnic relations, call for 'a new state of affairs' in gender relations too? Could we not expect that relations between women and men in the future might also differ from the past, using these very same terms? Have we not a right to expect that our relations as women and men are every bit as *equal, respectful, communicative and non-violent* as relations between Turkish and Greek Cypriots (hopefully) will be? Would that not, of itself, help to bring about lasting peace?

Hands Across the Divide, like other groups in civil society in north and south Cyprus, have spent a great deal of our energies struggling for a 'solution to the Cyprus problem' that has continually eluded us. As 2004 approached, we thought: whether or not we get an agreement by the magic date of EU accession, let's set free our minds to leap over that moment, and imagine a future when peace is here at last. Situating ourselves firmly in that imagined future we asked ourselves concretely: what changes would we, as women, want it to bring? Gender change in a 'post-Solution' Cyprus

Hands Across the Divide is a group of women, living north and south of the Green Line and abroad, calling for a permanent peace, working for gender equality, and sharing the values of democracy, inclusion and non-violence. We are a women's organization by choice, because we share a perspective generally lacking in Cyprus: a 'gender perspective' that takes account of the realities both of women and men, the feminine and the masculine, and the relations between them. We feel such a viewpoint has something fresh to show us about the conflict, about Cypriot societies today, about the long-drawn-out peace process, and about the Cyprus that might follow from the signing of an agreement.

In all our Cypriot cultures a sharp dividing line has been drawn between the sexes, with contrasted roles and expectations for each. This has narrowed the scope for both women and men, brought about characteristic strengths and failings in femininity and masculinity, hindering communication between us. On gender differences, which we see as social rather than natural, have been built many inequalities and disadvantages for women. But we feel that men could also gain from gender change, for there are burdens as well as privileges in being the more powerful sex. Our wish is that the damaging differences and divisions of gender diminish, and that genuine partnership be enabled to grow. The following are some of the changes in gender relations we would like to see accompany an end to 'enemy' relations between Turkish and Greek Cypriots.

Constitution and law, policy and politics

A peace agreement for Cyprus will involve changes to the constitution and related structures, in the interests of co-operation between its peoples. That innovatory moment could be an opportunity for creative changes, also, on the gender dimension. The Constitution should

explicitly identify women and men, and stress equality between them. Laws and policies should be evaluated for their gender implications before they are introduced. Those who draft them should receive training in gender issues in their field, and be supported by gender-sensitive data and statistics.

We propose the establishment in our parliaments of a standing committee on gender equality, and likewise an administrative unit for gender issues in every ministry. In addition to these permanent bodies to assure long term change in gender relations, there should be immediate positive action measures to speedily overcome women's historic disadvantage and achieve parity of numbers and effective equality on decision-making bodies and in senior executive posts. Government funding to political parties should include incentives to nominate more women parliamentary candidates.

Women suffering discrimination on grounds of gender should have recourse to an equality *ombudsperson* and equality commission, with executive power to redress discrimination on grounds not only of gender but also of marital status, sexual orientation, age and disability, racial or ethnic origin, and religion or belief. We affirm the value of an umbrella organization for women's rights within the framework of which women's non-governmental organizations would be enabled to promote, monitor and implement programmes in the economy and other sectors.

Economy, employment and training

The importance of a gender perspective in economic policy is insufficiently recognized.

Globalization is bringing greater economic disparities, between and within countries. Although recent decades have seen a greatly increased participation of women in the labour market in Cyprus, with a consequent gain in women's economic autonomy, we are experiencing, as elsewhere in the world, a feminization of poverty, with many women employed in low-paid, part-time and sub-contract jobs, marked by insecurity, with a high incidence of unemployment.

In the spirit of 'gender mainstreaming' we call for the following measures. Action to increase women's participation in economic activity and to bring about a balanced representation of women and men in all sectors, levels and occupations of the labour market, with the

creation or expansion of institutional networks to support the career development and promotion of women. Implement equal pay with that of men for work of equal value. Programmes and policies to ensure that the role of women in reproduction and childrearing are not used as a basis for discrimination nor to restrict the full participation of women in society. Flexible working practices to promote the reconciliation of work and home life, with incentives to men to make use of parental leave and equalize roles in the home sphere.

Women should have equal access to education and training, with particular support for girls in the hitherto male dominated subjects of science, mathematics, new technologies (including information technology), and other technical subjects, especially those promising good careers in growth sectors. Women should have access to life-long learning, especially in rapidly changing information technologies, and in management, business and leadership skills, so as to empower them in the different stages of their lives. Support should be provided for women entrepreneurs, including credit schemes.

Security, militarism and violence

Armed conflict is not only a political issue but a women's issue. The people of Cyprus, and particularly women, have lived with the effects of violence and insecurity for decades. It has taken a heavy toll, not only in public life but also between individuals at a personal level, including in the relations of home and family. In HAD we detect a connection between gender-based violence at the personal level and the violence of armed conflict. There are clear links between the ideologies of militarism, patriarchy, nationalism and capitalism. Nationalist politicians and militaries need men to 'prove their manhood' by being willing to kill and die on behalf of the state. They need women to behave in ways required by patriarchal ideals: ready to offer up their sons and husbands in defence of the 'national interest'. As women, we want an end to these harmful tendencies.

We believe one reason peace has been so long in coming to Cyprus is that women and women's organizations, along with the rest of civil society, have, despite the explicit requirement of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, been excluded from peace negotiations. HAD, along with other women, have been deprived of the opportunity to introduce a feminist perception of

security – instead of the build-up of armaments for national ‘defence’, true human security, the guarantee of psychological, economic and social well being. Security for women means feeling safe not only from the threat of war, but from risk of harassment or violence, at home, at work and on the streets.

We long to see the decades-long militarization of Cyprus replaced by a culture of peace. An end to military conscription would make possible gentler forms of manhood for men and boys. All militaries, including the British bases, should be disbanded, land mines cleared, defence industries converted to civil production and the so-called ‘defence’ budget re-allocated to health, education, services for the elderly and more kindergartens for our children.

The police of both parts of the island should be under a civilian, local, authority, with women recruited in equal numbers and with equal status to men. Police officers should have gender training, in particular in sensitive handling of cases of domestic violence, rape and the abuse to which migrant women are vulnerable. Women should always have the right to speak to a woman police officer. Crime, including enforced prostitution and the drugs trade, must be treated as a serious social problem and offenders be brought to justice. The incidence of domestic violence is growing in both north and south Cyprus. We need to empower women to come out openly, talk about their experiences and seek redress.

The Reconciliation Commission for which the Annan Plan provides could be a significant mechanism for forgiveness and healing. Women’s groups such as HAD have a responsibility in such processes, as a space in which reconciliation can be fostered, among and between women of all ethnic ‘identities’ in Cyprus. The other side of the coin is that ‘reconciliation’ should and could be interpreted by the whole of Cypriot society as a process of bringing to light, speaking honestly about, and finally putting behind us (along with ethnic conflict) the oppression, inequality and violence that sadly, much too often, cast a shadow on relations between men and women.

The family, everyday life and the community

One of the most difficult sites of gender change is the family. The family is the most cherished

and valued institution in society, the place where we find love and affection, security and support. Yet, at the same time, it is the place where unfairness, oppression and even in some cases violence, are capable of hurting us most. We believe that while Cypriot society is engaged in the task of renewing democracy at the political level, designing a new system of governmental structures as part of a ‘solution’, we should boldly renew our expectations of ‘deep democracy’, a democracy that penetrates to the grassroots of society and includes democracy in marriage, household and family.

For instance, as women we want complete autonomy, free from pressure by religious, political or familial authority, over whether to marry and whom to marry, and over other life choices. A civil marriage ceremony should be available for all who prefer it. There should be no discrimination on grounds of being, or not being, married. Children on maturity should be free to decide for themselves whether to adopt a religion and to choose which it will be.

Unpaid domestic work and responsibility should be shared equally between women and men, with both partners having an equal chance to work or study. We call for full legal rights and more support from both state and society for single parents. Fathers must be required to honour their financial obligations towards children. The state should share the burden of care with the family, providing more day nurseries and after-school facilities to enable parents to work, and high-quality low-cost community care and residential homes for the elderly, disabled and ill.

The public spaces of our local communities must be cleared of barbed wire, rid of intimidation by military or civilians, and freed of official or police harassment to produce identification. Military land must be converted into spaces for recreation, so that our localities can flower as spaces of holistic education in which sport, culture, street and home life are all sources of mutual learning and development.

Education, media and culture

We live in an island that has symbolized love, a place of many cultures, but also an island of conflicts and wars. So many centuries – and now Cyprus is seeking ways of giving birth to herself with a new identity that will meld together all the people of Cyprus, whatever ethnic ‘name’ they carry, and (we would add) whether they are

women or men. We believe the value that should prevail above all others, in a post-peace Cyprus, is that of diversity. Embracing diversity is the key to solving our bitter struggles.

However, even though the physical fighting has stopped between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, collective memory continues to play a role in transmitting enemy images from one generation to the next, just as beliefs about contrasted and unequal gender roles are also transmitted to the young by the older generations. Fixed and intractable images of both kinds have become central to a sense of identity in Cyprus, blocking any possibility of a healthy relationship between the two communities or the two sexes. How can reconciliation processes create the dense network of partnerships and alliances for common goals that could transform destructive relationships between Cypriots into co-operative ones, whether on the dimension of ethnicity or of gender?

Education for diversity and equality is clearly fundamental to achieving a pluralist, multicultural and democratic society. Government departments and local authorities responsible for education should set up units with the specific responsibility of promoting education for equal and respectful citizenship and co-existence. They should pioneer multicultural, multilingual, non-sexist schools, and overhaul teaching materials to rid them, on the one hand, of racism and negative ethnic stereotyping, on the other hand of sexism and gender stereotyping. The history curriculum, in particular, in both south and north Cyprus, is imbued with nationalist bias. Besides, history is represented as men's stories told by men in a masculine voice. We wish to see the subject humanized, expressive of diverse viewpoints, and reclaiming women's hidden history.

Teacher training should openly address divisions of gender and sexuality, nationality, ethnicity, religion, colour and class, so that teachers are capable of acknowledging, welcoming and representing multiple and complex Cypriot identities in schools, colleges and universities. There should be a conscious element of conflict resolution in the educational process to address conflict in gender relations, family life, local communities and (at a national level) cultural and religious conflict, as well as tensions concerning the environment. Children and young people should be enabled, by both teachers and parents, to express their viewpoints on conflictual themes in the confidence of being heard respectfully, so as to foster empathy.

As a result of their ability to reach and influence large numbers of people, the media carry an immense power, either to deepen division and conflict, or enable a culture of peace. To counter the media's negative potential for escalating tensions, journalists (and through them their audiences) should be trained and encouraged to be more alert to the realities and sensitivities of 'the other' – whether this means the insufficiently heard voice of the ethnic 'other' or of women. Thus, media in all areas of the island should air the political and social realities of the various communities that live in it. They should encourage public discussion about conflictual issues, adopt a responsible in-depth and analytical approach to reporting them, state clearly the underlying and explanatory facts.

Too many media representations today purvey gratuitous violence and promote stereotypic roles for men and women, with women often sexualised, portrayed as passive and as victims. We wish to see more women in positions of influence and authority in both press and broadcasting, whether in decision-making, directing, production, news services or entertainment. The media can be influential in changing the use of language to suit new times – less sexist and militaristic for instance. We would like to see a 'watchdog' institution to register complaints against the media under anti-discriminatory laws.

Intellectuals and artists can play an important role both in building peace and creating a respectful and gender-equal society. It is their strength that through their work they can question and deconstruct those myths and traditions that exclude, marginalize or put down the ethnic or gender 'other', while through their imaginations creating more pluralist, inclusive myths and traditions for the generations to come. We would like to see the intellectuals and artists of both 'sides', and of both sexes, associating and working co-operatively in such a way as to shift the understanding of the others' life experiences, in exhibitions, poetry readings, dance, cinema festivals, theatre productions and many other cultural forms. These possibilities should be explored at local level in our communities, at national level in Cyprus, and internationally – where the people of Cyprus can make the island known as a centre of inclusion and of equality – in short, of peace.

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Conciliation Resources, London

Quaker Peace & Social Witness, London

Responding to Conflict, Birmingham

War Resisters International, London

Centre for Study of Forgiveness &
Reconciliation, Coventry

St Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and
Peace, London

International Alert, London

Charter19, London

Saferworld, London

International Fellowship of Reconciliation,
Alkmaar

Richardson Institute for Peace Research,
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Conflict Analysis and Development Unit,
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