

Civilian Movement for Ministries or Departments of Peace in the World

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Resumen

El 13 de mayo del 2008 Federico Mayor Zaragoza publicó un artículo en uno de los principales diarios españoles, *La Vanguardia*, titulado “Ministerios de Paz”. En el artículo puede leerse lo siguiente: “Con el nuevo milenio va extendiéndose, de forma que resultará imparabable en los próximos años, la fuerza de la razón, la conciencia del poder ciudadano que, pacíficamente, con firmeza, ya no se resigna a vivir sometido a los más arbitrarios designios del poder. La fuerza de la razón frente a la razón de la fuerza, guiada por los grandes valores universales y no por las leyes del mercado, para devolver a la humanidad las riendas de su destino. Es esta nueva ciudadanía la que será capaz de movilizarse, con firmeza pero sin violencia, hacia una cultura de la paz.”

¿Y qué ha hecho hasta la fecha esta “ciudadanía mundial”, además de poner en marcha movimientos civiles por la paz, para fomentar entre las instituciones políticas la cultura de la paz? He reunido información interesante de distintas fuentes que quisiera compartir. Lo haré en este orden:

–Qué han conseguido hasta el momento ciudadanos de todo el mundo con la creación de un movimiento internacional llamado Alianza Global por los Ministerios y Departamentos de Paz.

–Cuál es el significado de *cultura de la paz* (cuestión abierta a un debate posterior).

–Cuál es el significado de *Departamento o Ministerio de Paz* (cuestión abierta a un debate posterior).

Abstract

On the 13th of May, 2008, Mr. Federico Mayor Zaragoza¹ publishes an article in one of the mainstream newspapers of Spain: *La Vanguardia*, titled “Ministries for Peace”. In it he says:

“With the new millennium the force of reason is expanding in a way that seems unstoppable in these next years, the conscience of the citizens' power, that pacifically, but firmly, will give in to submission towards the arbitrary designs of power. The force of reason against the reason of force, guided by the great universal values and not by the law of market, to return to humanity the reins of its destiny.

It is this new citizenship that is capable of moving, with firmness but without violence, towards a Culture of Peace...”

What has this 'global citizenship' been doing, apart from the civilian movements for Peace, to spur the political institutions towards a Culture of Peace?

I have gathered some interesting information from various sources I would like to share.

The order of it will be the following:

– What has been done up to now by citizens around the world that have started a global movement called the *GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE*;

– What is meant by a Culture of Peace (for further discussion);

– What is meant by Department or Ministry for Peace (for further discussion).



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GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE

One notable example has been the coming together of citizens from all over the world to start a movement in London, in 2005, to ask their Governments for Departments of Peace.

The manifesto presented in the House of Parliament reads thus:

Declaration of the first people's summit for departments of peace

London, October 19th, 2005

Today, we announce the launch of an international initiative for the creation of Departments of Peace in governments throughout the world.

Violence of all kinds is increasing.

There is an urgent need to find responsible solutions, expanding on past and present peace building successes.

This international initiative will both provide resources and support for existing national Department of Peace campaigns, and assist new ones as they appear in other countries.

While the exact role of the department will differ in each country, its basic functions will be the same:

- To foster a culture of peace;
- To research, articulate, and help bring about non-violent solutions to conflicts at all levels; and
- To provide resources for training in peace building and conflict transformation to people everywhere.

We, the undersigned, joyfully vow to support and encourage each other, to share information, to enrich each other's experience, to listen to one another and

to celebrate our commonalities and differences in our journey together towards a culture of peace.

Signed by:

- Department of Peace, Australia
- Working Group for a Federal Department of Peace, Canada
- *Ministry for peace*, United Kingdom
- The Peace Alliance, Campaigning for a US Department of Peace, USA
- Delegation from Israel
- Binnie Degli Innocenti, WWGHM, Italy
- Federation of Damanhur, Italy
- Global Peace Campaign, Working for a Ministry of Peace in Japan
- Ank Mesritz, House of Peace, Netherlands
- Paul van Tongeren, European Centre for Conflict Prevention, Netherlands
- Zoughbi Zoughbi, WPAAM, Palestinian Conflict Resolution Centre, Palestine
- Romanian Department of Peace Initiative
- Jo Berry, Building Bridges for Peace, United Kingdom
- Rolf C Carriere
- Simonetta Costanzo Pittaluga - Spain

Since then there have been 2 more world summits, one in Canada and one in Japan. The calls are such:

Communiqué from the Second People's Summit for Ministries and Departments of Peace - Victoria, BC, Canada - June 19-22, 2006

The Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace gathered at Royal Roads University,

1 Federico Mayor Zaragoza (b. 1934 in Barcelona) is a Spanish scholar and politician. He served as General Director of UNESCO from 1987 to 1999. Through the Foundation for a Culture of Peace, created in Madrid in March 2000, under the patronage of the Department of Education of the Community of Madrid, Mayor continues the task he began as General Director of UNESCO: that of promoting the transition from a culture of violence and force to a culture of peace and tolerance.

Victoria, Canada, to advance the establishment of ministries and departments of peace in governments worldwide.

Government and civil society delegates from Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, India, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Palestine, Philippines, Romania, Solomon Islands, Spain, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, united to develop an effective global and national architecture for peace.

In plenary sessions and working groups, Summit participants established the foundations for local, national, regional, and international campaigns that will work towards conflict resolution and peace building.....

The Global Alliance calls upon governments of the world and civil society organisations everywhere to:

- Develop necessary resources and infrastructure for resolving conflicts effectively by peaceful means;
- Establish, train, and develop civil peace services, human resources, and capacities for peace building and conflict transformation;
- Incorporate conflict resolution and peace building into school curricula from primary schools through university;
- Actively engage youth, women, and all communities to participate as equals in peace building, to ensure participation and representation of all;
- Support and encourage coordinated efforts to gather lessons learned and best practices from peace building experiences around the world.

The Global Alliance is committed to partnership and cooperation with governments, organisations, and institutions nationally and internationally working for the achievement of these goals and the promotion of peace by peaceful means. Governments such as those in the Philippines and Solomon Islands, who have already established secretariats and departments for peace building, conflict transformation, and reconciliation, are pioneers and examples to the world.....

Communiqué - Japan Summit - September 25th, 2007

Summit Calls for Ministries and Departments of Peace in All Nations

The 3rd Global Summit for Ministries and Departments of Peace took place on September 21st-26th in Kisarazu and Tokyo, Japan. This extraordinary event began on the International Day of Peace and Global Ceasefire declared by the UN. It featured 21 country delegations*, representing both civil society and parliamentarians, from all five continents, including Nepal, which became the second country, after the Solomon Islands, to form a Ministry of Peace, and Rwanda, a country that experienced genocide in 1994.

The event was sponsored by the Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace numbering more than 25 countries and hosted by its Japanese member, Japan United for Ministry of Peace (JUMP)

Ministries and Departments of Peace are dedicated to creating a culture of peace within and between countries where the Ministers of Peace would meet to reduce violence and war through non-violent conflict resolution.

A main purpose of this Summit in Japan was to support the peaceful nature of the Japanese Constitution, now under review, and to advocate that all countries create peace constitutions.

Over the four days of the meeting, the Summit heard reports from each country, carried out a series of intensive training towards the formation of Ministries and Departments of Peace within their respective governments, and resolved to witness the creation of at least two more ministries by the next Summit, with Costa Rica as the most likely to declare. At the Summit the Africa Alliance for Peace emerged, initiated by delegates from Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda.

The Global Alliance calls for structures in governments and civil society that support a culture of peace, working together with all sectors in each country, especially youth, towards that goal.

*Countries represented were: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Costa Rica, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palestine, the Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, UK and the USA...

What we observe is a growing movement of citizens who ask for what is needed, at political, policy and institutional level, for a Culture of Peace.

WHAT IS MEANT BY A CULTURE OF PEACE?

An example of a simple analysis of the difference between Culture of Peace and Culture of Violence is reflected, simplified, in a paper presented by Martí Olivella, (of NOVA, Centre for Social Innovation of Barcelona, Spain, at the 3rd International Gathering For a Culture of Peace - March 27th, 2006 - Building Civil Peace Services - For a Civil Peace Service in Catalonia, Casa del Mar, Barcelona.):

From War Culture...	to Peace Culture in Catalonia (Spain)
Values	
If you want peace... prepare war (preventive)	If you want peace prepare peace (justice)
Construct peace with violent means	Construct peace with peaceful means
Fight against violence with violent actions	Fight against violence with non-violent actions
Violence as the final resource	Violence is not the solution
Eye for an eye: everybody blind	Love the enemy and do not legitimize his violence
Organisation	
Defence Act	Act for the Promotion of Peace (in Catalonia)
Ministry of Defence (of War)	International Peace Institute (in Catalonia)
General Staff Council	Council for the Promotion of Peace (in Catalonia)
Armed forces (soldiers)	Unarmed forces (civilians)
Military service (compulsory and/or professional)	Civil Peace Service (volunteer and/or professional)
Functions	
Armed defence of the Constitution (in Spain)	Mediation and transformation of social conflicts
Armed defence of the State	Civil defence of the nation
Armed intervention in international conflicts	Non-violent civil intervention in international conflicts
Infrastructures	
Military defence centres (military castles network):	Civil "defence" centres (Castles for Peace Network):
- Research centres	Research centres -
- Education and training centres	Education and training centres -
- Legitimization and propaganda centres (museums)	Legitimization and awareness-raising centres (museums) -
Current resources	
Armed Forces Professionals 2005: 70,000 (1)	Non-Armed Forces Professionals 2005: 0
Armed Defence global budget 2005: €16,000 million (2)	Non-armed Civil Defence global budget 2005: 0
Possible resources to start a long journey (transfer of 0.14 % by 2007)	
Professional Armed Forces 2007: 69,900 soldiers	Professional Non-Armed Forces 2007: 100 civilians
Armed Defence global budget 2007: €15,980 million	Non-Armed Civil Defence global budget 2005: €20 million

Submitted to the Consell Català de Foment de la Pau by Nova-Forces de Pau Noviolentes on March 1st, 2006 and adapted for the 3rd Meeting for Peace Culture, March 27th, 2006

1 According to La Vanguardia of February 19th, 2006. Of whom, 32,000 are heads and officers.

2 According to the website of Justícia i Pau (see table below). Rounded figure.

Another table appears in the article by Jean-Pierre Mfuni Mwanza “The case for establishing Ministries of Peace in Africa” - *Copyright 2006 -Distributed/ reprinted with permission by The Peace Alliance Foundation- www.peacealliancefound.org*

Table 1. Main characteristics of the two cultures

Culture of violence	Culture of peace
Belief in power that is based on force	Belief in dialogue to resolve conflicts
Having an enemy	Tolerance, solidarity, understanding
Authoritarian governance	Democratic participation
Secrecy and propaganda	Free flow of information
Armament	Disarmament
Exploitation of people	Human rights
Exploitation of nature	Sustainable development
Male domination	Equality of women and men

The possibility of finding many more comparative tables is possible, the question is:

Who will be responsible for implementing these visions into society?

WHAT IS MEANT BY DEPARTMENT OR MINISTRY FOR PEACE?

It is important to understand that in different countries and cultures and political backgrounds the Departments or Ministries for Peace will probably have different connotations.

It is also important to understand the basic difference of “Peace” as seen from the Military point of view, and Peace seen from the Civilian point of view: this difference is called Non-violence, and a Culture of Peace is implemented *Unarmed*.

The desire to see arms banned is probably not feasible at this historical moment, but we have to offer alternatives to ‘Armed Peace Missions’ by the military, we have to weave Non-violent Civilian Intervention as an option to Peace Missions, and we have to prove it, by sustained support to NGO and CSO initiatives, at the political and policy level.

These are some thoughts from different parts of the world on what Peace Ministries or Departments could be doing.

The idea I brought back with me from the First London Summit is resumed in the following extract

from the report I wrote for the Catalan Department of Cooperation and Development upon my return:

“...Departments/Ministries for Peace could offer an alternative from the perspective of a Culture of Peace, to Governments, when research, policy preparation, and implementation are needed.

These Departments/Ministries should have:

– Department of Continued Research and Archives open to all civil and Governmental initiatives;

– Department of Relations with the rest of the Ministries to be able to offer alternative information for their needs and decisions, from a Culture of Peace;

– Department of Relations with Civil organizations that are working in the field, acting in conflict zones, home and foreign, supporting their work with in-kind means and funds;

– Department of Management of projects for prevention, transformation and resolution of conflicts:

- Support Management of Humanitarian Aid,
- Support Management of Development,
- Support Management of Peace building, Peace making, Peace keeping
- Support Management of Civilian or Military Peace Corps (from training, to deployment, to follow-up upon return home);

– Department of Finances

*That would manage the 1% of State Budget (0,3 % for Culture of Peace and 0,7% for development, as proposed by a campaign in the Catalan Autonomous Region and supported by civilians around the world),

* That would have relations with the ethic Business World, to work on ‘Creative Capitalism’ together,

* That would work with the Ministry of Finances and Commerce to propose alternatives to economic policies, and controversial globalization;

– Department of Justice, ‘Restorative Justice’, to defend those who need it;

– Department of ‘Missions’ (Civilian, Unarmed and Non-violent);

– Department of Education and Media relationships.

* * *

Coming from the USA, this is an extract of “FROM A CULTURE OF VIOLENCE TO A CULTURE OF PEACE: THE CASE FOR MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS OF PEACE”, by Dorothy J. Maver, Ph.D., and Michael H. Abkin, Ph.D.

A Chapter in “Earthrise: The Dawning of a New Civilization in the 21st Century”, by Patrick Petit (Ed.).

.....*What would a Department of Peace look like and how would it work?*

Realizing that the road to real security is through sustainable peace (rather than other way around), the Department of Peace and Non-violence, headed by a Secretary of Peace, would have responsibilities to address the root causes of violence in both domestic and international arenas; to develop and promote peace education, including establishment of a Peace Academy; to encourage peace media; and to address the non-violent resolution of human security issues.

Imagine a Secretary of Peace at the cabinet level whose responsibility is to offer options and processes that point the way to potentially peaceful resolution of tension and conflict, thereby building more constructive relationships that lead to a culture of peace, with sustainability, justice, and cooperation on behalf of the common good.

Imagine a National Peace Academy on a par with the military service academies in the USA, where our military and civilian personnel will be supported with cutting-edge technology and peace building training.

Imagine the research, funding, and implementation throughout the country of programs that reduce conflict and prevent school violence, gang violence, youth violence, domestic violence of all kinds.

Specifically, internationally, the Department of Peace will stand side by side with and complement the work of the Defence Department -- for that matter, the State Department, too -- by researching, formulating, and bringing to the cabinet's table and to the National Security Council non-violent conflict resolution, peace building policy, and action options whenever international conflicts appear on the horizon or break out.

Further, the Department of Peace recognizes that our foreign policy can't project peace abroad unless we have peace in our hearts and daily behaviour at home, as well. For this reason, its scope is domestic as well as international. It will identify, spread the best practices already out there, and provide greatly increased financial support to programs addressing violence prevention at the root causes in such areas as restorative justice, domestic violence, child abuse, gang violence, school violence, hate crimes, and such.

Recognizing that a cultural change such as this requires education for peace from day one, the Department of Peace will support the spread of peace education and conflict resolution education in our schools as well as peace and non-violence study programs in our colleges and universities, and it will establish and operate a National Peace Academy to complement the military service academies."

* * *

From Canada, Saul Arbess, Co-chair of the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative (CDPI) saul.arbess@departmentofpeace.ca, www.departmentofpeace.ca, sent me the following Model they have elaborated:

PRELIMINARY MODEL OF MINISTRY OR DEPARTMENT OF PEACE, NOV. 2007

Overall Mandate: To Build a culture and architecture of peace at home and abroad by directing policy in the areas of peace and human security across government departments
Model of communication: Collaboration using NVC and related approaches; in relationship to other ministries, the minister might ask "How can we support the work you do?" and "Help my ministry to improve our way of working with you in achieving our mission."

- *Reviews areas of conflict domestically and between countries searching from the root causes of conflict utilizing the strategy of conflict transformation by peaceful means.*
- *Serves as an incubator of creative responses to conflict.*
- *Acts as a sensor of potential areas of violence and provides strategies for early non-violent intervention and mitigation of conflict.*
- *Strengthens and supports CSO initiatives at all levels.*
- *Trains and deploys unarmed civilian peace services as professional peace workers and trains with defence, military personnel in non-violent strategies in post conflict reconstruction.*
- *Promotes human rights and the rights of the child.*

Working with other ministries/departments

Education: *Peace education at all levels and university level peace studies.*

Military (Defence): *Supporting non-violent intervention and practices.*

Environment: *Mitigation strategies to reduce and respond to impacts of climate change where potential violence exists.*

Health: *Child development (the peaceful child); Holistic health care (the whole person).*

Justice: *Restorative Justice Practices (healing the harm); Forgiveness and reconciliation; Reduction of violence.*

Social and Economic Development: *Meeting basic human needs; Democracy building.*

Foreign Affairs: *Peace diplomacy; Disarmament and arms reduction; Renunciation of war; Human rights.*

Innovations

Commission on Peace and NGO forum for government oversight

Elders Council (non-partisan)

Civilian Peace Service

Peace Academy (as in the US Bill)

Academy for Peace (as in Costa Rica)

All Party Parliamentary Committee on Conflict Issues (as in the UK)

* * *

From Africa an interesting view is expressed by Jean-Pierre Mfuni Mwanza (*article cited on p.4*)

“...4. The tasks of a Ministry of Peace

During times of both peace and war, there is a huge amount of peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace building activity occurring at governmental, civil society, and individual levels. Given this, the tasks of a Ministry of Peace in building a culture of peace will include the following:

- *To publicise and encourage existing peace building activities. The Ministry will not take over existing initiatives but will make them known and provide support to help them expand and to be more effective.*

- *To encourage other ministries and civil society organisations to undertake new initiatives which will promote a culture of peace. Examples in the education sector will be the training of teachers in appropriate skills and ways of thinking about conflict; writing textbooks and developing curriculum materials in the areas of conflict resolution, non-violence, and peace; the establishment of peace studies as an academic discipline at universities; and organising student exchanges with neighbouring countries and between different regions of the country. Examples in the military sector could include the re-orientation of military forces to a ‘defence only’ capability.*

- *Where there is no obvious ministry or civil society organisation available for a task, to undertake initiatives itself. An example could be the establishment of a civilian peace building standby brigade, perhaps involving members from different countries, to offer assistance in case of natural disasters and in recovery efforts following armed conflicts*

- *To celebrate the accomplishments of peace. Suter (2004) argues that just as war has its heroes, so does peace, and these should be celebrated. There are often monuments in honour of military heroes and the new ministry should find ways of honouring the country’s peace heroes. In addition, national days are often celebrated with the high profile of armed forces, such as military parades. The Ministry would coordinate peace-related ways of celebrating its country’s national days*

- *Through the above and other means, to build widespread public acceptance and support for the ideals of a culture of peace. In undertaking these tasks, the ministry will pay particular attention to the means it uses.*

A central principle of the ministry will be to build peace by peaceful means.”

Conclusion is not such.

Much sharing and open minded approaches, and multicultural respect, needs to be had to make it a truly Global Initiative for a Culture of Peace.

There is still a need to do much work towards the understanding, the legislation for establishment, and the implementation of such an idea.

Especially, there is a need to inform of what is being done and keep the information flowing, as the technologies, now available, permit us to do.

It is interesting to know that Catalonia (Spain) has been one of the first nations to act upon the need of a Culture of Peace. The Law for Promotion of Peace was approved by the Catalan Parliament on June 25th, 2003, a Peace Council came of it; a law for a Civilian Peace Institute was presented in the Spanish Parliament in 2006 and is still being discussed; and a law for an International Catalan Peace Institute was passed in 2007, and for the World Day for Peace 2008, the Institutional Board was presented.

Happily, the idea is there, and I quote once again Jean-Pierre Mfuni Mwanza:

“The idea is new and utopian....

Establishing a Ministry of Peace in the country is a new idea; such a ministry has not been established in any country, there is no experience to draw from or model which can be followed and the sheer size of its task means that it may be ineffective.

But why should this stop an African government from establishing such a ministry? Ministries of the environment and women’s affairs were unheard of 30 years ago; now most countries have one or both. Having been created, they become an established fact of political life and develop a momentum of their own. It will require only one government to create a Ministry of Peace for others to follow.

“Eventually, what once was seen as purely utopian may come to be seen as practically possible and later even as conventional wisdom” (Suter 1984: 215).”

Why should anything stop such initiatives in our country... in all countries?!! ■

More information: www.mfp-dop.org