

The Global Mediation and Reconciliation Service

Launched by Virginia Swain at the Hague Appeal for Peace in May 1999, the Global Mediation and Reconciliation Service (GMRS) offers restorative and preventive peacebuilding through consultation and training services to develop Reconciliation Leaders to facilitate custom-designed interventions for global change.

The GMRS had its beginnings in a conference paper jointly prepared by Ms. Swain and Dr. Joseph Preston Baratta, who founded the Center for Global Community and World Law together.

The GMRS shares the **vision** articulated by the world's Nobel Peace Prize Laureates and approved by the UN General Assembly in many resolutions never as yet achieved: to create an international community committed to making peace through nonviolent means, Chapter 6 of the UN Charter.

This paper makes the case for an Executive Office of the UN Secretariat for Chapter 6 to provide resources to enact the Global Mediation and Reconciliation Service.

The **mission** of the GMRS is to create environments that promote peaceful coexistence. Leaders and peacemakers are mentored to heal the cycle of violence. The GMRS provides consultation, mediation, conciliation and training services for leaders ready to work on building strategic, cross-sectoral alliances to work through issues of violence. Its services are based on John Paul Lederach's theoretical and practical approach to reconciliation with three starting points: relationship building, encounter activities to express grief, loss and the anger that accompanies experiencing injustice, and innovative reconciliation techniques that exist outside the mainstream of international political traditions.

The GMRS grew out of nearly a decade of conflict resolution research and development undertaken by Ms. Swain. What is innovative about her approach is her emphasis on a collaborative process which involves and engages those most affected by the conflict to become stakeholders in the resolution. Her training to promote Reconciliation Leaders teaches emerging and seasoned leaders how to facilitate safe and empowering environments to resolve the complex problems of the 21st century and thus enable the world to acknowledge differences without violence.

Reconciliation Leaders are practical idealists and realists who offer a systems approach to leadership and peace building. Their approach grows from their personal mission, skill building, and a commitment to be at peace in themselves and in service to others. Reconciliation Leaders are committed to find balance among career, home life, and reflection time using a methodology to deal with the high level of stress in their own and in other people's lives.

At this important moment in our history, Reconciliation Leaders offer a compelling vision and broad world view. They support the commitment of their groups, institutions and the United Nations to providing reconciliation to respond to crises and challenges. They have the courage to refrain from advocating their own solutions to a problem, while eliciting solutions from the people who will live through those issues.

The learning methodology of Reconciliation Leadership provides personal, interpersonal, systemic and global competency building -- integrated with mission-focused training. Participant leaders learn new skills and develop their own mission statement with sensitive and skilled

guidance. The program is unique because it helps leaders tap their internal strengths to better promote peaceful resolutions to conflict. The approach has broad applications to family feuds, community and national disputes, and even global challenges. The methods learned are useful to professional and international peacemakers as well as anyone interested in creating a just, sustainable, multiethnic and intercultural world community. Participants are welcome from all sectors and may participate in the full program or take the program course by course. For more information, go to www.global-leader.org, click on upcoming.

Ms. Swain introduced a Peacebuilding Process of Reconciliation to Develop Political Will (PPR) at the “Celebration of the Children of the World,” an event she organized at the United Nations in 1992 to unite the UN community (NGOs, member states, international civil servants, UN agencies) beyond their sovereignty to build solidarity for the plight of street children. This event had the full support of UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali.

Presentations and implementations of the PPR since then have tackled such issues as peacemaking versus peacekeeping, racism and gender relations. For a complete list of implementations, go to www.global-leader.org.