

Fall, 2005



# Plowshares Institute Newsletter

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## Tsunami and Katrina: Calls for Reconciliation

The world's prayers and support went out to the victims of Katrina and Rita on the Gulf Coast. Americans were generous in supporting the victims of these natural disasters, as they were the December 26<sup>th</sup> tsunami that devastated Southeast Asia and East Africa. From the tsunami to Katrina acts of heroism, generosity, and service by agencies like Doctors Without Borders, the military, the Red Cross, and the Salvation Army plus individual volunteers across the world and nation are reassuring evidence that the common humanity that binds us together can again find tangible expression.

On the other hand, recent research reveals many instances of discrimination by race and class that surfaced in the aftermath of the Gulf Coast hurricanes, many of which reflect an institutionalized process of neglect for persons below the poverty line who are in most instances people of color. An example is the assumption that ordering an evacuation of New Orleans would allow people without the transportation or the financial capacity to respond. Meanwhile hundreds of public school buses stood idle and eventually were engulfed by the hurricane wave surge.

The many tragic structural divisions along race and class lines in the American society have been illuminated and exacerbated in the wake of these storms. While relief and reconstruction efforts remain underway, little has been done to address the underlying structural issues of poverty and racism.

As we consider the need for reconciliation in the Gulf Coast, the progress being made in addressing structural injustice in Indonesia following the devastating tsunami which killed over 130,000 and left 200,000 homeless is a helpful illustration. In Aceh, this disaster precipitated a renewed dedication by both the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) to bringing an end to a 30-year civil war. On August 15, 2005 both parties signed a peace accord ending hostilities and opening the door for true and long-lasting reconstruction to take place in Aceh. However, the official ending of hostilities is only the beginning.

Plowshares has been asked by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY)



*Bob Evans (middle) meets with Indonesian President, SBY (left) and Director General for the Protection of Human Rights, Hafid Abbas (right).*

and Vice President Kalla to join with the Ministry of Law and Human Rights in Indonesia and the Crisis Center of the Faculty of Psychology of the University of Indonesia in shaping and leading a post-tsunami and post-civil war program of reconciliation, empowerment, and healing. This program will equip over 2,400 people from all sectors of society including former GAM combatants in skills of trauma healing, human rights, and conflict intervention. By investing in Aceh's human capital and building new coalitions around common goals, this program has the potential to make a significant contribution to the development of a post-conflict reconciliation model not only for Aceh, but for the Gulf Coast and the world.

Plowshares will spend the next two years supporting Indonesian and Acehnese trainers in coordinating and implementing 12 workshops to equip "trainers of trainers" to disseminate the skills in trauma healing and conflict intervention to the wider Acehnese society. We believe that this program has the same capacity to bring healing and transformation to Aceh as did our program in South Africa which helped a nation divided by history, race, and wealth transition to an inclusive and democratic nation.

Thus, while we mourn for the lives lost and the devastation caused by these disasters, we rejoice in the steps Indonesia has taken to transform its own disaster into a model of reconciliation not only for the Islamic world but for all of us. We pray that Katrina will similarly be seized as an opportunity to examine and address the many structural injustices of American society.

## Emerging Programs in Mainland China

This past May staff members Bob and Alice Evans and Yanyan Yip, a colleague from Plowshares' Hong-Kong based partner, Civic Exchange, spent a week in China focusing on the potential of consensus-building and conflict transformation to address conflicts fueled by income disparity. Along with land grabs and environmental degradation, the growing gap between the poor and non-poor is seen as one of the major causes of increased numbers of demonstrations and violent confrontations throughout China.

Plowshares' hosts for this visit were the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, and the Chinese government department of Comprehensive Social Management under the Division of Law. Yanyan and the Evans conducted a pilot workshop on the basic principles of conflict transformation in Nanjing and consulted with members of the Academy of Social Sciences and the Department on Comprehensive Social Management in Jiangsu Province. The pilot project was well received and led to an invitation to continue this training in April, 2006 with representatives from several cities in Jiangsu, China's most prosperous province. Interviews during this visit also led to the development of two new Chinese case studies which will be used in peace skills training in Mainland China.

This emerging peace skills program builds on several previous confidence-building sessions between Plowshares staff and members of the Academy of Social Sci-



*Plowshares staff members with Nanjing workshop participants.*

ences and other government officials. The Jiangsu Academy of Social Sciences is developing a process for the translation of Plowshares' *Peace Skills for Community Mediators* and the *Peace Skills Leaders Guide* into Mandarin Chinese, in cooperation with the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.

Plowshares staff also spent two days with colleagues at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences exploring the role of religion in the delivery of social services in China. These conversations led to an invitation for Plowshares to conduct training in conflict transformation for the social work department. Plowshares is honored by the trust of our Chinese hosts to join with us in developing a working agenda over the next several years.

This program initiative is partially supported by a presidential discretionary grant to Plowshares from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

## Plowshares Honors Douglass Lewis' 25 Years of Service as Board President, Welcomes Abigail Turner as New Board President



*Abigail Turner (left) shares stories of Douglass Lewis' (right) leadership of the Plowshares Board during the past 25 years.*

At the October 2005 board meeting, the Board honored Douglass Lewis, Plowshares Board President of 25 years, and Former President of Wesley Theological Seminary for his faithful service. In a ceremony full of fond memories and gifts of appreciation, the Board celebrated Lewis' leadership and vision. Douglass will remain a member of the board.

Abigail Turner, Litigation Director for the Legal Aid Society of Minnesota, has become the new Board President.

Plowshares thanks both Douglass and Abigail for their commitment to Plowshares vision of a just global community.

## Addressing the Roots of Terrorism: An Indonesian Update

Plowshares is entering the third year of a South/South program between Indonesia and South Africa on “Human Rights, Democracy, and Conflict Transformation: Addressing the Roots of Terrorism.” Plowshares’ 30 years of experience in South Africa and more than 10 years working in Indonesia provide a base for this program co-sponsored by Plowshares and the Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights.

Plowshares’ consultant in the project is the Jakarta-based Center for Empowering Reconciliation and Peace. This past August the Center’s director, Judo Poerwowidagdo, Alice Evans and Bob Evans conducted a week-long in-country training and orientation for the third team of 20 senior Indonesian government, academic and civic leaders in Jakarta. Many of the delegates had little previous experience with mediation and several have never traveled outside of Indonesia. The third delegation, drawn from 10 different Indonesian provinces (equivalent to US states), will experience a dialogue and strategic planning visit to South Africa from November 13-27<sup>th</sup>.

This year’s delegation includes a number of lawyers who head provincial (equivalent to “state”) human rights law offices. One of their significant challenges



*Seminar participants explore structural power relationships in this interactive portion of the in-country training.*



*Third team of Indonesian participants in the joint Plowshares/Ministry of Law and Human Rights project receive training in Jakarta, Indonesia*

is to “harmonize” international and national Indonesian human rights laws with local customary laws, many of which are based on ancient tribal customs incompatible with internationally accepted norms. The careful work of South Africa’s Constitutional Court and Human Rights Commission offers constructive guidelines for balancing national and local legal structures. The November South Africa seminar will also focus on mediation programs within the prison system and intensive training on diversity management for the delegates with Plowshares’ South Africa partner Craig Arendse, Director of Mediation Transformation Practice.

Also during August the Evans continued to work closely with Dr. Hafid Abbas, Director General for the Protection of Human Rights and co-director of the South-South program, and with the alumni of the first two delegations to South Africa. The Indonesian “action plans” developed by these first two teams in response to their training, dialogue and strategic planning in South Africa are both impressive and extensive. They have initiated action plans in more than half the provinces in Indonesia. Their topics focus on a broad range of human rights education, protection, and advocacy issues for women, children, labor, refugees and prisoners. These teams have also formed the Indonesian Human Rights Association which has met several times for mutual support, sharing of creative approaches, and future planning.

## Plowshares Launches Reconciliation Dialogue Project with Presbyterian Promise



Presbyterian Promise, an organization related to The Presbytery of Southern New England, and Plowshares Institute are working together to transform some of the Church's most divisive conflicts into new understandings and new capacities to communicate and empathize, with the goal of fostering a more reconciling Church. Plowshares is bringing its background in dialogue and conflict transformation to work with the Reconciling Dialogue Project of Presbyterian Promise to build constructive dialogue and inclusive policies in congregations for gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender people.

Reconciling dialogue from a faith perspective is at the core of Plowshares' ministry, as is working with congregations and communities to use the energy of conflict to create new understandings and relationships. This project involves (1) strengthening the capacities for reconciliation and dialogue of the board members of Presbyterian Promise and gays and lesbians and their allies and

family members; (2) developing support networks among these communities; and (3) the design and facilitation of a state-wide pastor's workshop to encourage constructive dialogue and reconciling skills to address problems that divide the Church such as Biblical Authority, gender and sexual orientation in order to provide better pastoral care for all those within the churches of the Presbytery of Southern New England.

This pilot program also provides an opportunity to develop a model for reconciling dialogue in other faith communities in the United States around highly controversial topics. Plowshares will also staff a workshop on "Becoming Agents of Reconciliation for Congregations and Communities" scheduled for Ghost Ranch July 17<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006 dealing with the results of this pilot and discussion of sexual orientation, biblical authority, and family values as issues polarizing our churches.

## Democracy and Development in Indonesia

By: Eliza Linley



*Plowshares Delegation meets with Dr. Hafid Abbas, Director General for the Protection of Human Rights in his offices in Jakarta*

In August of 2005, Plowshares sponsored a traveling seminar to Indonesia to learn more about the goals and challenges of this emerging democracy. Thirteen of us arrived in Jakarta on August 3 and spent two weeks in Java and Bali meeting with government leaders, academics and clergy. We met with three cabinet level ministers, the American ambassador, a seminary dean and two university presidents as well as a whole host of professors, business people, NGO representatives, staff and students. To a person, we found the Indonesian people to be friendly and welcoming. The barrier of formality that one sometimes finds in other Asian countries is completely absent in Indonesia. Hospitality, open access and friendly, frank discussion are hallmarks of the New Indonesia.

All this informality belies Indonesia's status as a major player on the world stage. With the world's fourth largest population, the third largest democracy, a significant Christian minority and more Muslims than in all of the

Middle East, Indonesia is in a unique position to model successful pluralism and be a broker of peace to the world. The current government and Indonesia's president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, have a powerful vision for Indonesia's future based on democracy and human rights.

But it remains to be seen if this vision can overcome the crushing burden of poverty Indonesia faces, as well as a lack of education, poor public health and habitual, entrenched corruption at every level. While Indonesia is rich in natural resources, the direct foreign investment that might drive the economy is hampered by these chronic problems along with a climate of social unrest and the threat of terrorism.

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## An Update on Plowshares US Cities Program Plowshares Seeds Grow in Great Varieties

Following a model developed in South Africa from 1992- 1994, Plowshares staff worked with community leaders in nine US cities to develop multi-ethnic, multi-cultural networks able to build constructive relationships among neighborhoods and government agencies. The model involved a minimum of three rounds of basic training in “peace skills” followed by advanced mediation and “training of trainers.” Each of the workshops had a broad variety of some 40 different community leaders who worked with other colleagues in their city to shape a sustainable program unique to their own context. Several of the current city programs have a central coordinator and depend on volunteers to staff community mediations and workshops. Plowshares’ staff continues to be encouraged by the variety of programs which trace their origin to The Cities Program:



**Wichita, Kansas** The work of the Community Mediation Service (CMS), based at Wichita State University, is coordinated by the Chair of the Board of Directors, Floyd Hansen. Floyd and his CMS co-founder, Ken Short, the acting director of the Wichita Mediation Center, have placed a special emphasis on community policing. At Plowshares’ request, Floyd sent a recent up-date of CMS programs.

CMS was recently afforded the opportunity of training on- the-street police officers in basic mediation skills. The project was underwritten by the Regional Community Policing Training Center, Department of Community Affairs, at Wichita State University. Trainees, 132 officers in all, attended one-day sessions at training sites in Wichita and Goodland, Kansas and in Omaha and North Platte Nebraska.

The one-day curriculum drew heavily from case files and experiences in community oriented policing. Based on evaluation responses, the sessions were judged to be both focused and timely. Participants were given certificates by the Regional Community Policing Training Center. Follow-up local and regional resources were offered at each training site.

**Los Angeles, California** Christians Empowering for Reconciliation and Justice (CERJ) is now directed by Dennis Westbrook who was part of the original training team for LA-CERJ and served on the staff of the Los Angeles Human Rights Commission. A conversation with Dennis indicates that CERJ has now trained more than 1,250 people in skills of community conflict transformation. CERJ has a special focus on faith-based organizations in the greater LA area. It has also worked with a number of public schools on issues of racial diversity.



In its early years CERJ, directed by Michael Mata and Kathleen Chuman, was lodged at the Urban Leadership Institute of Claremont School of Theology. As of this Fall CERJ is formally related to Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena and will be conducting training in conflict transformation with field education students at the Seminary. The CERJ Board and partners continue to apply their skills in various areas with a strong body of volunteers who work with churches, schools, communities and court systems.



**Hartford, Connecticut** The initial Plowshares-sponsored workshops led to the formation of the Center for Conflict Transformation in Hartford (CCTH). The Center is directed by former PI staff member, Margaret Steinegger Kaiser. The program is sponsored by and housed in the offices of the Christian Activity Council located in Hartford. CCTH serves the community in several ways including the training of new Hartford police officers through the police academy and other educational events for community policing programs. Margaret also works with educational institutions in Hartford, training young people in conflict transformation. CCTH has contributed annually to an international program sponsored by the YMCA and NCCJ which brings together Israeli and Palestinian young people in the United States. Margaret and CCTH volunteers also provide mediation services for a variety of clients. In addition to fees for service, CCTH is funded by Connecticut-based foundations.



## **CHINA and HONG KONG (SAR)**

### **Transition and Democracy: Human Rights, Economics, and the Role of the Church**

**May 22 – June 5, 2006**

*Plowshares Institute, Columbia Theological Seminary, and Hartford Seminary* are co-sponsoring this traveling seminar to Hong Kong and mainland China. The seminar will examine leadership changes in China, renewed global engagement with the US and North Korea, and the world's most robust economy. We will also consider issues of democracy, human rights and the role of religion in China. Unique to this seminar will be personal dialogue with senior government, civic and religious leaders in Hong Kong and mainland China.

Participants will visit Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, as a stimulating complement to life in mainland China. Our hosts in Hong Kong will address political and economic changes and dramatic moves toward greater democratic participation. In mainland China the group will meet with religious, government, and education leaders in Shanghai, Beijing, and Nanjing (Jiangsu Province). As guests of the Jiangsu International Cultural Exchange Center and Nanjing Union Seminary, the group will anticipate meeting with Bishop K.H. Ting, representatives of the Church in China, and academic and government leaders who will share their views on China's transition. The delegation will also visit renowned cultural sites such as the Great Wall, Tian'anmen Square, and the Forbidden City.

Seminar leadership will be provided by the **Rev. Dr. Robert A. Evans**, Executive Director of Plowshares Institute, and Chinese colleagues in Hong Kong and Mainland China.

## **Democracy and Development in Indonesia (Continued from page 4)**

The current government is well aware of the problems. Yet we came away with the impression that these leaders remain undeterred and committed to the promotion of human rights, the reduction of poverty, and better access to education and health care for all Indonesians. The organizing principle for this vision of democracy is the socialization of human rights. Drawing on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Indonesia has crafted a model of social organization that covers most areas of society. Implementation of this model is a huge and unprecedented undertaking which the new government is just beginning. The Directorate General for Human Rights is charged with disseminating this national action plan through its 70,000 employees in offices throughout the country.



*Indonesia's Children ask for peace*

Indonesia is also on the front lines of the global issue of religious pluralism. In this democracy with an 85% Muslim majority, the government remains committed to religious diversity despite considerable pressure to form a Muslim state. This is one of several factors in the separatist movements the government contends with in Aceh, Ambon, Papua and elsewhere. For the United States, however, Indonesia's commitment to secular democracy and human rights makes it a promising gateway to the Muslim world.

In short, this is a very exciting time to be in Indonesia. There is a sense everywhere that the nation is not on the cusp, but in the midst of structural change. This creates tension as well as hope. What will become of the poor, the illiterate, the religious minorities that face persecution? Will the National Action Plan for Human Rights be ultimately successful, or become mired in the corruption and strife which have plagued Indonesia since colonial days? To remain positive in the face of enormous challenges, the weight of history, and global skepticism – this is the very definition of hope. We saw it everywhere in Indonesia, from visionaries at the highest levels of government to ebullient first year university students. Indonesia is a young country, both in the composition of its population and its status as an emerging nation and potential world power. With help from more established democracies, Indonesia may be able to fulfill its promise. Enlightened self-interest suggests that we would do well to be the good friend that Indonesia deserves.

## Local Training Opportunities

### **Becoming Agents of Reconciliation in Denominations, Congregations, Communities, and Families** Ghost Ranch, New Mexico, July 17-22, 2006



*High desert country in Ghost Ranch, NM*

In the face of growing conflicts within our congregations, our communities, and our nation, many of which have been highlighted in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, this seminar will focus on developing skills and sharing insights for becoming more effective agents of reconciliation. For the Church to address conflicts in church and society, congregational leaders need to develop the capacity to constructively and creatively facilitate dialogue within their congregations, denominations, and communities on controversial issues.

This ecumenically based course will help participants develop skills to constructively engage one another on controversial issues dividing the church such as sexual orientation, interpretation of scripture, cross-cultural conflict, and family values and relationships. This calls for skills of listening, conflict analysis, empathic identification with others, mutual problem solving, and strategies for facilitation. The instructors and special resource persons will apply their experience and skills to provide concrete examples of addressing these types of conflict. The course will use a resource developed by the leaders when working in South Africa. *Peace Skills for Community Mediators* which includes spiritual, moral, and cultural resources to promote understanding of conflict and to develop constructive approaches to addressing the differences that divide us. The seminar leaders will draw on extensive U.S. and international work as mediators and trainers in peace-building skills to address controversial topics.

For additional information see Plowshares' website: [www.plowsharesinstitute.org](http://www.plowsharesinstitute.org)

**Course Leaders:** Rev. Dr. Robert A. and Prof. Alice Frazer Evans, Plowshares Institute, Connecticut and Center for Conflict Resolution, South Africa.



### **Becoming Agents of Reconciliation in Congregations, Communities, and Countries: Lessons from the United States, South Africa, and Indonesia** Hartford Seminary, Connecticut, June 19-23, 2006

This course will use case studies of conflict in congregations, communities, and nations to help pastors, educators, and lay-leaders develop skills to become agents of reconciliation. We will explore the biblical and theological theme: "Empowering for Reconciliation with Justice." Participants will be equipped to promote constructive dialogue in conflicted congregations and communities on controversial issues from homosexuality to mission priorities. The Evans and Bishop Verryn will draw on their experience in South Africa, Indonesia, and the United States in promoting a culture of human rights and reconciliation. The training in conflict transformation will be drawn from the *Peace Skills for Community Mediators*, a manual and leaders guide written by the Evans.

**Faculty:** **Robert A. Evans**, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics and Executive Director, Plowshares Institute. **Alice Frazer Evans**, Adjunct Professor of Theology and Ethics and Director of Writing and Research, Plowshares Institute. The Evans are both Senior Fellows at the Centre for Conflict Resolution at the University of Cape Town, South Africa and Senior Trainers for the Center for Empowering for Reconciliation and Peace in Indonesia. **Paul Verryn** is the Bishop of Johannesburg for the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, a counselor, and an authority on HIV/AIDS and immigration issues. He is the Director of the theological college in Soweto and is a Professor of Bible, Theology, and Ethics.

Contact Hartford Seminary, 860 509-9500, for an application form or additional information



Matthew Bennett, Plowshares Special Advisor for Strategy, Planning, and Operations

## Plowshares Welcomes New Staff Member Matthew Bennett

Plowshares welcomes our newest staff-member, Matthew Bennett. Matthew is responsible for strategic planning to strengthen our organizational impact and plan for Plowshares future, in addition to fundraising, producing “marketing” materials, and coordinating Plowshares website and other technology. Prior to joining Plowshares as a full-time member of the staff, Matthew worked as an intern in 2003 to help strengthen Plowshares funding and program strategies and as a staff member in 2004 to help deepen the impact of Plowshares programs and future directions.

Matthew is a graduate of Duke University where he studied Public Policy at the Sanford Institute with a focus on non-profit management and international development. During his tenure with Plowshares, he has co-facilitated workshops in Uganda, Zimbabwe, New Mexico, and Cuba. Formerly, Matthew has worked with Equal Share, Inc., a non-profit economic relief agency in Harlem where he currently holds a seat on the steering committee. Additionally, he has studied and lived abroad in the Dominican Republic, Uganda, and the Netherlands.

## Plowshares Continues Cuban Initiative

In early November Bob Evans and Matthew Bennett conducted a workshop on conflict transformation and peace-building in Cárdenas, Cuba for the Center for Reflection and Dialogue of the Cuban Council of Churches. The 35 participants represented the Cuban Council of Churches, a variety of denominations, as well as local civic leaders. This session involved a training of trainers workshop with six participants from previous workshops to enable wider dissemination of peace building skills in Cuba.

The training led to the development of a strategy for training in conflict transformation for church and civic leaders including a focus on women and youth. We are exploring with a newly established steering committee and a partnership with the Center and Plowshares that will plan for subsequent rounds of training in Cuba.

Several new Cuban case studies are in the process of being edited and the Spanish translation of *Peace Skills for Community Mediators* has been an essential component of our continued work in Cuba.



Workshop Participants role play a case study on congregational conflict

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***Cultivating Peace for a  
Just Global Community***