

Proposal for a Catalanian Civil Peace Service

Civil Peace Services

An alternative to armed intervention in violent conflicts

“Wars do not solve anything, rather they complicate everything. War or any form of violence, spontaneous or organised, is no way to solve conflicts. Victory achieved with violence does not lead to true peace, full and lasting. A change needs to be made and decisive steps taken to establish and maintain peace through peaceful means.”

There are other alternatives to military intervention to create peace in the world

The response of millions of people around the world against the war in Iraq paved the way for the use of alternative methods that promote peace using peaceful means, such as the creation of civil peace forces and bodies. These are unarmed and non-violent, capable of effectively intervening in the resolving of conflicts, without any worries about them being occupation forces.

War leave societies unstable

A conflict does not end when, after a lengthy and complex negotiation, a ceasefire is called or a peace agreement is signed. A helpless, conflicting, traumatised and unstructured society is often left behind that will survive with difficulty. Even the smallest incident can trigger off and reawaken the conflict.

It is essential to strengthen the peace process and reconstruct the socio-political structure

In addition to helping countries coming out of an armed conflict to rebuild their infrastructure and provide for basic requirements, it is also necessary to help them rebuild the socio-political structure of the country by reactivating or adapting the administrative, social, political, judicial, legislative and economic systems, etc. This social reconstruction needs to be carried out in cooperation with local organisations. This will maximise the existing potentials in the civil society, strengthening these organisations and increasing the training of local specialists in the maintaining of peace, non-violent means of dealing with conflicts and the recuperation of the social and political coexistence of the country.

Only with stable peace is it possible to develop cooperation policies

In order to effectively and safely carry out humanitarian aid, co operational development, and human rights promotion projects, a stable and peaceful situation is required at the very least. In the same way that expert bodies are needed in natural or man-made disaster situations, it is necessary to establish expert bodies to prevent and transform violent conflicts and to protect human rights. The ever-increasing role that the civil society is playing on behalf of people, associations and NGOs from all over the world in this field makes it necessary to organise this potential of resources more efficiently.

Effective assistance requires combined intervention of organisations

In order to cooperate with countries subject to violent conflict, a combined action between local organisations and external ones can be arranged (humanitarian aid, development, human rights protection and transformation of conflicts). This allows a greater and more objective perspective and more rational and coherent planning of respective projects, avoiding underhanded behaviour or neglected aspects. Many NGOs agree that a greater

degree of coordination and cooperation will help to increase the effectiveness of civilian deployment in situations of conflict.

International organisations require an increase of civilians in peace interventions

The demand by the EU, the OSCE and the UN for skilled civilian personnel for their peace missions is growing. This indicates that in the future the emphasis will be on the intervention of civilian organisations in the *prevention and management* of violent conflicts. Currently, however, there is no coherent system in place to recruit and train these people to make them available to these bodies or the hundreds of NGOs that work in this field.

The creation of a Civil Peace Service is a both a requirement and an opportunity

Facing up to violent conflicts is an urgent priority that requires considerable investment of civilian and military resources. Areas in conflict, however, do not always want a military mission to keep the peace. The arrival of an international military presence in a country that has already been traumatised by soldiers causes distrust and fear.

Military forces alone cannot prevent or resolve a conflict satisfactorily. Military personnel are being used more and more in humanitarian roles and in other roles that could be better managed by civilian specialists. They could carry out the work more effectively and be more accepted in the country than military contingents.

Training and deploying more civilians to carry out these functions will free up military resources and allow them to be dedicated exclusively to tasks that are suitable and correspond to their training and function.

In many cases official diplomacy and second level diplomacy are not sufficient, and additional and independent action is required from external organisations. These can carry out regular and sustained work directly on the ground, in collaboration with local peacekeeping bodies, which reduces the possible negative impacts of external intervention.

The project to create a **Civil Peace Service** is an opportunity and a key step to achieve real changes in governments' and civil societies' understanding of how to face up to armed conflicts. It is an opportunity to illustrate the necessity and the value of creating a body of stable and professional non-violent peacemakers. This would allow the reinforcement of democracy and of local independence for people that suffer the hardship of war, while acting with the utmost respect for cultural, religious and ethnic diversity

For some time now, social and other government organisation have existed in many countries. They have built up vast experience and a valuable obligation and are dedicated to preparing and training civilians to intervene in armed conflicts.

Non-government entities

EN-CPS – European Network of Civil Peace Services with 34 organisations in 22 countries: Austria, Belarus, Catalonia, Chechnya, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Norway, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United Kingdom.

NP - Nonviolent Peaceforce made up of 93 organisations from all continents.

Government institutions

Several European countries have created or are in the process of creating **Civil Peace Services** to improve their own ability to recruit, train and deploy civilian personnel.

GERMANY Civil Peace Service (since 1999)

- Founded in 1999 as an association between the government and non-governmental organisations as an important tool of German cooperation policy. Subsidized by the central government with 14 million euro annually and managing both development services and peace organisations.

SWITZERLAND Peace Team Forum (since 1994)

- The Foreign Office studies its effectiveness.

FRANCE Civilian Peace Service (since 1995)

- First civil peace service, for ground work, sent to Kosovo in 2001.

ITALY White Helmets (since 1999)

- The study of its viability was financed by the Ministry for Defence.

HOLLAND Civil Peace Teams (since 1995)

- Four week training courses for peace workers, with soldiers and politicians who collaborate on these courses.

AUSTRIA Civil Peace Service (since 1993)

- Financed by the Austrian Home Office, managed by an association of NGOs.

NORWAY Norstaff and Nordem (since 1991)

- Financed by the Norwegian Foreign Office, managed by independent NGOs.

UNITED KINGDOM

- Civilian platform that has not yet received any institutional support

The Civil Peace Service (CPS) explained

The CPS consists of organizations managed by civil associations and/or official institutions. Their objective is to create civil intervention teams, which stay in crisis zones or areas where there is an armed conflict. The teams aim to apply established non-violent strategies in an efficient and non-partisan way in order to safeguard human rights, to reduce violent incidents and to provide an environment for the fair and peaceful resolution of conflicts. The teams are composed of competent, well-trained men and women of varying ages who either have experience or are experts in the fields of conflict transformation and prevention and the creation of peace.

Its mission

To provide an alternative to military intervention so that for all those involved fair and sustainable peace can be achieved. By employing non-violent methods and strategies, which have proved effective, death and destruction can be prevented and human rights protected. In this way, the right conditions are set for local and external groups who work

for peace and to improve dialogue, and they can safely look for a peaceful solution to conflict.

Objectives

- To help avoid, reduce or completely end violence, and build on the establishment of a just and lasting peace for everyone involved.
- To protect those who are trying to turn the country where they live into a peaceful society, particularly when it is dangerous to be associated with peace campaigning.
- To cooperate, provide support and training to local organizations that work for peace and to resolve conflicts in their country. To insure that the peace process is sustainable and that it will continue to develop.
- To facilitate communication when dialogue has failed and when direct negotiation between local groups has proved impossible.
- To get to the root causes of the conflict by readjusting the imbalance in political, social economic and cultural opportunities, and direct a peaceful conciliation of each side's needs.
- To promote relations, understanding and reconciliation by bringing together belligerent groups. To strengthen existing proposals for peace agreements and the preservation of peace.
- To encourage the restoration of a strong, organized and democratic civil society whilst offering material, technical and moral support in order to help local representatives manage the process.

The military, the police, humanitarian and development agencies, government and non-government organizations are all needed to in order to combat violent conflict. Inevitably the work of each group overlaps one another, yet there is not one body that exists that can work independently and effectively to do all that is needed.

The military

Deals with destabilizing elements

Separates warring factions

Negotiates with military forces

Patrols borders

Disarms

Removes mines

Organizes troops

The police

- Trains police forces
- Reforms the police
- Guarantees the law
- Provides crowd control
- Maintains public order
- Investigates criminal activity
- Works on community relations

Humanitarian Agencies

- Provide logistic support
- Distribute food aid
- Provide a water supply
- Transport and aid
- Reconstruction
- Urgent medical attention
- Construct refugee camps

Peace Organizations

- Provide psychological support
- Elections
- Human Rights
- Provide escorts
- Independent media coverage
- Reintegration
- Training
- Mediation
- Reconciliation

Development Agencies

- Provide education
- Health services
- Social welfare
- Agriculture
- Infrastructures
- Government
- Civil society
- Community finances

The above is just a small sample of the variety of work that goes on in the field of conflict management, which is continually being developed. In addition to the UN agencies, the OSCE and other government organizations, there are more than 400 international NGOs who work on an impressive range of projects in conflict zones throughout the world.

The resolution of violent conflicts through civil collaboration

The nature of the Civil Peace Service's work in a conflict zone is varied and substantial, and for this reason they require not only experts in the field of conflict management but also experienced and trained individuals who come from many

different professional fields. They can play an important role by giving support to local people and providing the benefits of their specialist knowledge in the following areas:

1. Conflict transformation

Mediation in conflicts between different local groups.

Education and encouragement of a culture of peace.

Training in conflict transformation.

Reconciliation and the overcoming of old antagonisms.

Promotion of productive community relations.

Reduction in prejudice and misunderstandings.

Mutual understanding and acceptance of differences.

2. Peoples' safety

Armistice, border and peace zone control.

Intervention in social and community conflicts

Provision of escorts for potential victims.

Training provided for the localization and destruction of mines.

Humanitarian escort for threatened groups and communities.

3. Demobilization and reinsertion

Support for traumatized victims.

Rehabilitation of former soldiers.

Psychological support for individuals and groups.

Control of the demobilization process.

Reform of security services and the police.

Rehabilitation of child soldiers.

Redeployment of military and paramilitary personnel.

4. Human Rights

Promoting public awareness of human rights.

The protection of children, women, minority groups, refugees and those displaced by conflict.

Research into human rights violations.

Information about the situation and the application of human rights.

The adequacy of human rights legislation.

Investigation and prosecution of war crimes.

Foundation of commissions that will really work.

5. Democratisation

The creation of democratic institutions.

Promoting political pluralism and civil participation.

Development of the Constitution and Parliament.

Create a good government system by:

Training civil servants and elected politicians in the principles and practice of democracy.

Encouraging transparency in the finance of parties and the elections process.

6. Electoral Processes

Training of international inspectors.

Regulation of the election process and campaigns.

Training of local inspectors.

International supervision of the elections.

Education of the voters.

Identification and registration of legal voters.

Register of parties and candidates running for election.

7. Civil administration

Opportunities for consultation, training and management of:

General administration

Register of births, deaths and marriages and Land register.

Local government.

Customs.

Appointments to political institutions.

Economic and environmental issues.

The tax system.

Social services

Education

Housing policy.

Health and medical provision.

Infrastructure

Water and energy supply.

Transport and communication.

Telecommunications.

Provision of hygiene facilities and waste disposal services.

Basic infrastructure.

8. The media

The development of an independent national media: Training for media directors and workers.

local and national radio and television

Observation of the freedom of expression in the media.

Printed or online press

9. The legal system

Training of judges, public prosecutors and lawyers.

Reform of the security system.

Training of police and prison officers.

Prevention of organized crime.

Reform of the legal and judicial systems.

The announcement of anticorruption laws.

10. The improvement of civil society

The creation of organizations which have their roots in the local community.

Encourage public involvement, including women in order to instigate social and political change. Support the creation of democratic and multiparty institutions.

Establishment of local civic groups and networks.

The development of independent trade unions.

The appeasement (using peaceful methods) of conflicts between groups.

The turnaround of a culture dominated by violence and military

influence into one characterized by peace and non-violence.

Education in order to work towards peace, and training in non-violent means of action to resolve pacifically conflict in our personal lives and in society.

Training, evaluation and accreditation

In the field of conflict management there are various activities that require clearly different levels of training, aptitude and experience in order to carry out actions in a competent and effective manner.

Some tasks require a high level of skill and specialisation, while others not as much. In the middle, there are a whole range that require practical contribution.

Training and ability are, therefore, key points in the selection of contingents that take part in Civil Peace Services interventions. Consequently, they must offer:

- general training programmes for interventions in the protection and construction of Peace, Cooperation and Human Rights;
- specific training programmes for the different areas and tasks to be carried out during the intervention;
- extra preparation programmes adapted to the particular type of conflict, country and culture;
- approved means of evaluation and accreditation for all centres, schools and university departments in agreement with the CPS;
- official registries of volunteers and professionals, including their fields of specialisation, level of training, level of experience and availability.

Recruitment

The selection of personnel, specialised in different fields, to intervene in armed conflicts, needs to be based on various factors. The specific characteristics of the conflict, the specific requirements of the opposing parties and the purpose of the project or programme in question all need to be considered.

The contingent can be comprised of the following types of people:

- Experts and/or professionals with fixed salaries. Occasionally, according to the nature of the activity being carried out, volunteers and trainees take part and their expenses are paid. All of them with approved accreditation.
- Independents or officials attached to NGOs or the various entities that support them.
- Those who have a long-term or short-term commitment, occasional or permanent.

The personnel that make up the CPS are:

- young graduates that have just finished their studies and, before starting on their professional course devote some time to working for the CPS;
- people who are taking a break in their professional career because they want to carry out public interest work;
- single people or people with no dependants, who have the knowledge and experience to carry out some of the activities required in CPS interventions;
- people with a vocation, who make a life choice and devote themselves entirely to the different fields of the CPS.

Different types of organisation

The organisational configuration of the CPS can take various forms:

- **Institutional:** Centralised, with fixed personnel and contracted personnel for projects. The financing, selection and management of deployment are the responsibility of the institution.
- **Mixed:** Set up by government agencies or organisations for non-government organisations. The financing, selection and management of deployment are organised through the agreement of the group.
- **Coalition:** Institutional civil services of local and independent fields... in coalition with non-government civil organisations. The financing, selection and management of the deployment are organised through the agreement of the coalition.
- **Contract:** Contracts coming from multilateral organisations (e.g.: UNDP, OSCE, UN, EU, African Union, etc). The financing and authorization are the responsibility of the contracting organisation.

How can we succeed in creating a Civil Peace Service in Catalonia?

We believe that it is necessary to set up a broad platform of NGOs and entities that goes beyond the precise area of peace movements, to create a basic infrastructure:

- to embark on a campaign to generate awareness of the concept and to create an open and positive image of the Civil Peace Services in public opinion;
- to seek support from individuals or social and political organisations, in order to promote or assist in the creation and organisation of the Civil Peace Services.

“The prevention of conflicts is not possible without the involvement of civil society.”

Kofi Annan

To take part in the platform or to help, contact provisionally:

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Notice

This document is not a treaty of the Civil Peace Services, and, therefore, has some deficiencies affecting its degree of accuracy. Its objective is to briefly describe what the CPS are, what their purpose is, what they can do and how they can be structured. The aim is to attract the interest of people and organisations from the sectors that promote Peace and defend Human Rights, Co operational Development and Solidarity, to take part in, or to help with, a platform for the creation of a CPS in Catalonia - Spain.