

Project Statement for Award #6455

I propose to apply a method of integrating teaching, training and research in the area of conflict resolution. I will focus on Latin American and Middle Eastern cases. During my recent visit to Brazil (July 2015) I became familiar with the work of my host, the Global South Unit of Mediation (GSUM) at the Pontificia Universidade Catolica do Rio de Janeiro. Together with two young scholars there I now hope to develop a new teaching/training curriculum for South/South horizontal collaboration. Such a course could help better application of conflict transformation skills. This would especially be useful in finding consensual alternatives when popular demands arise. Such often spontaneous and genuine acts of protest often escalate and preempt negotiations based on the universal human rights' principles.

Much of my research has focused on the Southern Cone of Latin America (Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Paraguay leading to three books and academic articles). Brazil as well has been an area of interest and I seek the opportunity for an in-depth research in social issues and its potential role working with universities and civil society across borders. I have been invited a number of times in the past to lecture and train in Brazil. This work has been in the field of multitrack diplomacy and human rights (Universidade de Sao Paulo, Universidade Federal do Sao Paulo [UNESP], POC/International Relations, Rio). I also delivered a keynote for the GAPCon -Grupo de Analisis y Prevencion de Conflicto- coordinated by Candido Mendes University, Rio; and the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre. All those visits, albeit for a few days each provided wide background knowledge. However there was no opportunity for action research over a meaningful period of time. In recent years, my interest in North/East Brazil has grown. This was triggered by the growing awareness of the importance of the Global South transfer of knowledge and experience in the consolidation of democracy. The role played by European colonial and neocolonial policies and the current economic presence of other world powers generate fears of domination due to asymmetrical power relations. On the other hand, in South/South transfer of knowhow, the level of trust can be higher. The industrial South is predominantly of European descent. This 'BRIC' identity is in contrast to the characteristics of Salvador de Bahia. Salvador de Bahia has the ethno-cultural potential to reach out more effectively their Black Africa brethren.

A significant number of states in Africa are moving away from authoritarian rule and transitioning to democracy with increasing economic growth.¹ And yet, too often civil society organizations' (CSOs) strategies are locked in by the legacy of the past. When facing authoritarian regimes they develop confrontational strategies, with mass

¹In the last twenty years workshops were conducted in Bolivia (between the teachers unions and the Ministry of Education, sponsored by Nur University, Santa Cruz), Ecuador (between fishermen and environmentalists in Galapagos, sponsored by Conservation International) and Mexico (between supports of the Zapatistas and members of the federal and State of Chiapas commissions of dialogue and negotiation, initiated by Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Colegio de Mexico, Cuban and US academics joint recommendations for normalization, etc.)

mobilization, protest and boycotts. Brazil itself has gone through a comparable process and has now a consolidated democracy. Its recent experience can be valuable. Change exacerbates conflict and the challenge is to resolve conflict constructively. With all its pitfalls and experimentation with new practices, Brazil should or could become a legitimate bridge to the Global South.

Working with colleagues from the Jorge Amado University Center, (Unijorge) a should help build increased capacity for their future work; internationally in the Global South and domestically addressing cleavages among diverse communities in the city and region. More specifically, such objective could be summed up as follows:

I. TEACHING: I assume I will be invited to teach one or two graduate courses- depending on the amount of research and training negotiated with GSUM. The first course would be specifically on conflict resolution, and the second would connect conflict resolution with human rights. Below is a synopsis of each course:

1) *Multi-track Diplomacy and Conflict Transformation*: The course is an intensive program within the field of alternative dispute resolution (ADR), designed to provide theoretical perspectives and experiential learning on ways to bring about domestic and international peacebuilding. The aim is to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to facilitate the transformation of protracted ethnic, nationalist or religious conflicts, as well as conflicts over borders, water, or other common-pool resources into constructive processes of social change and sustainable peace. These techniques provide essential complements to official, “first track,” diplomacy, especially for complex societal conflicts involving non-state actors. In the Global South the prevailing form of identity driven intra-state conflict has a salient ethnopolitical and religious dimension. Multi-track diplomacy has become an increasingly important toolbox for government officials IO agencies and NGO staff working in development, relief, refugee and humanitarian aid, peacekeeping and other activities in areas of conflict and political instability. The great majority of violent conflicts are now internal rather than inter-state, with at least one party a non-state actor, and with no mutually acceptable official structure through which disputes can be settled. In the context of mistrust and uncertainty, the sustainability of development programs often depends on our ability to encourage local communities to find common ground on implementation of planned initiatives. The format has been developed over more two decades of experience with international workshops at the University of Maryland. Students are tutored to design a conflict assessment to evaluate the appropriateness or feasibility of a chosen second track initiative (diagnosis); future scenarios, and specific constructive outcomes that might emerge from the workshop(s) (prognosis); and planning and proposed structure for a second track or citizens’ diplomacy initiative bringing together unofficial representatives of the parties to promote peacebuilding or conflict transformation (treatment).

2) *Graduate Seminar on “The Relevance of Human Rights to Conflict Resolution”*: The applicant has developed and taught since 2006- a forty-hour course [University of Maryland; American University DC; IDC, Israel, Universidad Central, Caracas and

forthcoming at University of Oregon, Eugene]. With the changing nature of conflict around the world from predominantly international into intra-national, the question of participation in the problem solving process of members of the communities involved in the struggle arises at more significant level. Furthermore, the fact that increasingly the predominant number of victims of these domestic or civil wars are civilians themselves² makes it clear that the resolution needs to relate to acute form of suffering that is not traditionally covered through the rules of uniformed combatants, that the rules of the game and often the heavy price in human lives generate a most negative slippery slope- from extra-judicial executions to massacres and genocide- that fuels the fire of the original tangible roots of conflict among the peoples involved. A legitimate debate is emerging, human rights considerations perceived as an irritant but also as a yardstick: on the one hand those who advocate the introduction of human rights covenants as guiding principles during the negotiating process and surely in the text of the peace agreements of contemporary identity driven conflicts; and on the other side the more traditional view of those who suggest, if at all, to leave it for a later stage of post-negotiation.³ While there is a growing consensus that introducing human rights issue at a later stage may consolidate the tenuous and often minimalist peace accords, we have been investigating the added advantage of bringing the two notions simultaneously from the early stages of the process may result in more positive outcomes. At an aspiration level, as in Latin America and elsewhere consensus about linking the two terms “peace and justice” has characterized the movement towards nonviolence, the end of gross human rights violations and reconciliation in the aftermath of civil wars as well as social justice. Often associating the term “human rights” with “justice” and “conflict resolution” respectively with “peace”, the concepts normally used by the academics have been associated to different paradigms and disciplines.⁴

II. TRAINING: The Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM) has developed over more than two decades a comprehensive approach for innovative problem solving workshops, which has been used worldwide. More than sixty track II/citizens diplomacy workshops were facilitated or co-facilitated by the applicant, many in Latin America. But the consolidation of democracy in South America has brought into power elected regimes that are open to popular demands, its achievement also depending upon capacity building in negotiation with governments

² The number of civilian victims was estimated in World War I of approximately 5%, going up to 50% in World War II and to 90% in the 1990's (95% in African conflicts), see Harris, Peter and Reilly, Ben, (eds.), Democracy and Deep-Rooted Conflict: Options for Negotiators, Stockholm, IDEA, 1998

³ Edward Kaufman and Ibrahim Bisharat, "Introducing human rights into conflict resolution: the relevance for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process", Journal of Human Rights, (Vol. 1, No 1, March 2002), pp 71- 92.

⁴ Ted R. Gurr and Barbara Harff, (Eds.) Early Warning of Communal Conflict and Humanitarian Crises, Proceedings of Workshop held at the CIDCM, November 5,6, 1993, Sponsored by International Alert and the Korea Foundation", in the Journal of Ethno-development, Vol. 4, No. 1, July 1994.

that often profess to endorse the same overall ideology. Using with techniques of citizens diplomacy through university-based interactive problem solving workshops (IPSW) can be a contributing step for the institutionalization of such learning experience and sharing it with CSOs⁵.

In parallel of the teaching experience, we would like to offer a weekend long training at CEERI, the Center for Strategic Studies and International Affairs, His director, Leonel Leal Neto, is also a professor at UNIJORGE and former Secretary of International Affairs of the City of Salvador. The subject for the simulation should be decided in consultation with the local sponsors. A recently published Manual in the Spanish language provides easier access to Brazilian participants to the multiple exercises that characterized experiential learning.⁶

The stakeholders are participating as “Partners in Conflict”, intended to underline a common identity such as a shared occupation or profession (e.g., academics, journalists, attributes (e.g., gender, religion) or mutual concerns (e.g., environment, development). Emphasizing commonalities and a shared identity while acknowledging basic differences encourages the establishment of a solid link between the two groups. The dynamics can be summarized in four stages, its length determined by previous assessment:

- 1) Trust building exercises, which generate an informal and friendly atmosphere that inspire confidence in each other, acquaintance with the process of facilitation and allows for the participants to express their expectations and motivations.
- 2) Skills building, as in many other areas, professionalism in conflict resolution needs to train participants into an improve process of consensus building. For that purpose, skills are required in areas such as nonviolent communication, prejudice reduction, collaborative attitudes, creativity, brainstorming and integrative problem solving;
- 3) Consensus building requires a transition from a traditionally adversarial phase into the search for common ground. The Adversarial/Reflexive/Integrative/Action (ARIA) methodology to be introduced to the participants will reveal a strategy that elicits the needs behind the declaratory positions. And when such needs are grasped, then the integrative process is done in three phases, separating the idea-creation from the classification and evaluation; then leading into bringing the shared ideas to an acceptable level of consensus.
- 4) Re-entry with the preparations for implementation once the intense experience is over. The real test of the experimentation is in the ability of the implementation, once the “Partners” return to their habitat, often hostile to the new ideas of change. We need to address psychological, political and organizational issues. The drafting of an

⁵E. Kaufman and J. Davies, (eds.), *Track II/Citizens Diplomacy: Applied Techniques of Conflict Transformation*, (Rowman& Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, MD, 2002- hard cover and 2003- paperback.), Chapters 9 & 10,

⁶Ana Bourse and Edward Edy Kaufman, *De Socios en Conflicto a Socios en la Paz: Metodos y estrategias para transformar las diferencias en oportunidades para todos.* (CRIES, Editorial Icaria, Buenos Aires, 2014)

“action plan” is a skill in itself where the individual responsibilities are allocated including a timetable for implementation that can be monitored by all. It is also meant to develop an “epistemic community”—a group of individuals who share collective understanding relating to their own issues and problems.

III. RESEARCH: With an “action research approach”⁷ and the cooperation of Diego Magalhães Executive Director, Global Connections- [former trainee Sao Paulo Federal Universidade do Sao Paulo and now to work with me as a co-facilitator in Portuguese. We would like to use the methodology of community mediation [ho’oponopono] from South Pacific islands. This framework was brought to our academic community by Prof. Johan Galtung⁸ and can be adjustable to small communities in Brazil. Tension has been brewing in Bahia between groups within the Christian Evangelical community and those of practitioners of Afro-Brazilian religions and such heritage is still evident is in the practice of Afro-Brazilian religions, such as Candomble and Umbanda .Of 92.6% of Bahia’s upholding some religious affiliation 73.6 % of these are Catholic; 15.4% are Evangelist Christians, their number has been growing rapidly due to effective recruitment policies. While aiming at strengthening religious tolerance through consensus building, the undertaking of a joint developmental initiative is expected to create bonds between the contending groups.

Using conflict transformation techniques developed at the CIDCM in the University of Maryland and taking into account the experience in interfaith dialogue, working together with Bahia experts such skills will be adapted to the local realities, integrating them with the traditional Brazilian tools. Our preliminary work leads us to hypothesize that the joint (Protestant-Traditionalist) community might choose to work on an issue such as the management of contamination at the local level, leading to separation of organic and inorganic garbage and its disposal, as a project of common interest. The advantage of the development element in this conflict-resolution project is that the bonding of joint action be the basis for setting the ground rules for cooperation.

FINAL REMARKS: 1) The three mentioned tasks could produce benefits to introduce more conflict resolution courses in UNIJORGE. 2) For GSUM, new teaching curriculum development for South/South horizontal collaboration. 3) It could further the introduction of cutting edge teaching approaches merging human rights with conflict resolution. 4) For me, experimenting how best to use the toolbox available at CIDCM across cultures is of significant benefit. 5) With the local colleagues functioning as facilitators we all may have the opportunity to search for common

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O'Brien, R. (2001). Um exame da abordagem metodológica da pesquisa ação [An Overview of the Methodological Approach of Action Research]. In Roberto Richardson (Ed.), *Teoria e Prática da Pesquisa Ação [Theory and Practice of Action Research]*. João Pessoa, Brazil: Universidade Federal da Paraíba.

⁸ Kaufman, Edy Edward, Reviewing “Johan Galtung: A Pioneer in Peace Research” *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, Special Issue, 2015, pp 104-106.

ground in the Evangelist versus Afro/Brazilian rites dispute.⁶) As in several of my previous experiences, action research can lead to co-authored academic publications.⁹

And above all, I regard this project as a form of legacy to share with some younger colleagues in Brazil that have expressed their wish to practice and improve the conflict transformation tools that we have perfected over the years at CIDCM.

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College Park, Md. August 1, 2015

⁹ John Davies, Edy Kaufman, Wubalem Fekade, 'Mamphekeleli Hoohlo, and 'Mamochaki Shale), "Partners in Conflict in Lesotho: Building " Capacity for Sustainable Peace", in, Building Peace: Practical Reflections from the Field. Craig Zelizer and Robert A. Rubinstein (eds.), Kumarian Press, 2009,
Also, Edy Kaufman and Saul Sosnowski, "The Contributions of Track II Diplomacy to the Peru-Ecuador Peace Process", in Ronald Fisher (ed.) ,Paving the Way: Contributions of Interactive Conflict Resolution to Peacemaking, (Boston, Lexington Books, 2006).