



# NEWSLETTER

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## Letter from the President

This newsletter brings sad news of the passing of one of our leading sociologists of religion and mentor to many RC22 members. Ivan Varga had been the RC22 Honorary President for many years, and we in this association are already feeling a loss.

This newsletter has been written in his memory and his wife and daughter have kindly given us the permission to reproduce his eulogy.

So many RC22 activities have happened since our last newsletter. We have had two major events. Afe Adogame put together our exiting mid-term conference in Nigeria, and Eloisa Martin worked on the fantastic RC22 programme at the last ISA forum in Argentina. Their work has been extraordinary and rewarding.

Thanks to them, both events have attracted many stimulating and ground-breaking papers that have provided great insights to many sociologists of religion. We are now working on the next programme for the World Congress in Japan and soon, a call for papers will be available.

We have an e-mailing list that compliments this newsletter, and in case you would like to receive information on the sociology of religion from around the world, please send me an e-mail ([A.Possamai@uws.edu.au](mailto:A.Possamai@uws.edu.au)).

You can also send calls for papers or announcement in the sociology of religion to [RC22@uws.edu.au](mailto:RC22@uws.edu.au). The information is also posted on the RC22 blog at <http://www.isa-rc22.org/blog/>. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jim Spickard who created this very useful blog for RC22, and keeps it running.

I also would like to thank our secretary/treasurer, Afe Adogame, who has put this newsletter together and which provides us with many interesting articles and conference reports. If you wish to include anything in our next newsletter, please get in touch with him at [a.adogame@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.adogame@ed.ac.uk).

More and more articles, books, conferences on religion are being written and organised and I feel, even if this might sound paradoxical, that the sociology of religion is going through a type of renaissance. never say this enough, but if you are a sociologist of religion or if you are simply interested in this discipline, come and join



us to live this renaissance a bit closely.

New tools of understanding, new methods of collecting data and of analysis are thought of and discovered, and RC22 is right in the middle of this phenomenon.

Please have a seat and enjoy the reading of this newsletter on a hard copy, on your computer, or on any other electronic means.

Sociologically yours,

\*The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the association.

## Eulogy In Memory of Ivan Varga

What do sociologists do when they want to know something about other sociologists? They read their work. What do sociologists do when one of them just passed away? They are sad, they feel a loss, they mourn in their personal fashion, and then they read again his or her work. I went through this process for Ivan.

Ivan was such a great friend and mentor to me and to the Research Committee on the Sociology of Religion (RC22) that I still have not been able to accept that he is no longer with us, except through his writings. Like he set himself up to rediscover the hidden secrets of Simmel, I went through re-discovering his writings. And what a body of work! Ivan had such a clear mind about social life that you even wonder if he had not created life itself. His writing is so sharp and so clear when dealing with profound and complex issues that you admire the great mind and the years of intellectual reflection to reach that stage. As such, for many academics, he is a great inspiration to follow.

It felt ironic to re-read one of his articles published in *Current Sociology* in 2005 on the body in hypermodernity. He was writing about death and it took me by surprise as the event of his death is still so embodied (a word he liked to use) in me. As he wrote:

“Death, which has ever been a natural event, accepted as such, even though it was painful for the families, is now becoming a failure to be avoided or at least pushed far away into time. (As Woody Allen has satirically remarked, ‘in North America death is optional’).”

I am so glad that Ivan took his ‘option’ so late in his life and that he has been with us, sociologists of religion at the International Sociological Association, for many years after his retirement.

It also pleases me to realise that when he wrote this article 7 years ago, with his own mortality. I am thus confident that he passed away in peace.

In the same article on the study of the body and religion, he argued at the end that the body has become sacred in our society. It is thus a paradox (something that sociologists live so well in their writings and personal life) now that he has no longer a body, that his ideas and writings will certainly become, as time passes, sacred to sociologists.

Vale Ivan, you are already greatly missed by us and the association you so kindly took under your wings.

### Adam Possamai on behalf of RC22



### Eva and Christina Varga

His wife Eva, his daughter Christina and his granddaughter Alexandra knew him as a loving and devoted husband, father and grandfather. But when we reflect on Ivan’s life outside his family, we see him as a brave, determined, uncompromising and endlessly curious person.

Some of the things that moulded his identity: His mother was Viennese, so his first languages were Hungarian and German, and his father was a journalist. They were assimilated Jews – his father Josef changed his name from Weiss to Varga and they celebrated Christmas.

den for extended periods of time, something that may have contributed to his reading voraciously, to using his mind, to living a life of the mind. His childhood was soon marked by the horrors of the Second World War whether enduring air raids in Budapest, or going outside without his yellow star in order to get more food for the family during the terror of the Nazi regime. He watched his friend get picked up on the street to be shot into the Danube River.

Many of his Viennese relatives were deported to concentration camps. In a fortunate twist of fate, his mother, Livia, worked for Raul Wallenberg because his office was in their building. This allowed the family to avoid being moved to the Jewish ghetto, and gave them some immunity from persecution until later in the war. Still, like other Jewish families, they were forced to share their two-room apartment with several families.

His father became practically blind after the war, and listened endlessly to the radio. When Ivan asked him why he listened even to idiotic shows, his father said “Because you can learn something from anything.” This is something Ivan likely took to heart, as his interests were wide-ranging, from Africa to Latin America, from religion to post-modernity to art to travel.

It is certainly something his daughter learned from him, and hopes to pass on to her daughter. We were struck by the fact that his father died of cancer and Ivan and his mother helped ease him through the end. A mirror to the end of Ivan’s life, though Ivan had his joyful granddaughter there, too, making him gifts, making him laugh and stroking his hand. She was the last person he smiled at.

## Eulogy In Memory of Ivan Varga—cont.

Then, at the end of the war, came the soviet liberation. At first, he was a hopeful young socialist, helping to rebuild the damaged city of Budapest. A photo shows him interpreting for a visiting Chinese youth delegation. When a friend said they didn't know Ivan knew Chinese, he said "I don't, but what else could they be saying at an event like this?"

In fact, Ivan knew several languages. It was a talent, certainly – one we hope Alexandra has (she is already making puns in two languages, which delighted Ivan, and we shudder to think what the two of them would have gotten up to). But he also worked hard to learn additional languages. He ended up speaking, reading and writing in five languages, and reading in several more.

He studied philosophy, sociology and economy at the university, mostly at evening courses, while supporting his family with his job at a publishing house. But during the Communist rule, sociology was declared a "bourgeois pseudo-science" and the head of the sociology department at the university was arrested and sent to a concentration camp. Ivan's interest in philosophy allowed him to study with the renowned Marxist philosopher Georg Lukács, whose humanist version of Marxism affected Ivan's thinking, and made him critical of the Soviet type of Marxism-Leninism. Later, he would write that his message to young colleagues is to maintain a flexible position, but a theoretically coherent one.

Ivan joined a group of young intellectuals who weren't shy in criticizing that orthodoxy. And when the Hungarian uprising in 1956 was quashed, Ivan was arrested and interrogated for several days in an attempt to intimidate him and recruit him to spy on his friends and fellow intellectuals. This he never

agreed to do, regardless of the bribes or threats he was offered. But he was lucky enough to already have had a valid passport issued to him for travel to Poland. So he left quietly one day, asking a friend to take care of his mother. The western-oriented scholarship in Poland ended up influencing his thinking. And in later years, he was associated with a Yugoslavia-based group of scholars who published the review *Praxis*.

After a year, he returned to Hungary, in order to take care of his mother. The authorities weren't exactly happy to see him, though he was no longer as much in danger of being jailed. But as a former revolutionary, he wasn't allowed to continue his research fellowship and he was not allowed to work officially. He supported himself and his mother by translating, but his name was not allowed to appear on any of his work. One of the books he translated was about religion, starting a lifelong interest in the sociology of religion.

It wasn't until the early '60s that, as the process of liberalization continued, he was allowed to get work as the philosophy and sociology editor with a periodical dedicated to the critique of religion (the name *Világosság* translates to "Light") and in 1963, when the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was established, he was hired.

In 1961, he married Eva. In 1968, Christina was born. The same year, Ivan was permitted to go teach and do research in the area of developmental aid at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, and Eva and seven-month-old Christina followed him there.

The family stayed in Tanzania for four years. During that time, we went on various trips with a VW bug which, in retro-

spect, may not have been the safest for a toddler. Ivan tried to take pictures of elephants and zebras, generally catching their backsides, except for an angry bull elephant that elicited a hasty retreat. They went to Egypt and India, and to Mt. Kilimanjaro. And bribed a border guard who was waving a machine gun in Rhodesia, with a box of cigarettes. After four years, his contract was up and we were supposed to return to Hungary. Ivan had a story about going to the drive-in movies in Dar es Salaam, and watching the advertisements of the British Overseas Airways Corporation, with young people jetting around the world.

Hungary, of course, had closed borders, and he wanted this freedom for his daughter. This, he said, was a big reason they decided to defect. So, instead of getting on a plane to Hungary, the family got on a plane to Germany, with what they could take in suitcases.

In Germany, Ivan took on two teaching jobs, hundreds of kilometres apart, commuting for hours on the autobahn – though he did enjoy the lack of a speed limit, an attitude he took to Canada with him, much to our delight on the Highway 401. While he was in Germany, Queen's University took an interest, and in 1973, we moved to Kingston, Ontario. A bit of a shock for a couple of European urbanites.

He taught various courses ranging from art and culture to anthropology, but his main interest continued to be the sociology of religion, especially the relationship between religion and politics, and in particular the role of religion in post-communist societies. Later, he developed an interest in the impact of post-modernism on religion, which led to an interest in the problem of the body and cognition in postmodern society.

**Continues on pages 4.**

## Eulogy In Memory of Ivan Varga - cont.

His international work was primarily through the Sociology of Religion Research Committee of the International Sociological Association, of which he remained the Honorary President until he died. He also joined what became the International Society of Sociology of Religion. Through these bodies, and through collaboration with international colleagues, he organized and chaired conference sessions, contributed to journals and edited books, and presented papers in conferences from India to Australia and throughout Europe. These conferences allowed us to travel with him and have wonderful experiences, from fantastic art galleries to a range of architectural wonders, and good food and beautiful concerts. Once, through a colleague at the Vatican, he arranged for us to have a private viewing of a couple of huge Michelangelo paintings in a chapel not open to tourists and we will never forget being saluted by the Swiss guards in their colourful uniforms as we were driven through the gates.

Other memories from our travels range from Ivan drinking tequila and wearing a sombrero in Mexico, to sitting on the edge of the Fontana di Trevi in Eva and Ivan's beloved Rome, a city they first visited as a young couple. Ivan also had appointments abroad, ranging from Senior Fellow at the Centre for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University to Visiting Professor at the University of Roma Tre in Rome. He was a member of the Editorial Board of International Sociology, and was named Scientific Advisor to the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Ivan believed fervently in the university as a rigorous training ground for a life of the mind and the study of theoretical practice. This didn't always go over well at Queen's, which had a more North American style of making students com-

fortable and a smaller emphasis on theory than the European-type academy Ivan was used to. When he was denied promotion to full professor (partly because of a lack of documentation about his earlier academic output because of the political circumstances of his life), he appealed. It is typical that even in his appeal for promotion to full professor, he didn't soften his stance and was almost scolding the president of the university, saying he didn't believe in the mechanistic practice of spoon-feeding his students when the point was to learn how to theorize.

He simply wouldn't bend to demands he felt were absurd or immoral, much as he didn't in Hungary. In the end, he was promoted to full professor, due much to an international outcry about this decision, and to a campaign mounted by his friend Ioan Davies.

And he continued to encourage students to think for themselves, for instance he gave top marks to a student who took a thoughtful, but completely opposing view to his. He also put a lot of effort into encouraging students who were not bright but were trying hard.

After he retired in 1996, he continued to teach at Queen's as Professor Emeritus, as well as continuing his international work. Six years ago, after Eva retired and Alexandra was on the way, we all moved in together in a house in Toronto, which allowed us to enjoy the past 6 years together again as a family, and especially to share the joy of our Alexandra. Christina got to have some late-night scotches and conversation with Ivan, Eva and Ivan were able to catch up with old friends and make dear new friends and to go to concerts without having to drive up the 401, and we all got to celebrate Alexandra's successive birthdays.

And, of course, Ivan was a devoted and loving father, husband and grandfather: whether arranging to start an RRSP for his daughter upon her first job, whether arranging for an Alaska cruise for his wife despite suffering from terrible pain from sciatica, or whether making sure his granddaughter got oysters for her sixth birthday. It's obvious to say we miss him terribly, but we also hope that his qualities and the example of his life remain with us into the next generation. As well as his taste for oysters and perhaps even scotch.

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## Report on ISA/RC22 mid-term International Conference, “Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives” 27-30 January 2012, Abuja, Nigeria.

26 February 2012

To: The RC-22 President & Governing Board  
From: Afe Adogame & Jim Spickard  
RE: **Report on the RC-22 mid-term International Conference ‘Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives’, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-30 January 2012**

Dear Colleagues,

We are happy to report that the Interim Conference in Abuja went well. Attendance was lower than we had hoped, due to the political situation in Nigeria’s northern states. Of the 75 scholars who had planned to come, only 40 in all attended, with about 30 of those attending each of our scheduled sessions. Though fewer in numbers, the attendees engaged in a level of discussion that might not have been possible had more been present.

The papers were grouped under the following thematic sessions: Theoretical perspectives on Violence and Tolerance (I); Issues in Global Conflict and Violence (I & II); Religious Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Nigeria (I, II & III); The Challenges of Religious Pluralism across the globe (I&II); and Varied approaches to Conflict (I). The papers focused on theoretical, conceptual issues and drew on case studies from across the globe. While a few presented papers focused on USA and Europe, Israel, Ireland, Serbia, Pakistan, the Netherlands, Zimbabwe, many of the presentations focused on the Nigerian situation, especially as the Boko Haram movement continued its campaign of bombing while we were in session. (Fortunately, the violence was 175 to 350 km away.) We learned more about the dynamics of this Islamist politico-religious movement, and we also learned how little information is available about it.

The conference had three keynote lectures:

Prof. Jim Spickard (from the University of Redlands, USA) spoke on “Who Worries about Religious Violence? Images of Religion in Politics under a Neo-liberal Economic Regime”  
Prof. Mohammed Kuna (from Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto, Nigeria) spoke on “Revivalist Movements, Toleration, and Conflict in Nigeria: Preliminary Notes on the Boko Haram”  
Prof. Uman Habila Danfulani (from the University of Jos, Nigeria) spoke on “Waging Peace on Conflict in Jos Plateau Communities: Traditional Strategies of Conflict Resolution and Management.”



**A cross-section of conference attendees.**

Each keynote generated significant discussion. We had nine other sessions of 4-5 papers each, a few of which we combined to accommodate travel schedules. We read a small number of papers from scholars who were unable to attend. About a third of the attendees participated in our two cultural events: an opening evening of Nigerian songs and dance, performed by a very accomplished troupe, and a city tour of Abuja, coordinated by Dr. Israel Akanji, a member of our local organizing committee.

Intellectually, we learned a lot about Nigeria’s religious diversity, Christian, Muslim, and Traditional (which are not always mutually exclusive categories). We learned a lot about Boko Haram, including how much its activities worry Nigerians, given the existing religious and social tensions. We met members of

the local government, journalists, and officials from the Nigerian Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, and representatives of the Pan-Africans Strategic and Policy Research Group (PANAFSTRAG), which co-sponsored the conference with the ISA. At the official opening of the conference, some government dignitaries were in attendance and presented goodwill messages from the Honourable Minister, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja (Senator Bala Muhammed); and the Director-General, Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (Dr. Joseph Golwa), Abuja. Thanks to the Honourable Minister of the FCT for generous financial donation to support the conference, and to the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution for hosting us on the last day of the conference and showing us around the premises, including its library.

The academic sessions of the conference were held at the conference venue - 3Js Hotel Limited, Abuja, while the third plenary session and closing session took place within the premises of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Abuja. In all, it was a remarkable event of intellectual encounter and exchange. Non-Nigerians got a much better sense of the religious dynamics in Nigeria and in other parts of Africa. The Nigerian attendees met and conversed with researchers from other parts of their country and at different career stages; they also had a chance to observe how international scholars deal with their subject matter. This last process went both ways. Several of the international scholars remarked that some Nigerian intellectuals seem to want research to produce policy recommendations – something that not all of them found comfortable. These Nigerians, on the other hand, were not comfortable just receiving information without a sense of its implications. Most participants found such differences to be fruitful sources of learning.

## Report on ISA/RC22 mid-term International Conference, “Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives” 27-30 January 2012, Abuja, Nigeria.



### Excursion to the National Ecumenical Centre, Abuja.

At the end of the conference, we asked participants for their recommendations for future such meetings. Among the more interesting suggestions was that we plan training workshops either before or after future conferences, to give participants a chance to improve their research techniques. (These could be structured like the seminars and short courses held in conjunction with the American Sociological Association's annual meeting: 2-4 hour sessions on methods, theories, etc. of interest to local participants.) This would be useful, given the relatively large number of early-career scholars who attended our event.

At the same time, we had a number of senior Nigerian scholars who could have taught workshops to international attendees, particularly about topics that might be obvious to locals but not to visitors. We recommend encouraging such two-way learning as much as possible. By the way: the networking between senior and junior scholars, both Nigerian and international, was one of the most valuable parts of the meeting. We recommend encouraging such senior-junior interchange as much as possible.

In all, we regard the conference as a success. Yes, there were the inevitable unforeseen events, such as the resignation, three days before the conference started, of the hotel manager

with whom we had done our negotiation. And Abuja is not a walker's city: its broad avenues and long distances require cars to get around. Still, we were comfortable and intellectually well fed. The conference costs were covered and attendees left feeling that they had had a special experience.

At the time we proposed the conference we did not foresee the security crises partly occasioned by the Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria. Though Abuja itself was very safe, the sensational media coverage had dire consequences for the attendance, and also for the planning and execution of the conference. While conscious of the developments and uncertainties, we were however determined to pursue our goal to have a successful conference.

We praise the courage, zeal and contributions of many local and international participants who made it to the conference in spite of media fears. In fact, this in our view raises a crucial methodological issue for sociologists of religion on the tendency of engaging research on religion, conflict and violence 'from comfort zones' as against the 'real' field or perceived 'context of conflict and violence'.

We wish to thank the members of the local organizing committee (Rtd. Major General Ishola Williams of PANAFSTRAG; Profs. Rufus Akinyele and Olufunke Adebayo of the University of Lagos; Prof. Alaba Simpson of Crawford University; and Dr. Israel Akanji of the Abuja First Baptist Church) for their hard work and immense contributions to the planning and execution of the conference.

We also want to thank the volunteers: Corey Williams (one of Afe's postgraduate students from the University of Edinburgh, UK), for handling many practical matters in the conference secretariat; Faith Adogame (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Abuja) and Michael Ani (PANAFSTRAG representative in Abuja) who assisted in the conference secretariat.

Finally, our appreciation goes to the ISA and RC22 Governing Boards for providing some initial, take-off grants towards the planning and running of the conference. It has been a most pleasant and learning experience. We plan to publish some selected papers into an edited book through a peer-review process. We have commenced preliminary discussion with some international academic publishers and hope to work towards a published book in 2013.

Sincerely,

**Afe Adogame**  
RC-22 Secretary/Treasurer and  
Conference Convener/Host

**James V. Spickard**  
ISA-RC22 North American Representative



**Conference Entertainment: Traditional Dance .**

# ISA/RC22 International Conference Programme, 27-30 January 2012.

	Fri 27 <sup>th</sup>	Sat 28 <sup>th</sup>	Sun 29 <sup>th</sup>	Mon 30 <sup>th</sup>
9:00 – 10:30	<p><b>10:00 – 17:30</b></p> <p><b>Arrival &amp; Registration</b></p> <p>Free Networking</p>	<p><b>OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY (10:00 AM)</b></p> <p>WELCOME BY CONFERENCE CONVENOR/HOST – AFE ADOGAME</p> <p>GOODWILL MESSAGES FROM THE HON. MINISTER, FCT ABUJA, THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION, ABUJA, AND PANAFSTRAG.</p> <p><b>PLENARY SESSION I</b></p> <p>Who worries about Religious Violence? Images of Religion in Politics under a Neo-liberal Economic Regime</p> <p><b>SPEAKER: Prof. James V. Spickard</b> (University of Redlands, USA)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Alaba Simpson</b> (Crawford University, Igbesa)</p>	<p><b>PLENARY SESSION II</b></p> <p><b>Revivalist Movements, Toleration and Conflict in Nigeria: Preliminary Notes on the Boko Haram</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKER: Prof. Mohammed Kuna</b> Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Olufunke Adeboye</b> (University of Lagos)</p>	<p><b>PLENARY SESSION III</b></p> <p><b>Waging Peace on Conflict on Jos Plateau Communities: Traditional Strategies of Conflict Resolution and Management</b></p> <p><b>SPEAKER: Prof. Umar Habila Danfulani</b> (University of Jos)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Paul Spickard</b> (University of California, Santa Barbara, USA)</p>
10.30 – 11.00		Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break	Tea/Coffee Break
11:00 – 12:30		<p><b>SESSION 1:</b></p> <p><b><u>Theoretical Perspectives on Violence and Tolerance</u></b></p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <p><b>Deconstructing Religious Violence: Reflections on Herbert Blumer's Method of Symbolic Interactionism</b> (Corey Williams - University of Edinburgh)</p> <p><b>The Significance of Faith as a Foundation for Peace and Reconciliation: A Perspective of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Risale-Inur</b> (Vaffi F. Sheriff - Usman Dan Fodio, Sokoto)</p> <p><b>Disagreement and Pluralism according to Said Nursi's Risale-Inur</b> (Hakan Gulerce, Istanbul University, Turkey)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: James V. Spickard</b> (Redlands University, USA)</p>	<p><b>SESSION 5:</b></p> <p><b><u>The Challenge of Religious Pluralism across the Globe I</u></b></p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <p>Clash of Civilizations or Racializing Religion? Muslims and Membership in the US and Europe (Paul Spickard – University of California, Santa Barbara, USA)</p> <p>The Role of Religious Groups in Kenya's post-election violence (Njoki E. Wamai – King's College, London)</p> <p>Expanding the Universe of Violence: A Discourse on the linkage between Religion and Terrorism (Tunde Agara – Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Umar Habila Danfulani</b> (University of Jos)</p>	City guided tours
12.30 – 14.00	LUNCH	BREAK	LUNCH	
14:00 – 18:30	Free Networking	<p><b>SESSION 2:</b></p> <p><b><u>Issues in Global Conflict and Violence I</u></b></p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <p>Religion and Conflict in a Globalised Cyber-Sphere: Dynamics and Implications (Ayoola Najimdeen Bakare – Preston University, Islamabad)</p> <p>The Plights of Women in Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: A Contemporary Assessment (Alaba Simpson – Crawford University &amp; Habibu Shuaibu - Tallafin Kallabi Foundation, Abuja)</p> <p>Attitudes to Religious Conflict within Religious Peace Organisations in Israel (George R. Wilkes – University of Edinburgh)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Afe Adogame</b> (University of Edinburgh)</p>	<p><b>SESSION 6:</b></p> <p><b><u>Religious Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Nigeria II</u></b></p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <p>Religious Conflict and Tolerance in Multi-Faith Nigeria: Resolving the Dilemma from Global Perspectives (Sunday Awoniyi – Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko)</p> <p>Religious Tolerance in a Multi-Religious Society: A Case Study of Yorubaland (Rotimi Williams Omotoye – University of Ilorin)</p> <p>Security Crisis, Fundamentalisms and Tolerance in Global Context: The Nigerian Experience (Benson Ohihon Igboin – Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Mohammed Kuna</b> (Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto)</p>	City guided tours

## Programme contd.

15.30 – 16.00		<i>Tea/Coffee Break</i>	<i>Tea/Coffee Break</i>	
16:00 – 17:30	Free Net-working	<p><b>SESSION 3:</b>  <u><b>Religious Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Nigeria I</b></u>  <i>Panelists:</i>            The Role of Religion in Nigerian Politics (<b>Afolabi Oluwaseun Olawale</b> – University of Ibadan)            Boko Haram Movement: A Protest against Western civilization and Nigeria's socio-political system (<b>Essien Offiong</b> – University of Calabar)            Religious Volatility: The Tragedy of Religious Violence and Intolerance in Northern Nigerian Politics (<b>Stephen Onakuse &amp; Joe Bogue</b> - National University of Ireland College, Cork)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Rufus Akinyele</b> (University of Lagos)</p>	<p><b>SESSION 7:</b>  <u><b>The Challenge of Religious Pluralism across the Globe II</b></u>  <i>Panelists:</i>            Fundamentalism or Pluralism: Iranian Youth Orientations towards other Religions (<b>Nourollah Pasha &amp; Abdul-Aziz Ibrahim</b> – University Putra, Malaysia)            Islamophobia, Xenophobia or Fundamentalism? The Constitution Review Process and the Kadhi Courts controversy in Kenya (<b>Damaris Seleina Parsitau</b> – Egerton University, Kenya)            Suicide Bombing, Religious War and Contemporary Nigeria Experience (<b>A.O. Abisoye</b>– Crawford University, Igbesa)            Agonism or Antagonism? Effects of the Response of the Leaders of Religious Organisations to Expressions of Islamic Criticism in the Netherlands (<b>Sipco Jacob Vellenga</b> – University of Amsterdam)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Danoye Oguntola-Laguda</b> (Lagos State University, Ojoo-Lagos)</p>	City guided tours
17:30 – 19.00	WELCOME & INTRODUCTION TO THE CONFERENCE	<p><b>SESSION 4:</b>  <u><b>Varied Approaches to Conflict</b></u>  <i>Panelists:</i>            Orthodox View of Conflicts, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives (<b>Mirosljub Jevtic</b> – University of Serbia, Belgrade)            Ethnic and Religious Violence in Nigeria: A Biblical-Theological Approach (<b>Cyril O. Adamu &amp; John Onimhawa</b> - Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma)            Who is on the Lord's Side? Problematising Religious Violence in the Nigerian State (<b>Danoye Oguntola-Laguda</b> – Lagos State University, Ojoo-Lagos)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Vaffi F. Sheriff</b> (Usman Dan Fodio, Sokoto)</p>	<p><b>SESSION 8:</b>  <u><b>Religious Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Nigeria III</b></u>  <i>Panelists:</i>            Social Identity and Exclusion: A Socio-historical examination of the recurrence of Electoral Violence in Nigeria (<b>Comfort Erima Ugbem &amp; Agnes Ikwuba Agbanugo</b> – Benue State University, Makurdi)            Swimming against the Tide: An Analysis of Religious Understanding in Ilorin Metropolis (<b>Oyeronke Olademo</b> – University of Ilorin)            The Impact of Ethno-Religious Conflict on Nigerian Federalism (<b>Mohammed Lawan Bello &amp; Olufemi Adeniyi Fawole</b> – University of Ilorin)            The Politicisation of Religion in Nigeria and the Sharia Crises (<b>Mashood Omotosho</b> – OAU, Ile-Ife)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Sade Famose</b> (University of Abuja)</p>	<p><b>SESSION 9:</b>  <u><b>Issues in Global Conflict and Violence II</b></u>  <i>Panelists:</i>            Religion and Violence: A Test of Democracy in Nigeria (<b>Ezichi Anya Ituma</b> – University of Nigeria, Nsukka)            Does ZANU (PF) and MDC manipulate religion? Role of Religion in the Zimbabwean political conflict (<b>Lovemore Ndllovu</b> – Midlands State University, Gweru, Zimbabwe)            Gandhian Economic Model: A Viable Alternative for the New World Order (<b>Kingsley Okoro</b> – Ebonyi State University)            Conflict and Poverty in Africa: The Role of the Church (<b>Collins Ugwu</b> – University of Nigeria, Nsukka)</p> <p><b>CHAIR: Israel Akanji</b> (FBC, Abuja)</p>
19.30 – 21.30	DINNER/ SOCIAL EVENING	DINNER/SOCIAL EVENING	CONFERENCE DINNER	CLOSING SESSION/ DINNER/SOCIAL EVENING



## Welcome address by the Hon. Minister. Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja; Senator Dr. Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed.

ABUJA CONFERENCE -2012

**Welcome address by the Hon. Minister, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Senator Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed, Kauran Bauchi, at the conference of International Sociological Association (ISA) in Nigeria, from 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> January, at the 3JS Hotel, Utako, Abuja.**

Let me begin by welcoming our distinguished delegates of International Sociological Association to Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory and centre of unity, who are here for the International Interdisciplinary Conference.

I welcome in particular those visiting Nigeria for the first time. Your visit is very important to us, particularly at a time our democracy has truly matured. This shows your faith in the unity of Nigeria.

Abuja was created on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1976, but officially became the seat of government on 12 December 1991. Therefore, in comparison with most capital cities of the world, Abuja would be considered a young city. However, it is one of the fastest growing cities in the world, with a population estimated at over four million residents.

Abuja is a place of numerous attractions. Two renowned rock formations give shape to the city. These are Zuma Rock and Aso Rock. The former is referred to as the 'Gateway to Abuja' because it is located at the boundary between Niger state and the Federal Capital territory. The Zuma Rock is situated off the main road that goes from Abuja to Kaduna. This imposing natural monument is worth visiting by all guests.

On the other hand, the Aso Rock is the largest rock formation around Abuja. Studies show that the exact geographical centre of Nigeria could actually be located on a portion of this stretch called Katampe Hills. This is where Aso Radio and Aso television stations are located.

Other attractions within the axis of Aso Rock are the Three Arms Zone, so styled because it is home to the Presidential villa, National Assembly and Supreme Court complexes.

You will also find other great edifices like International Conference Centre, National Stadium, ECOWAS Headquarters, Nigerian Communications Commission, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, Ministry of Defence buildings, National Christian Centre and National Mosque, to mention a few.

I do hope you would find time to visit these facilities which help to define our capital city. As you may have also noticed our magnificent hotels make the city a centre of hospitality.

Since its creation 35 years ago, Abuja has been home to all Nigerians and foreigners alike, irrespective of class, religion or political divides, in view of its peaceful nature and captivating aesthetic values.

The theme of our conference, which is Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives, is very appropriate, considering the fact that it has of late become a topic of stimulating national and international discourse.

Conflict, as we all know, is ubiquitous and almost unavoidable whenever people hold divergent views on issues of life. Even in families, there are conflicts among children and sometimes between children and their parents. We can therefore say that there are various levels of conflicts which make all people stakeholders in studying the phenomenon.

This poses a major challenge to the world and different ways are being explored to build peace and encourage tolerance of one another and peaceful co-existence, which in my opinion, this conference would seek to address.

We, in the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) believe in peaceful co-habitation of all Nigerians, regardless of personal beliefs, because the Almighty Creator who planted us here wants us to stay together and prosper as one indivisible nation.

I implore all of you to join the government of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR, an amiable leader, whose love for his country is not only admirable, but also very infectious, and with your prayers, we will navigate out of the current tides.

I urge you to feel safe in Abuja and to take time out of your busy schedules to visit some of our amazing recreational sites.

One interesting feature of Abuja is that those who had been here in the past often desire to repeat their visits. It is my hope that you would have the same experience.

It is on this note that I would like to thank you for inviting me to be part of this important occasion.

I wish you fruitful deliberations and a safe journey to your respective destinations at the end of your conference.

Thank you and may God bless you all!

## A Goodwill Message from the Director, Institute for Peace And Conflict Resolution; Abuja.

**The Chairman of the Occasion  
Special Guest of Honour  
Officials of the International  
Sociology Association  
Distinguished participants  
Ladies and gentlemen of the press**

I wish on behalf of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Abuja to express our gratitude to the organizers of this conference for the invitation extended to us to participate in this auspicious gathering of scholars and other stakeholders in the global search for peace and tolerance.

The conference theme: "Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspective" is well chosen and quite apt especially in the light of current realities world-wide. The choice of Nigeria and the timing for this gathering of experts speaks volumes of local and international concerns at this moment. News that filters to you about Nigeria before you left your various homes were those that could be discouraging. That you braved it to turn out in this number is an eloquent testimony of your resolve to defeat the forces of intolerance and hatred. Nigeria's ethno-religious diversities are well-known. In terms of our religious dynamics, the country is split almost equally between Christians and Muslims, each of which accommodates various contesting groups. Over the years these diversities have been managed through various compromises aimed at accommodating one another. Thus even without any constitutional prescription, every president of this country has a vice from the other region. Our national functions start with a Muslim/Christian prayer (as if God can be split that way)

There are numerous examples of positive interfaith relations, prominent of which are those sponsored under the

auspices of the Nigerian Inter-religious Council (NIREC), which is co-chaired by the leader of the Nigerian Supreme Court of Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) and the president of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).

The Interfaith Mediation Centre based in Kaduna, run by Imam Ashafa and Rev. Wuye is one shining example of efforts in the inter-religious harmony by a non-governmental organisation. Even at informal levels there abound a lot of confidence building measures initiated and carries out by ordinary Nigerians who are tired of killing and maiming one another in the name of religion. On page 6 of the *Daily Trust Newspaper*, of Monday, January 10, 2012 there is a moving picture captioned: "Hisba men guarding the entrance of a church in Kano..., on the day the Muslims trooped out to protect Christians during Sunday church service in Kano" and on the front page of *Daily Trust* of January 11, 2012 another one is captioned: "UNITED IN PROTEST: Christians guarding their Muslim counterparts as they pray at the venue of a rally...". These two pictures are welcome departure from the gruesome images in the media of acts said to have been committed in the name of religion. "Bad news is good news"?

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, permit me to talk a bit about the institute. The Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution was established in 2000 primarily as a research centre, a think-tank and an agency of government to strengthen Nigeria's capacity for the promotion of peace, conflict prevention, management and resolution. Early enough, the institution realised the need for a strategic conflict assessment in Nigeria, the outcome of which gave a clear conflict mapping for understanding of the nature and dynamics of conflicts in Nigeria.

Following from this the Institute has carried out research works, most of which had been published. Some of these will suffice. They include; *Dialogue on Citizenship in Nigeria, the National Peace Policy, Mainstreaming Peacebuilding in Development Programming in Nigeria: A Framework, Traditional Methods of Conflict Prevention and Resolution, Media, Conflict and Peacebuilding in Nigeria* and a lot of training manuals to mention but a few.

In conclusion we wish to leave this gathering of eminent scholars and peace practitioners with the following:

1. That the differences between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria are exaggerated. These differences are not necessarily responsible for most of the conflicts in our polity. We urge the clergy on both sides to show this to be so through their actions and utterances.
2. When this happens, clearer distinctions will be made between the so-called 'religious conflicts' and socio-economic and political conflicts by parties of various religious beliefs.

At all times and in various climes religion has been used to sustain wars and violent conflicts, is still appears to us a contradiction in terms when the word 'conflict' is marched with religion'.

Once more we thank the organisers of this conference for helping the Institute in its work. We also urge participants from other parts of the world to feel free to enjoy Abuja, a city which from all flanks appears under siege but which I make bold to say is the safest capital city under the sun.

Thank you.

Peter O. Opara— For the Director General— Institute of Peace & Conflict Resolution IPCR. ABUJA.

## Brief from the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR)

### Projects - Culled from the IPCR website: [www.Ipcr.gov.ng](http://www.Ipcr.gov.ng)

#### IPCR Projects .

##### The projects of the Institute are:

- The constitutional approach to the resolution of citizenship related problems in Nigeria
- UNHCR'S funded intervention programmes in Mambilla Plateau, Taraba
- UNICEF/IPCR collaboration on the framework for Mainstream PeaceBuilding in development programming in Nigeria
- National Peace Policy
- The Presidential Implementation Committee (PIC) of the National Action Plan (NAP) on the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) of Nigeria

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#### **The constitutional approach to the resolution of citizenship related problems in Nigeria**

This is being done in collaboration with Open Society Initiative of West Africa (OSIWA). This project was conceived to broadly contribute to the attempt to amend the Nigeria Constitution with particular reference to the problematic of citizenship rights in Nigeria. The project was executed in two phases: The research and the intervention phases.

The research phase which has been concluded consisted of comprehensive review of attempts by successive Nigerian governments to deal with the issue of citizenship and indigeneship Rights. Under this phase, all past constitutions and report of panels of enquiries or

committees were reviewed in order to understand in a historical context the approach which has been adopted over the years to address the problem.

The second phase of the project which is the intervention phase derived in fact from the findings of the research phase. So far, speakers from the State Houses of Assembly in the south and North have been engaged in dialogue sessions from the 13th - 14th September, 2005 while that of the North was held in Benin, Edo State between 20th - 21st September 2005. We targeted the Legislature deliberately because we expect the issue to have grassroot acceptance.

The dialogue sessions involve sharing the outcome of the research with the participants and exposing them to information concerning the problem of citizenship in Nigeria.

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#### **UNHCR'S funded intervention programmes in Mambilla Plateau, Taraba**

In collaboration with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNCHR), the Institute had started the programme of intervention into the lingering problem between Fulani cattle rearers and crop farmers in Sarduna Local Government Area (Mambilla Plateau) in Taraba State. The violence associated with this conflict led to an estimated 17,000 Nigerians fleeing to Cameroun in 2002. The UNHCR is desirous of facilitating the voluntary repatriation of these Nigerians to their communities of origin by providing the conducive condition for such exercise.

In this regard, between 30th of No-

vember, and 12th December, 2005, a team of researchers from the Institute conducted field research in communities within the Mambilla Local Government towards understanding the conflict, while at the same time encouraging peaceful co-existence among the warring parties. The report of the field research was presented to a meeting of stakeholders organized by UNHCR in March, 2006. The second phase of this project which is direct intervention by engaging the parties began on the third week of April, 2006. The second phase of the intervention was completed only last month with a grand cultural fiesta.

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#### **UNICEF/IPCR collaboration on the framework for Mainstream Peace Building in development programming in Nigeria**

The Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) began a programme of collaboration in October 2005, to produce a framework for Mainstreaming Peace in Development Programming and Implementation in Nigeria. The expected outcome of the project is to produce a user-driven inter-agency toolkit that will assist development planners and implementers conduct development interventions in ways that build peace and reduce the risks of violent conflicts. In line with the work plan the draft framework document has gone through several stages. At present, the Institute and UNICEF have finalized work on the toolkit for publication and circulation to stakeholders in Nigeria. In addition,

Continues on next page -

## IPCR Projects contd.

UNICEF has designated the finished framework for mainstreaming peace building in development programming as training material for development workers during the 2006 project year. A training manual on conflict Analysis and Development Programming has been developed and used in training Development Planners, Programmers and Statisticians from Federal Ministries, Parastatals, UN Agencies and NGO's on how to mainstream Peace-building in development interventions.

### National Peace Policy

Over the years, Nigeria's contributions to peace at the domestic, regional and international levels have been on ad hoc basis. This is not good enough for the country in a knowledge-driven world. Thus:

- i) The National Peace Policy Project is designed to provide a national framework for defining and subsuming all Nigeria's domestic, regional and international efforts in peace operations;
- ii) The National Peace Policy will provide focus and direction for Nigerians to understand and situate their actions in the context of peace building;
- iii) The National Peace Policy is to form the basis for the evaluation of other policies of government in terms of the potential for building peace and mitigating conflicts; The National Peace Policy Project is on-going and taking the IPCRS to all the estate of Nigeria for consultations.

The Presidential Implementation Committee (PIC) of the National Action Plan (NAP) on the Strategic Conflict Assessment (SCA) of Nigeria

Following the country-wide Strategic

Conflict Assessment of Nigeria and its outcome which eventually came out as a National Action Plan to mitigate issues of conflict in the country, the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Nigeria His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, endorsed and adopted the NAP as his government's response to conflict. Mr. President thereafter put together a 25-member Presidential Implementation Committee (PIC) to lead the implementation of the NAP with His Excellency, the Vice President as Chairman and the Institute's Director General as Secretary. The DG of the Institute is the Head of the PIC Secretariat. After its inauguration on March 2, 2005, the PIC set up five sub-committees, based on sub-themes, to oversee the implementation of the NAP. These are:

- a. Security Sector Reform Sub-committee with the Honourable Minister of Defence as Chairman and the Director, Defence and Security Studies Department of the Institute as Secretary;
- b. Early Warning and Early Response Sub-committee with the Honourable Minister of Internal Affairs as Chairman and the Director Internal Conflict Prevention and Resolution Department of the Institute as the Secretary;
- c. Political Conflict Sub-committee with the Honourable Minister of Inter-governmental Affairs as Chairman and the Director External Conflict Prevention and Resolution Department of the Institute as the Secretary; and
- d. Mainstreaming Conflict Prevention Sub-committee with the Secretary to the Government of the Federation as Chairman and Director Research and Policy Analysis Department of the Institute as the Secretary.

In essence, the NAP is now at the stage

where most questions of concept and vision have been answered and only funding is needed for its implementation to pick up speed.

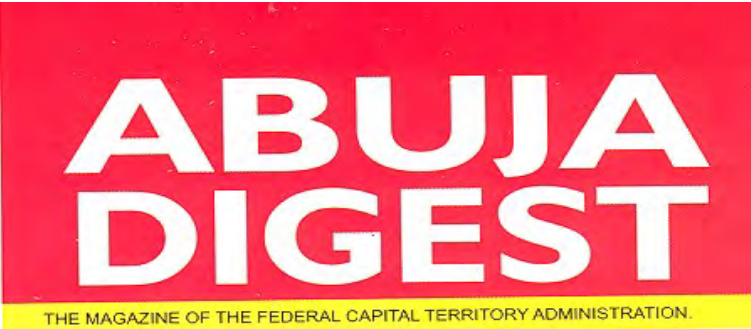
This project hosted by the Institute's Department of Defence and Security Studies explores the nexus between the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapon and the rising wave of crime in Nigeria. It also entails the building of capacity for relevant stakeholders to check the menace of small arms and crimes in our society and in particular their relationship with communal conflicts. The project is on-going, but the dearth of fund is limiting the project's activities.

This project seeks to examine the challenges faced in post-conflict situations in Africa. The challenges range from management of refugees, disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation, social and economic integration, etc. to properly carry on and design the project there has been the compelling need to undertake study visits to selected African countries as well as develop closer relationship with ECOWAS, AU, and the UN. This is meant to facilitate our study of sub-regional, regional and international responses of post conflict peace building in Africa. This study is on-going, and has taken us to the following conflict flashpoints or zones in Africa.

**ABUJA DIGEST COVERING CONFERENCE THEME ON PEACE AND SECURITY.**



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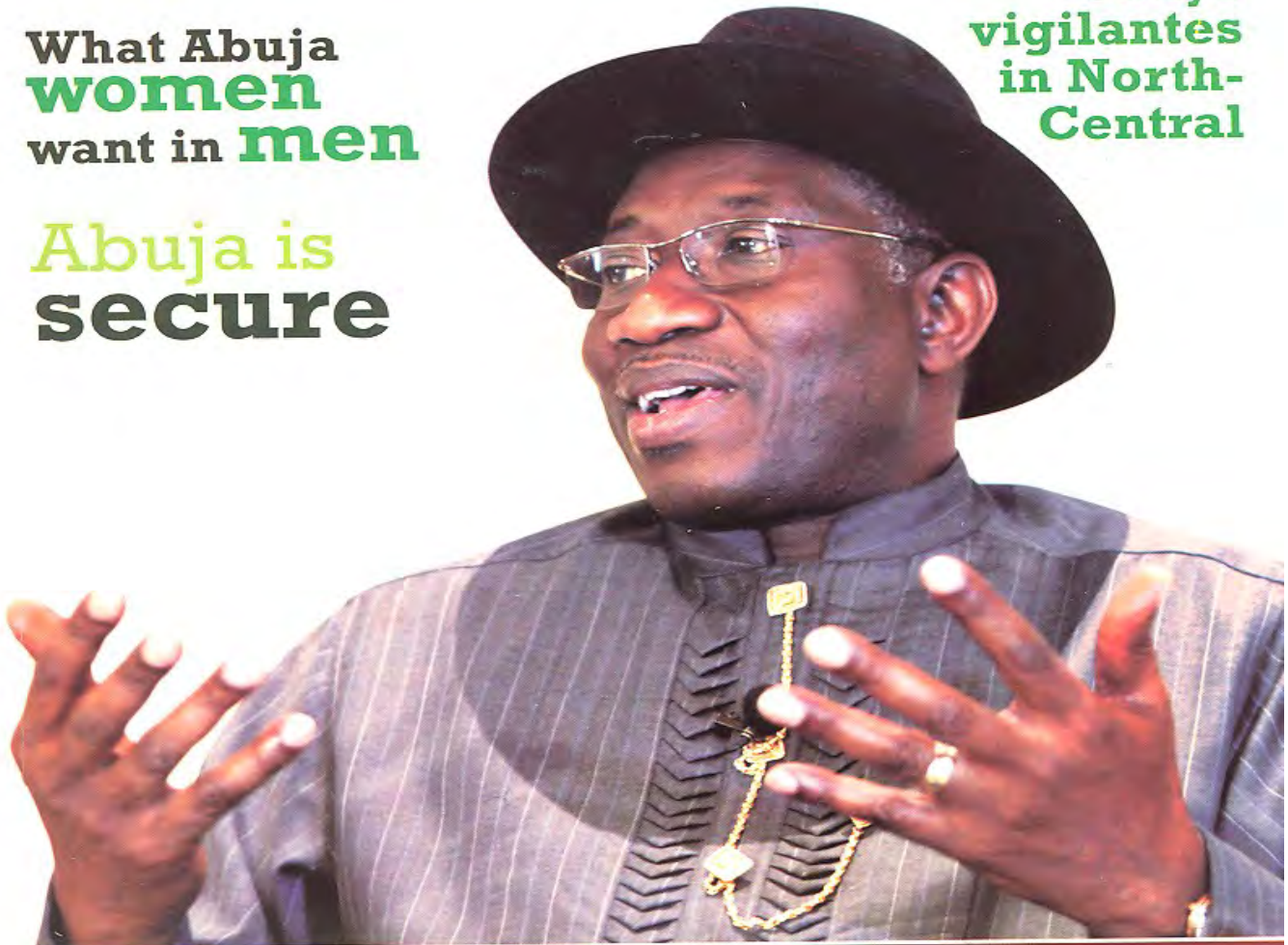
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**Transformation**  
**Dividends**  
**in FCT**

What Abuja  
**women**  
want in **men**

**Abuja is**  
**secure**

**G-7**  
okays  
vigilantes  
in North-  
Central



## Extract from Abuja Digest on Peace and Safety

### News



# Abuja is home for all,

## FCT Minister tells participants at international confab

By Emmanuel Tortiv

**T**he 22nd Research Committee of the International Sociological Association (ISA) recently held its mid-term conference in Abuja.

The event, which took place at 3J's hotel, Utako, was based on the theme: 'Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives'. It drew eminent scholars from the United States of America (USA), Britain, Pakistan, Belgrade, France, Turkey and others.

In his opening remarks, the convener of the conference, Professor Afe Adogame said the staging of the three-day event could not have come at a better time.

"When we advertised this conference, we received over 120 entries... But there could not have been a better time than now," he told the gathering.

The FCT Minister, Senator Bala Mohammed, who was represented by his Chief Of Staff, Alhaji Musa Umar Yashi, implored participants to join the transformation programme of President Goodluck Jonathan through practical advice and solutions that will help resolve conflicts. He said conflict in any situation is bound to arise among humans.

Senator Bala Mohammed called on most participants to avail themselves opportunity of the conference by going round to see the beauty of FCT.

"Since the creation of Abuja 35 years ago, it has been home to all Nigerians across the religious and political divide in view of its peaceful nature and captivating values," the Minister reiterated.

Papers were presented by prominent scholars, university dons and students from different parts of the world which bordered on the conference theme. Professor James V. Spickard of the University of Redlands, USA opened the first plenary session with a paper entitled 'Who Worries about Religious Violence? Images of Religion in Politics under a Neo-liberal Economic Regime'.

Other presenters included Professor Paul Spickard of the University of California, Santa Barbara, USA; Vaffi F.



● Bala Mohammed

Sheriff of Usmanu Dan Fodio University; Professor Adogame, convener and secretary of the Research Committee and Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh University in the United Kingdom (UK).

After days of exhaustive presentation of well-researched papers by participants, some of them, who spoke to Abuja Digest, aired their impressions on the august event.

Professor James Spickard said: "My most pleasing aspect of the conference is the fact that I came down to Nigeria to be able to hear from Nigerians themselves as it concerns the issue of Boko Haram. I think Professor Mohammed Kuna did a thorough and excellent job in giving us a strong historical background to the group."

Professor Kuna's paper was on 'Revivalist Movements, Toleration and Conflict in Nigeria: Preliminary Notes on the Boko Haram.'

Also speaking with Abuja Digest at a dinner after the conference, Professor Adogame was highly elated with the success recorded.

He said: "As scholars, we attempt to use what we theorize for the benefit of society. If we don't practice what we teach, then there will be redundancy."

"For me, the message that is coming out here is a very interesting one. This conference serves as a tool kit to deal with the current crisis in Nigeria in order to avoid a fire brigade approach."

## Reports from ISA/RC22 mid-term International Conference, “Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives”.

The timing of the conference was quite auspicious as it coincided with a period in the hosting nation, Nigeria, and the hosting venue Abuja, when conflict and violence were notably on the increase, thereby bringing the topic of the conference alive.

As a member of the Local Organizing Committee, I was particularly apprehensive of the increasing disturbance of Boko Haram, the Islamic militant sect within the Abuja area in which the conference was booked to hold.



**A front view of the conference venue – 3 J's Hotel, Abuja.**

The information pack/flier that was widely distributed and posted via the net actually took time to emphasize the safety conditions that were at the time of posting, associated with Abuja. However, within the space of about eight months, Abuja had started experiencing bouts of sporadic bombings including the one that affected the United Nations Building on 26th August 2011.

While these incidents created

obvious security concerns and actually affected the eventual turnout of participants at the conference, it is noteworthy to remark that the turnout was still quite impressive as the conference was yet able to capture its intended international and interdisciplinary participation and paper presentations at multiple angles of scholarly discussions.

Overall, the conference which was able to witness the presence of participants from the United States of America, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, the United Kingdom and various parts of the Nigerian academic community went very well. The coming together of participants from across these geographical areas has actually revealed the persistence of professional drive in the personalities of the participants.

This further shows the resilience and determination of the participating intellectuals to the cause of the Association and the conference theme. On a lighter mood, participants were moved to give a clapping ovation to themselves as individuals in appreciation of this brave act of being a part of the conference in such violent seasons and surviving it.

**From Prof Alaba Simpson  
Crawford University—Igbesa**

The conference brought together scholars with diverse expertise and strong interest in the study of religion and conflict. The discourse started with an analysis of religion and conflict from socio-political perspectives. This enabled participants to critique various sociological theories which underpin or influence our study of religion in society.

The narrative outlined sociological theories such as the secularization theory, the deprivation theory, etc. as an attempt to situate religious conflict within the sociological theoretical discourse. This conference proceeded from theory to empirical studies in Africa and the rest of the world. Holding the conference in Abuja, Nigeria, was a perfect moment to deal with topical issues such as religious fundamentalism, religious tolerance and ethnic and religious violence.

Of major interest was the problem of Boko Haram movement in Nigeria. This sparked lots of debate among participants and opened many avenues and the need to investigate radical Islamic movements which operate in a cloud of secrecy. Various theories or expositions were outlined about Boko Haram as an attempt to explain the role of Boko Haram within the Nigerian conflict.

## Reports on ISA/RC22 mid-term International Conference, “Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives”.

The conference deliberations revealed that the subject of religious conflict, violence and tolerance is very complex particularly in Africa. An important part of the conference proceedings was an attempt by many scholars to outline various conflict resolution models. Some of which were derived from African traditional belief and value systems.

The role of the mother’s brother in conflict resolution was interesting and very relevant in the African socio-cultural context. Africa continues to be affected by conflict and violence. The outcomes of this conference will contribute to knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of religion and conflict not only in Africa but the rest of the world.

Abuja, a city of diverse cultural and religious beliefs, epitomises the African cultural and religious landscape where people of different persuasions mix and mingle.

The beauty of the city is also celebrated and found in its unique architecture displayed in the National Mosque and National Christian Cathedral.

**Lovemore Ndlovu— Midland States University, Gweru, Zimbabwe**

The ISA/RC22 Conference in Abuja was a great privilege to take part in. While we did not have the large number of participants we had once hoped for, our smaller group nevertheless came together for a rigorous examination of the Conference theme. We also had a bit of fun. From chatting in between sessions, to watching and participating in a traditional Nigerian dance session, academic and personal relationships were created and cultivated.



**Conference Opening Ceremony – Cultural Dance Troupe, Abuja.**

The papers presented were fascinating. While some focused upon specific and detailed cases of conflict or tolerance, others delivered a bold and comprehensive analysis of broader historical and theoretical approaches. The unintentional, yet timely focus on Nigeria constructed a web of conversation linking together seemingly unrelated events and people. Thus, patterns emerged during many of the presentations that crossed boundaries of culture and geography.

Personal attacks and hubris were mostly put aside, which speaks to the caliber of the participants. The excursion was also a major highlight. Getting a chance to see Nigerian craftsmanship and creativity at the Arts and Crafts Village was priceless. The architecture of Abuja was intriguing. Like any rapidly growing city, the landscape is a mixed bag. From the neo-gothic National Cathedral, to the expansive mansions of the elite and concrete huts of the marginalized, Abuja encapsulates the ambitions and inadequacies of this still emerging African giant.

This was my acting debut as Secretariat for an academic conference. It was onerous at times, but wholly worth the effort given the successful outcome. I want to say thank you and congratulations to everyone involved. I believe that despite unresolved issues and admitted obstacles to better understanding the phenomena of religion’s place within society, our coming together has moved scholarship forward a notch. This will be visible for all to see in the production of the edited volume.

I would encourage all of us to remain in contact. We have each accumulated a wonderful, international network for collaboration, so keep it alive and I hope to see all of you at future conferences in Nigeria and beyond!

**Corey Williams—University of Edinburgh**



## Reports on ISA/RC22 mid-term International Conference, “Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives” 27-30 January 2012, Abuja, Nigeria.



**Picture 4: One of the plenary sessions with Prof. Spickard**

The centrality of the conference focused more on Boko Haram giving the religio-socio-political challenges posed by the group on the country. The rationale behind the group's operation was a fundamental question the conference tried to grasp with.

The facelessness of the group as ascertained by the conference makes it difficult to identify what measure and mechanism to employ in proffering an answer to the problems thrown up by the group. However, there were certain degree of intellectual misconception and misunderstanding on how to create a scholarly balance between domestic and international terrorism. As scholars in the fields of social sciences mapping out patterns of socio-cultural, religious and political behavior cutting

across borders is more than paramount, which was subliminally missing during the course of the conference.

Interestingly, education as a medium of development was somewhat unanimously believed to be instrumental for understanding the dynamic of conflict and violence. It seemingly appears that

the foreign religion of Islam and Christianity is the major problem of Nigeria, giving the fact that traditional religions have been tolerant and accommodating comparatively to these two foreign religions which in real sense are the bone of contention in most crises.

The conference papers obviously buried themselves in theoretical assumptions of conflict and few were oblivious of the fact that realities are actually capsulated in theories. Thus, few of the papers either consciously or unconsciously become forgetful of the implications of theories. However, it worth mentioning the papers actually struggled to fathom the dynamics and complicity of conflict and how politicization of religion has increasingly become a decisive factor in the Nigerian context and the world at large.

The conference showed that as much as religion carries huge blame for conflict and violence, this variable is equally potentially instrumental for bringing about peace and harmony but only when it is divorce of politics. Lastly, understanding of conflict and violence will be inadequate without conceptualizing them in a global

traditional and historical perspective as was delineated by some of the speakers.

By and large, the conference was a platform, availing speakers to voice out their view on conflict, violence and religion, more particularly the troubling issue of Boko Haram robed in socio-religious violence.

**Najimdeen Ayoola**

**Preston University Islamabad**

## **Reports on ISA/RC22 mid-term International Conference, “Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives” 27-30 January 2012, Abuja, Nigeria.**

The mid-term International Conference on Religion, Conflict, Violence and Tolerance in Global Perspectives was held recently in Abuja – Nigeria from 27th to 30th January 2012. It was organized by the International Sociological Association and attended by many academics from USA, England, Belgrade, Turkey, Pakistan, Malaysia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Nigeria have participated in the conference .

At the official opening, the conference convenor/ hos Dr.Afe Adogame from the University of Edinburgh, UK welcomed the distinguish guests and participants. Besides, the conference was honoured by the good will messages of the Hon. Minister, FCT in Abuja. In addition, to these members, the Director General of Institute for Peace and Conflict, Resolution and PANASTRAG were present in conference hall.

The closing session of the conference was a thoughtful of discussion, criticism and interaction. From the information above, the following observations from the conference are to be underlined: Facilitating the attendance of ISA conferences of this nature for academics and students of Nigerian universities.

Making cordial relationship between academics and ISA for cultural interaction between people.

Religious leaders should advice their followers to exercise patience and tolerate other opinions so that every body lives peacefully in society more over since most world religions have peace entrenched in their holy books, religion can easily be used as an instrument for peace education among young persons as well as other followers and adherents. Members of different faiths respect one another's opinions and religious beliefs.

There should be unity and respect in the diversity of religions.

Religion should teach and promote the virtues of peace, forgiveness, reconciliation, love, respect for life and other values that, promote non violent change. Failing to do this, religions have also been known to have the capacity to socialize and indoctrinate young persons into vicious cycle of hate and violence. This can should be turned around Peace and Tolerance Education should be taught in schools at all levels.

ISA international conference held in Abuja on 27-30th left positive impact on the participants why?

Because according to the various comments and responses received from paper presenters showed their enthusiasm and agreed that ISA conference offered for the first time experience and knowledge on matters related to religion, conflict and tolerance on global perspectives.

As a participant in the conference, I hope in the coming ISA second conference in Nigeria, students and other members of peace makers will be involved to share the benefit of dialogue equally.

Finally I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to ISA /RC 22 Organizing committee who made a great effort to making the conference in Abuja a great success. Best wishes to the convenor/ host and secretary of the conference.

**Dr. Vaffi F. Sheriff**  
**Usmanu Danfodiyo University**  
**Sokoto – Nigeria**

## Introducing the International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy.

*Introducing the International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy by Thomas Clough Daffern B.A. (Hons) D.Sc. (Hon) PGCE Ph.D., - Director. Interview by Ms. E. Phuti Mogase.*

### 1. What is the "THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PEACE STUDIES AND GLOBAL PHILOSOPHY" about?

IIPSGP, to use its acronym, came about in 1991, as a result of several factors coming together. The first was that in 1983 I had founded, along with some other academics and intellectuals, an organisation in London called Philosophers for Peace. This was a group (still in existence) whose aim was to bring intellectuals, theorists, philosophers and visionaries from every country and culture and religion throughout the world into discourse and sharing about how to achieve peace on our planet and break the endless cycles of wars, hatred and revenge which have bedevilled mankind for far too long.

We held meetings in London on a regular basis. Then from 1989-1991 I worked as a research development officer at the Institute of Education, University of London, to investigate the feasibility of creating a new post-graduate institute of higher education in London focussing on peace studies and conflict resolution. This would be from an interdisciplinary focus, drawing on anthropology, sociology, history, philosophy, religious studies, philology, archaeology, political science, economics, international relations. The project had the support of about 100 leading thinkers and academics in both the UK and worldwide who recognised that London should do more to advance peace and international cooperation than hitherto. We had several leading think tanks (Chatham House, International Institute of Strategic Studies) focused on military strategy and international relations, but none specially on peace issues. The feasibility study which I

published in 1991 said we could and should create such an institution.

IIPSGP was set up to fulfil the feasibility study, as an outreach project of Philosophers and Historians for Peace.

### 2. What is its goal and vision?

The International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy is a unique international network of scholars, peace educators, philosophers, academics and spiritually concerned individuals working to advance learning and scholarship in peace, justice, philosophy, science, spirituality and global education covering all fields of knowledge as applied to the amelioration of human suffering, violence and destructive conflict. We are working for the prevention and transformation of violence and human conflict and war through the power of wisdom, communication, information, research, education, philosophy, reason, science and applied spirituality.

Our vision is to focus particularly on the positive aspects of human nature and society: cooperation, altruism, imagination, vision, love, friendship, enlightenment, truth, beauty, intelligence, solidarity, prosperity for we see these as the long term building blocks of a peaceful world society. The Institute is committed to the achievement of inner and outer peace, through deep reflection and study on the causes of conflict, violence and suffering in the world today and their remedy. Our purpose is to advance international understanding, cooperation and peace, through scientific, spiritual and general educational studies. One of our major long term visions is to help establish a fully resourced and funded international School of Peace and Global Studies in London at University level.

We also work to advance the general profile of education for peace and international understanding and to raise the general quality and depth of educational theory and practice, not

least through our proposed affiliated charity "Education Aid". We remain committed to the vision that education is the primary

tool the world community has at its disposal for the transformation of planetary culture towards peace and well being, and to this end we continue to work alongside many educational bodies, initiatives and individuals in Britain and worldwide, both formal and informal, esoteric and exoteric, concerned to end peace through the powerful dynamic of the transformational learning process. In terms of sociology, IIPSGP's work has been influenced by Karl Mannheim's work on the sociology of knowledge and we are involved in research into the social epistemology of peace and enlightenment. We have also been influenced by the work of Sorokin in his work on the sociology of love and altruism, as well as the work of the Buildings, Elise and Kenneth and Paul Smokier and other pioneers of modern peace and conflict studies.

We have recently moved to a location in a Scottish castle close to the Faslane Nuclear submarine base which houses the UK nuclear deterrence. IIPSGP also campaigns for the abolition of nuclear weapons worldwide and supports academic and scientific and ethical work towards this end, arguing that continuing reliance on nuclear weapons in today's unstable world is counterproductive, dangerous, expensive and inherently unstable. We support a nuclear weapons free Middle East and a nuclear weapons free Africa, as first steps towards a nuclear weapons free world. We hold an Annual Poseidon Seminar aimed at bringing all sides of the debate around nuclear weapons together in Scotland.

### 3. Who are your affiliates?

Innumerable professional education, academic and scientific research organisations and institutes; you will find many of them listed on the "links" section of our website: [www.educationaid.net](http://www.educationaid.net)

## Contd. — International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy

### 4. In what context should everyday people be talking about truth and reconciliation in Europe, and in Africa?

Truth and reconciliation are vital as an alternative to the discourse of lies, revenge and hatred which populate too often the media and the airwaves. The scientific study of truth is known as alethiology, and truth has always been upheld by philosophers as a most sacred duty, indeed one of the most sacred duties of all philosophers. In Sanskrit, truth is equated with being itself, sat – that which is.

In the European existentialist tradition likewise. In Hebrew and Semitic religions, truth is likewise a facet of the divinity. Truth is the "I Am that I Am" that speaks from the burning Bush to Moses, and for Christianity, the holy spirit, which enflames the innermost heart of every disciple and every man and woman of faith. In Islam, al haq is one of the 99 names of God. But as Being, truth is opposed to all that seeks to destroy Being, that negates or opposes life.

To stand for peace and non-violence therefore, is to be, in Gandhi's words, a Satyagrahi, a truth holder. Reconciliation therefore, and peace, can only be ushered into this plane of being when each of individually makes a stand for truth in our lives, in our personal, social and political relationships, based on truth, and on love, as opposed to negation, violence, fear and dishonesty. IIPSGP has the project of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for the Middle East (TRCME) documented on our website which stands for bringing the small still voice of truth to confront the powers of ignorance, fear, hatred and discord, that have split personal and social and cultural relations in the middle east for far too

long. We stand for the reconciliation of Muslim, Jew and Christian, of Sunni and Shia and Sufi Muslims, of Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Gnostic Christians, of Orthodox and Reformed and secular Jews. Through dialogue, sharing, communion, wonder and philosophical exploration, we hope in the TRCME to create a space for public discourse about private wisdom. This dimension has been left out of the arena by our diplomatic and political elites, who ignore "religion" or "spirituality" and instead focus on militarily power and economic strength. IIPSGP's vision is that peace will arise when ordinary people all over the world start to draw on our spiritual and moral power and speak truth to power, using only the tools of non-violence, wisdom and heart-force, or love.

Ordinary people can help advance the work of the TRCME in numerous ways, and the people of both Africa and Europe have much to gain, since the Middle East forms the land bridge between Europe and Africa, and because the great religions from the Middle East are the dominant spiritual factors on both continents. If we can achieve reconciliation in the Middle East, then peace is also more likely between the various conflictual elements in both Africa and Europe.

### 5. In your view how can 'Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding' be practiced or implemented - what does it take to make it successful?

It need dialogue, listening skills, patience, endless tact, diplomacy, courage, visionary leadership, a combination of feminine and masculine energies working in tandem, humility ("we don't have all the answers"), intellectual subtlety ("be you wise as serpents") and good

heartedness ("be as wise as doves"). Many conflicts need time to allow the karmic forces that became entangled in the conflict in the first place to work themselves through. Prayer (meditation, visioning work) can also help on subtle levels. Music, dance, the arts, ceremony and ritual can also help build energies that make reconciliation possible. If we make peace exciting enough, then war will lose its glamour and appeal. Respect is important, for elders from youth, and respect for elders generally, who are normally wise enough to have seen the terrible costs of violence.

Young people often don't realise that and seem willing to engage in violence as if proving their own macho strength. Education which transmits the collective wisdom of the ages, of all cultures, traditions, philosophies and religions, can also make a great difference. So can the transmission of ethical and scientific approaches to studying life's complexities, and education in conflict resolution and mediation skills should be part of every child's school experience, and every student's university experience, then young people would be equipped with the knowledge that violence, conflict and hatred are not the answer – and that peace is possible on this plane of being. IIPSGP has a mediation service designed for university level disputes (MSHE) which is unique worldwide in providing such a service, as too many students are now getting into expensive legal conflicts with academics. We have also pioneered teaching pupils in schools how to set up peer mediation schemes. Above all the answer to your question is through education: this is the key way to prevent wars and violence at all levels., **contd. on next page**

## Cont. the International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy

IIPSGP work in education is by stimulating educational work around the world, by organising Education Aid, and by running courses of our own, which are increasingly available on audio digital format for those unable to come in person. We also ruin the Global Green University as an offshoot academic institution whose mission is to facilitate higher education worldwide aimed at peace and global justice, in a new educational paradigm of cooperation rather than competition. Too much of academic work is itself filled with violence and competition.

The Global Green University aims to challenge that at root. So education is and remains the key to peace – but it has to be the right kind of education. Not mono-directional, but multicultural, multidimensional, multi-faith under the guidance of the 9 Muses, so to speak.

### **6. Which journal would be most relevant to read in relation to the 'religious' conflict in Nigeria between Christians and Muslims?**

There are a large number of journals on all aspects of peace and conflict studies: here is a list of most of them (obviously if you say which one is the single one worth reading, I would say our own IIPSGP journal, which is unique in that it is the ONLY academic journal in the world to focus on the nature of love, altruism and apology in relation to the dynamics of peace building and conflict resolution, and in relation to interfaith conflict resolution especially).

### **7. What lessons can be drawn from this country (Nigeria), in order to prevent it in other countries?**

The importance of doing preventative pre-emptive education with young people and young children

on all aspects of mediation training, peace-making and conflict prevention; also inculcating interfaith respect and tolerance for other religions and cultures from a very early age, in primary and secondary schools. The importance of having elders visiting schools and sharing with the youngsters the dangers of warfare and hatred between peoples and cultures. The importance of having a Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation in each government. The potential contribution the Commonwealth can make to peace-making and prevention of conflict.

The potential role that the Commonwealth Interfaith Network can play in helping foster this climate of better interfaith relations (an IIPSGP project).

### **8. Any addition or personal views on issues related to peace and reconciliation?**

To my understanding, as a philosopher and historian, and educator, it is a matter of both ethical and spiritual duty that we are engaged on this plane in trying to encourage peace-making and conflict prevention among our fellow human beings. To love life, to be pro-life in the deepest sense of the words, means that we should make a stand for peace, non-violence, communication, and spiritual understanding, as being our primary modality of being human, or we are failing to live up to our species name: Homo Sapiens.

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**SISR/ISSR 2010 Conference:****31st Conference of the ISSR / 31<sup>ième</sup> Conférence De La Sisir Aix-en-Provence (France) June 30 - July 3, 2011/ 30 Juin - 3 Juillet, 2011.****STS 4****Joint session RC 22 and ISSR****RELIGION AND ECONOMY IN AFRICA AND THE NEW AFRICAN DIASPORA // RELIGION ET ÉCONOMIE EN AFRIQUE ET DANS LA NOUVELLE DIASPORA AFRICAINE****Convener / Organisateur :****James V. SPICKARD**, University of Redlands, USA, [jim\\_spickard@redlands.edu](mailto:jim_spickard@redlands.edu)**Afe ADOGAME**, University of Edinburgh, UK, [a.adogame@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.adogame@ed.ac.uk)**Chairperson / Président: ADOGAME, Afe** (University of Edinburgh, UK)**The Economy of Sacred Muslim Space in Durban – Some Theoretical Reflections / L'économie de l'espace sacré musulman à Durban – quelques réflexions théorétiques****KOGELMANN, Franz** (Bayreuth University, Germany)[franz@kogelmann.eu](mailto:franz@kogelmann.eu)**Dynamics of thrift and cooperative society in the economic empowerment of Muslims in Lagos State University, Southwestern Nigeria / Économie et société coopérative auprès de Musulmans de l'Université d'Etat du Lagos dans le sud du Nigéria****ADETONA, Lateef Mobolaji** (Department of Religions, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos)[lateef.adetona@lasunigeria.org](mailto:lateef.adetona@lasunigeria.org)**Interface of religion and economic realities in Nigeria: the case of intervention of faith based non-governmental organisations – Redeemed Christian Church of God // Interface entre religion et réalités économiques au nigéria : le cas de l'intervention des organisations non gouvernementales confessionnelles – la redeemed christian church of god****OGUNTOLA- LAGUDA, Danoye** (Department of Religions, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos, Nigeria)[danoyeoguntola@yahoo.com](mailto:danoyeoguntola@yahoo.com)**La diaspora kimbanguiste et le développement des sites au Congo démocratique // The Kimbanguist diaspora and development of the Democratic Republic of Congo****GAMPIOT, Aurélien Mokoko** (GSRL)[gampiot@noos.fr](mailto:gampiot@noos.fr)**Politics of Islamic Banking: Hindering the National Unity of Sudan? / La politique bancaire islamique : un frein à l'unité nationale du Soudan?****ELHASSAB, Ahmed El-Hassab Umer** (BIGSAS, University of Bayreuth, Germany)[ahmedalhassab@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ahmedalhassab@yahoo.co.uk)

## The Second ISA Forum of Sociology: *Social Justice and Democratization* Buenos Aires, Argentina, August 1-4, 2012.

### RC 22 -Research Committee for the Sociology of Religion

#### “Religion, Justice and Democratization in contemporary societies”

Programme coordinator: Eloisa Martín; eloisamartin@hotmail.com

The current debate on religion in the public space has been intense, extensive and sophisticated during the last decades. However, it has not paid enough attention to concepts such as justice and democratization.

The purpose of this RC 22 meeting is thus to explore the relationships between religion, justice and democratization –understood in a broad sense – in the public space and in everyday life. We invite RC 22 members to propose sessions that deal with these subjects, in their relationship with contemporary debates in the Sociology of Religion.

### Beunos Aires Forum 2012

#### RC22 Research Committee on Sociology of Religion

#### Main theme

Religion, justice and democratization in contemporary societies

#### Programme Coordinator

Eloisa MARTIN, University of Brasilia, Brazil

#### RC22 Sessions:

Wednesday, August 1, 2012: 09:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Religion and the challenges of contemporary world

Wednesday, August 1, 2012: 12:30 PM - 02:00 PM

Religious pluralism and struggle for justice in secular democracies

Wednesday, August 1, 2012: 02:30 PM - 04:00 PM

Asian religions in the era of globalization

Thursday, August 2, 2012: 09:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Regimes of religious regulation I: Government and social regulation of religion

Thursday, August 2, 2012: 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM

Regimes of religious regulation II: Multiculturalism and the management of religion

Thursday, August 2, 2012: 12:30 PM - 02:00 PM

Alternatives religiosities and beliefs in contemporary world

Thursday, August 2, 2012: 02:30 PM - 04:00 PM

Beliefs in the city: Religious transformations in urban areas

Friday, August 3, 2012: 09:00 AM - 10:30 AM

Ethnicity, beliefs and religiosities

Friday, August 3, 2012: 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM

Politics and Religion

Friday, August 3, 2012: 12:30 PM - 02:00 PM

RC22 Business Meeting

Saturday, August 4, 2012: 10:45 AM - 12:15 PM

Religion, rights, mobility, migration

## REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE 22, BUENOS AIRES FORUM 2012 INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGY ASSOCIATION FORUM.

### RESEARCH COMMITTEE 22 INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGY AS- SOCIATION FORUM A SMALL REPORT

Among the several activities convened by the Research Committee 22 (RC 22) of the International Sociology Association (ISA) Forum held in Buenos Aires, Argentina in August 2012, I was able to attend four; a casual and jovial dinner at the Callao Restaurant, two panel sessions, and the RC22 business meeting. Although many of those responsible for our Committee's presence at the Forum could not be present at the dinner, those of us there ate well, laughed loudly, drank good wine, enjoyed ourselves, and not necessarily in that order.

The two RC panel sessions were exceptionally successful as both were well attended and questions were lively. The organizers of the Forum scheduled all of our sessions, including the business meeting, in the same room. This greatly facilitated the work.



Figure 1 – Presenter Carlos Garma from Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana Iztapalapa, Mexico; RC22 of the Buenos Aires ISA Forum.



Figure 2 – Attendees at the RC22 Session of the ISA Forum in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Photos © white/2012

Session papers and discussion focused on “Regimes of Religious Regulation,” “Politics and Religion,” with a Joint Session with the Logic and Methodology in Sociology host committee on “Qualitative Methods in the Sociology of Religion.”

In addition to sessions, plenary, and other conference related activities, the Local Planning Committee organized tours of the city for conference attendees.

Those new to Buenos Aires could choose from a number of informative introductory excursions; Buenos Aires Architecture and The City and its History were among the favorites. Many attendees also took-in sites on their own: La Boca neighborhood where Tango is everywhere, the inside of a city Cathedral that should not be confused with ideas of the Caribbean, and the largest book store created from a movie theater. To say that many of us had a wonderful and stimulating time would be an understatement.

### From the four corners of the world to Buenos Aires: Sociology of Religion at the II ISA Forum of Sociology

Eloísa Martín, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro  
RC 22 Programme Coordinator for the Second ISA Forum of Sociology & RC 22 Board Member

It was unexpectedly massive. More than six thousand papers were submitted, but only a bit more than three thousand were accepted. Scholars from different countries joined together, during a rainy week in early August, to attend the Second ISA Forum of Sociology: “Social justice and democratization” at the University of Buenos Aires, in Argentina. The Research Committee 22 on Sociology of Religion received around 150 proposals for its 12 regular sessions. On top of this, 30 others were sent for two Joint Sessions on “Qualitative Methods on Religion”, which was hosted by RC 33. Due to the high number of submissions, and a strict distribution of sessions, session organizers and I agreed to accept more papers on top of the regular ones. These were delivered papers and authors had a small amount of time to introduce their written work. In this regard, during the preparation of the conference programme, I made three main suggestions to session organizers:

- 1) When selecting papers, to keep a balance between the regional backgrounds of the presenters. So, besides having an expected major presence of Latin American scholars, sessions had also scholars from Asia, Africa, Oceania and Europe, and were thus regionally diverse.
- 2) To have bi-lingual sessions in Spanish and English – in order to share experiences and research. I asked session chairs to invite presenters to distribute or show in Power Point a brief description of their papers' main points in the other language, since this would help to follow the presentation, at least in general terms. The use of this strategy



## REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE 22, BEUNOS AIRES FORUM 2012 - cont.

was quite successful and led to lively debates in both languages during question time.

3) If there were good enough, to accept as distributed paper as many local papers as possible – since these papers had been rejected due to limited space and time. Since ISA and RC22 are not really well known in South America, this increased the chance to have a local presence during the conference. This has been a good strategy to ensure more participation and a wider audience.

Three scholars and one student were granted financial support. RC22 received USD 900 from ISA for travel grant, and USD 285 for registration fees. Resources were limited, because the funds allocated depended on the number of members –this is one of the reasons why it is important to maintain and increase as much as possible the RC22 membership. We received 26 applications, but only 17 of them were considered, because they fulfilled all the basic requirements – such as being an ISA and RC22 member, and having an active role during the Forum. As Programme Coordinator, it was my duty to propose the names that would receive the resources, and I must confess it was not an easy decision. First of all, and following similar decisions at the RC, I proposed to divide the amount into two. I tried to be as objective as possible, considering the actual situation of all applicants. Dr. Deepak Verma and Dr. Daniel Gutiérrez were granted a partial travel support (\$450 each). Dr Tania M.C. de Almeida and Miss Cecilia Delgado were selected to receive a conference fee waiver.

In the future, it would be interesting that those who receive financial support be formally asked to participate in the business meeting, send a small report about the conference and their comments about how this support helped them to participate in the Forum. These commentaries would help to make decisions about how to distribute resources in future forums and world congresses.

During the Forum, RC 22 was allocated 12 sessions. Most of them were chaired and organized by scholars from Latin America, which was a great opportunity to make RC 22 better known in the region. "Beliefs in the city: Religious transformations in urban areas", was organized and chaired by Hugo José Suárez, "Alternatives religiosities and beliefs in contemporary world", by Felipe Gaytán, and "Ethnicity, beliefs and religiosities", by Daniel Gutiérrez –all of them from Mexico.

Two Brazilian colleagues organized and chaired the sessions on "Asian religions in the era of globalization" (Ronan Pereira) and "Religion and the rights of social minorities" (Tania M.C. de Almeida). Jualynne Dodson (USA) chaired the session on "Politics and Religion". Verónica Giménez Beliveau and Alejandro Frigerio, from Argentina, organized and chaired the sessions on "Religion, rights, mobility, migration" and "Regimes of religious regulation". The latter had another session, organized by David Lehman (USA). The session "Religion and the challenges of contemporary world" was organized and chaired by myself. Because of last minute inconveniences, Deepak Verma (India), did not travel to Buenos Aires and could not chair the session on "Religious pluralism and struggle for justice in secular democracies" he organized. Adam Possamai kindly took his place. Prof. Lehman also let us known in advance that he could not attend the Forum and Alejandro Frigerio took his place during the session.

As RC 22 session organizers, Dr. Ronan Pereira, Dr. Tânia Mara Campos de Almeida, Dr. Verónica Gimenez Beliveau and Dr Jualynne Dodson sent me their commentaries about the Forum. All of them appreciated the logistical support, equipment at rooms and the helpfulness of assistants. A particular highlight that all session chairs commented on was the large attendance and the audience interest in asking questions and getting involved in interesting debates –despite the lack of time for debate.

As Verónica Giménez Beliveau commented: "I must say that the time was really tight, and while we were unusually on time, there was no time for more than a few questions".



In this sense, among the problems to take into account in future fora and congresses, time was the major concern: it was considered too tight both for the presentations and for the debate at the end of the sessions. Tania Almeida also would have liked to have more time to conduct a brief summary of the papers presented and to give a conclusion of the session. She suggested that sessions should be at least 15 minutes longer.

The main challenge we have for future conferences is on how to deal with this increasing number of paper submissions and the limited time that is allocated for regular sessions. Should we have fewer sessions with more days each? Should session coordinators accept fewer submissions in order to give authors more time to discuss their works? How to deal with no-show or last minute cancellation, if a session coordinator accepts only 3 or 4 papers? These are questions that we should take into account in future meetings.

For example, the session on "Asian religions in the era of globalization" had a good number of abstracts submitted, from Argentina, Brazil, USA, Spain, Japan, India and Vietnam. Initially, Dr. PEREIRA chose six papers for "oral presentation" and 2 as "distributed papers."

## REPORT FROM THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE 22, BEUNOS AIRES FORUM 2012 - cont.

Due some dropouts, the session finally had 4 oral presentations. Ronan Pereira pointed out that “one of the biggest problems is the lack of time for debate. But overall, the session fulfilled his role, bringing varied and interesting topics for discussion, disseminating sociological research and connecting researchers from several institutions and countries.” He also suggested that in the future it would be a good idea to “put on the outside of each room, the list of presentations to facilitate and expedite the access of people to lectures.”

Another example is the session on “Religion, rights, mobility, migration” was organized by Verónica GIMENEZ BELIVEAU and took place on Saturday morning. Eight papers were presented during very tight 90 minutes: six were oral presentations (most in Spanish) and 2 papers were distributed. Verónica found that the papers presented were very good because “all of them proposed research based on solid empirical data in different geographic locations constructed with a focus on religion and mobility.

The richness of the meeting was based precisely on the intersection between geographical diversity and thematic concentration”. In this sense, papers presented were from the Americas (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and the US), Europe (Belgium, Italy), and Australia. thank Cecilia for her hard work and kind dedication to our RC and I hope she can join us in the future as a paper presenter, sharing her research on popular shrines in Buenos Aires.

Another example is the session on “Religion, rights, mobility, migration” was organized by Verónica GIMENEZ BELIVEAU and took place on Saturday morning. Eight papers were presented during very tight 90 minutes: six were oral presentations (most in Spanish) and 2 papers were distributed. Verónica found that the papers presented were very good because “all of them proposed research based on solid empirical data in different geographic locations constructed with a focus on religion and mobility.

The richness of the meeting was based precisely on the intersection between geographical diversity and thematic concentration”. In this sense, papers presented were from the Americas (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and the US), Europe (Belgium, Italy), and Australia.

This was a particularly successful session, according to the organizer, “not only because of the number of submissions, but also due the high attendance (around 35- 40 people on a Saturday morning, the last day of the conference)”. Verónica is also enthusiastic about the possibility of publishing an edited volume with the papers presented in the near future, and so am I!

Jualynne DODSON’s session on “Politics and Religion” was also very successful. She also underlined the importance of sociability and the friendly environment during the Forum. She also noted that having all RC 22 sessions in the same room, including the business meeting, greatly facilitated the work. Tania Mara Campos de Almeida organized and chaired the Session on “Religion and the rights of social minorities” on Wednesday, August 1, that had 5 oral presentations and 2 distributed papers. The audience, coming from different continents, was very significant -about 40 people. Besides our regular sessions, RC22 had two joint sessions hosted by RC 33 *Logic and Methodology in Sociology*: “Qualitative Methods in the Sociology of Religion” These sessions were organized and chaired by Regine Herbrik, Bernt Schnettler and I.

Unfortunately, Schnettler finally didn’t attend the meeting. The first session had more comprehensive approaches, with papers dealing with Phenomenology as method in the sociology of religion (Jim Spickard), “Anthropology and qualitative methods in the sociology of religion” (R. Bernard) and “Computer assisted qualitative analysis of religion” (Roberto Cipriani). During the second session, case studies were presented.

Last but not least, I want to mention Miss Maria Cecilia Galera, who was our local liaison. Despite the fact that she was contacted at the very last minute – 40 days before the Forum started- she was an outstanding support for all activities and I am sure we could have organized other activities I had in mind if she had been enrolled earlier.



## Religion and Society



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(International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association)

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***A new issue has been published in December 2011, which has been the first issue since RASCEE has become the official journal of ISORECEA***

### ARTICLES

**Contextual Secularization – Theoretical Thoughts and Empirical Implications**  
***Gert Pickel***

**Secularization, Individualization, or (Re)vitalization? The State and Development of Churchliness and Religiosity in Post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe**  
***Olaf Müller***

**Secularization in Europe: Religious Change between and within Birth Cohorts**  
***David Voas, Stefanie Doebler***

**“Forced” Secularity? On the Appropriation of Repressive Secularization**  
***Monika Wohlrab-Sahr***

Localising Secularisation Thesis? The View from Poland

*Katarzyna Zielińska*

### REVIEWS

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*Roman Vido*

David Martin. *The Future of Christianity. Reflections on Violence and Democracy, Religion and Secularization*. Farnham/Burlington: Ashgate, 2011. 230 pages. ISBN: 978-1-4094-0669-3. £16.99 (paperback)

*Siniša Zrinščak*

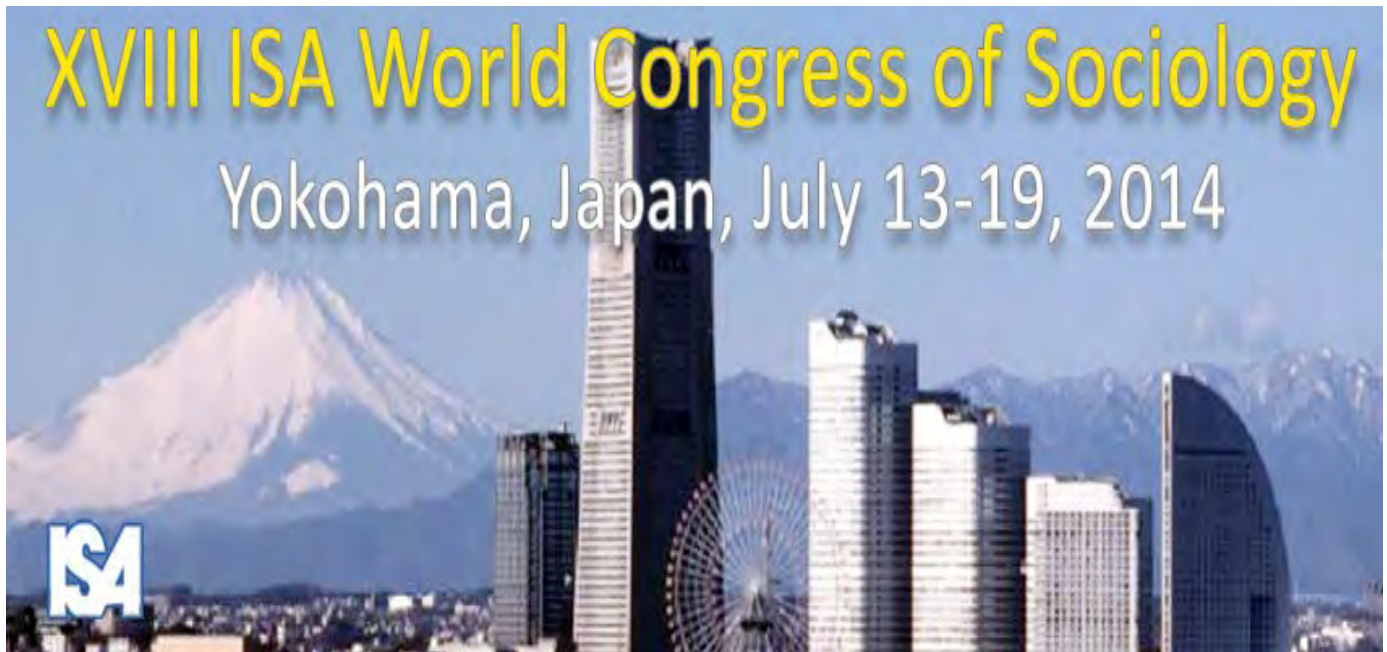
Paul Froese. *The Plot to Kill God. Findings from the Soviet Experiment in Secularization*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 2008. 264 pages. ISBN: 978-0-520-25529-6. £16.99 (paperback).

*Thomas Bremer*

Miklós Tomka. *Expanding Religion. Religious Revival in Post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe*. Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2011. 258 pages. ISBN: 978-3-11-022815-1. 69.95 € (hardcover).

*Gert Pickel*

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS



### **XVIII ISA World Congress of Sociology Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for Global Sociology Yokohama, Japan. July 13-19, 2014**

An incredibly sensitive community of academics and professionals such as the International Sociological Association, aware of the social transformations taking place in the world, cannot and should not be absent from a debate on inequality.

The great tradition of multi, inter and transdisciplinary works in which the most complex problems of the present day world are addressed; its unique condition of being academically, scientifically, regionally, institutionally and organically plural make it ideally qualified to face the challenge of contributing to this international exchange, from which an intellectual and moral force can emerge in order to achieve drastic changes in the manners, forms of reasoning and scopes of the decisions to be taken in the world to ensure the preservation of human life and societies.

Raquel Sosa  
ISA Vice-President, Congress Programme

## Useful reference journals/websites on Peace and Conflict Resolution

### AC Resolution Magazine

Published by Association for Conflict Resolution  
<http://www.acrnet.org/publications/acresolution.htm>

### African Journal of Conflict Resolution

[www.accord.org.za/ajcr/intro.htm](http://www.accord.org.za/ajcr/intro.htm)  
 South Africa: ACCORD, 1999-  
<http://www.accord.org.za/ajcr/intro.htm>

### African Peace Research Institute (APRI)

Journal Nigeria: African Peace Research Institute, 1986

### Armed Forces and Society

Now at Loyola, apparently an online service for Fellows only  
<http://www.iusafs.org/>

### Australasian Dispute Resolution Journal (formerly Australian dispute resolution journal, 1990-1998)

Australia: Lawbook Co., 1990-  
 Related web site  
<http://www.ausdispute.unisa.edu.au/>

### Canadian Journal of Peace Studies

Canada's oldest and chief scholarly, multidisciplinary, refereed international journal in its area. The journal is published four times a year and is now distributed in 43 countries.  
 - apparently no web access

<http://www.msvu.ca/PAX/cprea/Journal/>

### Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution

<http://www.cojcr.org/> available online  
 New York, NY: Cardozo School of Law, 1998-

### Conciliation Quarterly

Akron, PA: Mennonite Conciliation Service, 1982- 05 Stopped publishing in 2005-  
 23 years, back issues available  
[http://www.mcc.org/us/peaceandjustice/mcs/con\\_quarterly.html](http://www.mcc.org/us/peaceandjustice/mcs/con_quarterly.html)

### Conflict and Communication Online

[www.cco.regener-online.de](http://www.cco.regener-online.de) Germany: Unversitaet Konstanz, 2002-  
 German- English Journal bi-annual

### Conflict and Consciousness: Studies in War, Peace and Social Thought

New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing

### East African Journal of Peace and Human Rights

Uganda: Human Rights and Peace Center, 1993-  
 Stopped in 2000  
<http://ww2.mak.ac.ug/law/journal.htm>

### Ethnic Conflict Research Digest

Londonderry, Northern Ireland: INCORE, 1995-  
<http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/services/ecrd/>

### Global Change, Peace and Security

(formerly Pacifica review: Peace, Security and Global Change, 1995-2003; and Interdisciplinary Peace Research, 1989-1994) Abingdon, UK: Taylor and Francis, Ltd., 1989

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/14781158.asp>

### Global Governance

Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Pub, 1995-  
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/global/index.htm>

### Global Society: Journal of Interdisciplinary International Relations

London, UK: Carfax Pub. Co., 1986-  
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/13600826.asp>

### Group Decision and Negotiation

Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Pub., 1992-  
<http://www.springer.com/sgw/cda/frontpage/0,11855,4-0-70-35607887-detailsPage%253Djournal%257Cdescription%257Cdescription,00.html?referer=www.springer.com%2Fjournal%2F10726%2Fabout>

Hiroshima Heiwa Kagaku (Hiroshima Peace Science) Japan: Hiroshima Daigaku, 1977- Only in Japanese  
 Horizon: Pave Peace Through Culture and Literature - mainly a private journal of peace poetry, literature, etc. from Israel  
<http://www.iflac.com/horizon/>

Idea: A Journal of Social Issues  
[www.ideajournal.com](http://www.ideajournal.com)

Inc, 1989- (no web reference)

### Conflict Management and Peace Science (formerly Journal of Peace Science, 1974-1981) Abingdon, UK: Taylor and Francis, Ltd., 1974-

Available online- apparently- at a cost  
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/07388942.asp>  
 organization site <http://pss.la.psu.edu/>

### Conflict Resolution Journal

<http://www.sagepub.com/journal.aspx?pid=21>  
 Now at Yale, Political Science not Columbia New York, NY: School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, 2002-

### Conflict Resolution Quarterly (formerly Mediation Quarterly, 1983-2002)

<http://www.acrnet.org/publications/crq.htm>  
 Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1983-

### Conflict Trends

<http://www.accord.org.za/ct/intro.htm>  
 South Africa: ACCORD, 2000-

### Cooperation and Conflict

<http://cac.sagepub.com/> journal of the Nordic International Studies Association  
 London, UK: Sage Pub., Ltd., 1965-

### Crosscurrents Newsletter

Saskatoon, Canada: Greenwich Pub., 1973- (no web reference)

### Defense and Peace Economics

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10242694.asp>  
 London, UK: Carfax Pub. Co., 1989-

### Development and Peace - Catholic Development organization- newsletter

<http://www.dev.org/testA/public.htm>

### Dispute Resolution Journal (formerly Arbitration Journal, 1937-1993)

American Bar Association journal  
<http://www.abanet.org/dispute/drjournal.html>

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