



## MBB World Mediation News

Issue 5, February 2008

### Eastern Europe

**Albania:** Kosovo Case Study Demonstrates Importance of Building on Foundation of Local Culture to Assist in Resolving Disputes at Local Level and Integrating Mediation into National Justice System, with Goal of Developing Kosovo's Overall Capacity to Deal with Conflict, [Kosovo Case Study](#); [Partnersglobal.org](#)

### Middle East

**Syria:** Church Officials in Damascus Request Mediation of Decades Long Feud Between Two Factions of the Catholic and Oriental Orthodox Churches Despite Many Failed Prior Mediations, [Newindpress.com](#) (February 3, 2008)

**Palestine:** Hamas Seeks Direct Dialogue with Fatah Through Saudi Mediation as Only Means to Heal Rift, [Asharq Al-Awsat](#) (January 29, 2008)

Palestinian Foreign Minister Rejects Role of U.S. as Peacemaker in Mideast, Citing Relationship with Israel, [Islamic Republic News Agency](#) (January 13, 2008)

Hamas Welcomes Egyptian President Mubarak's Offer to Host Inter-Palestinian Talks Toward Unity, [Tehran Times](#) (January 28, 2008)

#### **Israel: Mediation Gains Momentum**

Mediation in Israel has developed momentum over the last year, since the Justice Minister approved implementation of a mandatory court-annexed mediation program to begin in March 2008. The pilot program in the magistrate courts of three cities will require parties in civil cases above a certain size to participate in a mediation session prior to going to trial. The court is proceeding carefully with the mandatory program, and is seeking to learn from mediation programs in courts around the world, noting that there are substantial differences in approach between common law jurisdictions (such as the U.S. and U.K.) and civil law jurisdictions (such as Continental Europe).

[The Jerusalem Post](#) (December 5, 2007)

### MBB in the News:

Pittsburgh Newspaper Recognizes MBB's Inaugural Mission in Buduburum Refugee Camp in Ghana, Describes MBB's Founding and Overall Mission in Bringing Dispute Resolution Skills and Services to Global Areas of Conflict, [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette \(KRT\)](#) (January 30, 2008) (Subscription Required)

### Inside MBB:

#### **Progress on MBB's First International Effort; Need in Liberia**

*Editors' Note: As anticipated in the last newsletter, an MBB team including Bob Creo, Ingrid Lundberg, Prabha Sankaranarayan and Harriett Nettles did travel to Ghana in late November to explore possibilities for the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Settlement project and to work on dispute resolution capacity building. Harriett reports that the MBB team's trip was very successful -- they trained over 60 mediators in a week's time and were able to make a brief trip to visit the Slave Coast historic sites to deepen their understanding of the historical interconnection of Ghana and the United States. In January, Harriett was able to return to Buduburam for one day and found that the MBB trainees have found opportunities to utilize their new mediation skills, and that there are more potential mediators clamoring for a second training. Bob Creo is planning to return in the Spring to continue the work. Harriett then continued on to Liberia for ten days to complete a needs assessment for a proposal for an extensive MBB project in Liberia. Harriett writes:*

## Western Asia

**Turkey:** *Turkish NGO Commits to Developing Intercultural Dialogue in Turkish-European Relations, with Summit Devoted to Dialogue and Peace, Participates in Global Conciliation Platform*, [Turkish Daily News](#) (January 18, 2008)

## East Asia

**China:** *Soft-Spoken Foreign Mediator in Southeastern Chinese Province Uses Knowledge of and Respect for Local Culture to Gain Trust and Ease Tensions; Mediators Aid Legal Experts in Helping Community Reach New Understandings and Methods of Response*, [China.org.cn](#) (January 31, 2008)

## South-Central Asia

**Kashmir:** *Citing Successful Mediation Efforts by Norway in Sri Lanka and Other Conflicts, Norway's Christian Democratic Party Urges Government to Take Role in Kashmir Issue Dividing India and Pakistan*, [Kashmir Watch News Service](#) (January 27, 2008)

## Oceania

**Tonga:** *Mediation Encouraged During Law Week*  
Highlight of Law Week in Tonga this year was the prominence of mediation, according to the Chief Justice of Tonga. A mediation film shown every night on Tongan television was very popular and greatly increased knowledge about mediation among both lawyers and the public. With financial assistance from the World Bank, copies of the mediation video are being sent to every village and church committee in the country.  
[Tonga-Now](#) (November 23, 2007)

## Africa

**Chad:** *African Union on Mediation Mission to Chad After Renewed Efforts by Rebels to Oust President Lead to Violence*, [African Path](#), (February 5, 2008)

**Sudan:** *United Nations, African Union Mediators Begin Meetings with Regional Partners of Darfur Peace Process Despite Continued Resistance from Rebel Groups and Fragile Humanitarian Situation; Peace Process Called Irreversible*, [Associated Press](#) (December 4, 2007)

*New Study Looks to Past Negotiation Processes in Sudan for Lessons; Darfur Peace Process Needs Clearly Stated*

Two recent trips to Liberia to explore possibilities for Mediators Beyond Borders have left me with as many questions as answers. As I sat in on the hearings of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in January, I sensed the strength of a force I can only describe as demonic or evil. At the same time, I was aware of the incredible effort and personal sacrifice of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the first elected female head of state on the African continent, and her cabinet, who have returned to rebuild their country from total devastation. The worst and the best of humanity juxtaposed.

The story that moved me the most was not the most gruesome I heard at the Commission that day. The prior speaker's hands and ears had been cut off due to his tribal affiliation by a rebel wielding a machete. He has since seen his attacker driving a bus in Monrovia. I listened, dumbstruck by the great challenge of any sort of healing or forgiveness that confronts the majority of Liberians. And they are the lucky ones, who managed to survive fourteen years of civil conflict as the rest of the world did what we typically do in the face of gross human tragedy – nothing.

Then a young girl began to speak quietly of watching her parents murdered. She was taken in by a kind old lady who was also killed. Orphaned and alone, she was then taken in by a man. Those present began to snicker and the Commissioners called for silence. It was only as she began to speak of the present that she began to sob. He beats me, she spoke through her tears. Can you help me? The Commissioners thanked her for her testimony and called for the next speaker.

The prevalence of domestic violence is estimated at over 80% in post-conflict Liberia. It seems that people have lost the ability to deal with life's conflicts without resorting to violence. People shake their heads and say, Liberians were such a peaceful people before the war . . . how did this happen? The Truth and Reconciliation Commissioners could do nothing for the girl. Indeed, there is

*End and Broad Mandate Supported By the Sudanese People,* [World News Connection](#) (November 27, 2007)

*Failure to Include All Interested Factions, Including Victims, Women and Lesser Rebel Groups, Has Threatened to Derail Mediation Efforts in Darfur; Call for U.S., China and Others to Deploy Envoys to Region to Facilitate Sustained Process and Ensure Durability,* [Africa News](#) (November 26, 2007)

*European Commission Allocates Funds to Support African Union-United Nations Mediation Team in Darfur Region,* [Sudan Tribune](#) (December 23, 2007)

**Kenya:** *U.N. Secretary General Visits Kenya to Carry On Organization's Mediation Efforts in Recent Election Controversy, Meets Separately with President Mwai Kibaki and Opposition Leader Raila Odinga,* [Inthenews.co.uk](#) (February 1, 2008)

*Government Plays Down Need for Mediation, Calls Talks Process of "National Reconciliation,"* [Earth Times \(Kenya\)](#) (January 31, 2008)

*Kenyan Women's Group Submit Memorandum to Mediation Team Asserting Right to be Involved in Crisis Negotiation and All Political Processes and Reaffirming Unique Role in Efforts at Reconciliation, Truth and Peace; U.N. Resolution 1325 Explored,* [AllAfrica.com](#) (January 31, 2008)

*African Union and International Community Seek Consensus on Way Forward in Mediating Kenya's Election Crisis,* [Reuters](#) (January 3, 2008)

**Uganda:** *Two Day Conference in Uganda Sets Out Principles of Agreement to be Addressed in Mediation Concerning Reconciliation of Ugandan and Sudanese Border Affected by Rebel Strife, Including Conditions for Return of Children from Rebel Camps and Their Reintegration and Protection,* [Sudan Tribune](#) (December 18, 2007)

**Zimbabwe:** *President Mugabe Unilaterally Sets Date for Elections, Complicating South African President Mbeki's Efforts at Dialogue Between Government and Rebels,* [Agence France Presse English Wire](#) (January 31, 2008) (Subscription Required)

**South Africa:** *Justice and Restoration Project in South Africa Successfully Resolving Social Problem Cases Using Holistic Approach, Restoring Dignity to Victims, Community and Accused,* [AllAfrica.com](#) (January 22, 2008)

## Latin America

**Caribbean:** *Jamaican Foundation Seeks Funding to Establish Dispute Resolution Centers*  
The Dispute Resolution Foundation in Jamaica is seeking

tremendous controversy over whether the testimonies should be used to bring the accused to justice. One ex-commander admits responsibility for the deaths of over 20,000 people and ritualistically eating the hearts of children before going into battle wearing only his combat boots. Since then, he has had a religious transformation and lives openly in Ghana.

The Commission may not be able to do anything, but we can. The Association of Female Lawyers in Liberia has requested training for their legal staff in mediating cases of domestic violence and child support, in part to conserve time for more egregious cases that must go to trial. They would like information on programs that have been successful in this kind of work in the U.S.

The MBB Project Team for Liberia is continuing to form. Anyone who has expertise in the areas above or would otherwise like to help in any way to build the capacity for mediation and conflict resolution in Liberia, please email us at [liberiambb@gmail.com](mailto:liberiambb@gmail.com).

Harriett Nettles

## Meditation:

**"Freedom is man's capacity to take a hand in his own development. It is our capacity to mold ourselves."**

Rollo May

## Noteworthy:

Getting to "Yes" in Kenya and Sudan, Where Winning is a Joint-Victory, [AllAfrica.com](#) (February 6, 2008)

Kenyan Writer Discusses Role of Mediation in Resolving Global Crises, Uses Examples of Current Conflicts and Mediations in Africa, Emphasizes Importance of Parties' Self-Determination, [World News Connection](#) (January 21, 2008) (Subscription Required)

to raise funds for at least 30 peace and justice centers, which will be the focal point for dispute resolution efforts across the island. In addition to Jamaican government agencies, the Foundation is looking to the United Nations and other partners for sustained funding for the centers, which will train and rely on volunteers.  
[Jamaica Gleaner](#) (December 11, 2007)

## North America

**Missouri, U.S.:** *Peace Initiative in Kansas City Assembles Team to Reach Out to Neighborhoods and Provide Intervention in Conflict and Gun Violence; Multi-Year Effort Will Partner with Local Organizations Providing Residents with Training and Skills to Resolve Conflict Peacefully,* [Kansas City infoZine](#) (January 24, 2008)

*Former U.S. Envoy Dennis Ross Advocates Shift in U.S. Foreign Policy, Urging Diplomacy over Military Mentality, Recalls Earlier Role of U.S. in Global Mediations,* [Fosters.com](#) (December 19, 2007)

## Organizations

**Combatants for Peace:** *Former Combatants in Palestinian-Israeli Conflict Join Together and Build Playground as Safe Place to Grow for Palestinian Youth; Group Committed to Educate Public Toward Reconciliation and Non-Violent Alternatives to Conflict,* [Combatants for Peace](#)

**United States Institute of Peace:** *Working with Partners from NGOs, Militaries, International Organizations and Private Sector, USIP Develops Fragile State Framework for Peacebuilding,* [United States Institute for Peace](#)

**Search for Common Ground:** *Being Understood - A Basic Human Right; Choosing the Safeguarding of Common Human Values over Concept of Clash of Civilizations,* [Common Ground News Service](#) (January 29, 2008)

*Commitment to Peace Education Will Make It More Difficult to Dehumanize and Demonize Those Who Are Different from Us; Skills in Peaceful Conflict Resolution Are Key to Efforts,* [Common Ground News Service](#) (January 17, 2008)

*Women from Diverse Religious and Cultural Backgrounds Explore Separateness, Disparities, Cultural and Ethnic Identities By Creating Middle Eastern Village Experience and Exploring Individual and Collective Narratives,* [Common Group News Service](#) (January 31, 2008)

*The Art of Political Mediation, Benefits to Principle-Based Approach,* [Business Daily \(Nairobi\)](#) (January 30, 2008)

*Institute of Peace Offers Seminar for Community College Educators Focusing on Factors Affecting Conflict Resolution, Including Role of U.N. and Regional Organizations in Affecting Conflict, Preventive Diplomacy; Peacemaking and Peacebuilding, and International Mediation; Community Colleges Play Unique Role as "Democracy's Colleges," Often Being Point of Entry to Education for Immigrants,* [United States Institute of Peace](#)

## Survey: Other International Mediation Developments

- Chinese Government Establishes Cross-Sector Group to Study How to Promote Mediation in Hong Kong, [South China Morning Post](#) (November 25, 2007) (Subscription Required)
- The Asia Foundation and McConnell Foundation Are Expanding Program for Community Mediation Across Twelve Districts in Nepal, [Earth Times](#) (November 26, 2007)
- Year-Old Mediation Center in Bangalore, India Resolved 600 Cases in First Year with 75 Lawyers Trained as Mediators; "Mediation Week" to Be Held in February, [Hindu \(India\)](#) (November 27, 2007)
- Citizens Mediation Center in Lagos, Nigeria Mediates Thousands of Landlord-Tenant, Workplace, Family and Other Cases, [AllAfrica.com](#) (November 21, 2007) (Subscription Required)
- Philippines Spreads Mediation to Sarangani Province with New Mediation Center, [PIA Daily News Reporter](#) (December 4, 2007)
- Fiji Ponders Next Step After Court Rules Against Argument that Mediation Should Satisfy Arbitration Requirement in Labor Agreement, [Fiji Government Press Release](#) (December 20, 2007); [Radiofiji.com](#) (December 20, 2007)

**Concerned Parents Association of Uganda:** NGO Formed by Parents of Abducted Children in Uganda's Civil War to Raise Awareness in International Community to Plight of Uganda's Children and Call for Aid in Their Rescue; Increasing Number of Citizens See Peaceful Resolution of All Conflicts as Only Viable Solution, [The Fraynetwork Justice Issues Website](#); [Concerned Parents Association](#)



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