

Peace messengers are coming !

The Peace Messengers Network Newsletter

N°3- December 2008



From one year to the other

It is the end of year, time to celebrate- particularly for Peace messengers, who learned at the same time that SCI-France received funds to organise a Peace Messenger training seminar in Spring (YEEEEEEAH!) and that the ICM voted to give them funding to print out the Peace Messengers Handbook. Great opportunities to reinforce and expand the network!

It is also time to reflect on what happened to all the plans developed during the PM Network meeting in August. The Dreambook is on the back burner until further notice, the Handbook has been developed but not during a seminar.

Unexpected opportunities to develop connections with Latin American and African partners have

arisen, while a strong interest was expressed from Asian branches. The Wiki will hopefully also be a new opportunity to better connect, work together and support each other. And the PM seminar will indeed take place!

Another challenge for next year will be to reflect on how to move from a small informal network to a larger and stronger structure, able to support all Peace Messengers in SCI. Will it be a formal Working Group? Or will it be a lighter structure? If you are interested in these issues and/or would like to be involved in it, get in touch!

But before that, it is time for a well deserved break. We therefore wish you

ALL THE BEST FOR NEW YEAR!

WIKI

The Peace Messengers WIKI will be developed in the next weeks. It will be a useful resource center, as well as a place where Peace Messengers will be able to exchange tools and feedback on them. We hope that some pages will eventually become public, but in the meanwhile, we strongly advise you to contact the WIKI team at wiki@workcamps.info to get a login and password.



Peace Messengers on the web...

Some active branches have set up their own Peace Messengers pages, check them up!

SCI-France: <http://www.sci-france.org/pages/groupepeacemessengers.htm>

OWA- Poland :
<http://www.jedenswiat.org/pl/index.php?aid=156>

PVN- Albania :
<http://www.pvnalbania.org/spip.php?rubrique23>

... let us know if your branch's website also has a section on Peace messengers !

Peace Messengers at ICM

ICM (the annual meeting of all SCI branches' delegates, where main decisions regarding SCI International are being taken) was first the opportunity to request funds for the PM Handbook from SCI budget. Delegates voted in favour of this request, thereby endorsing the work done by Peace Messengers and recognizing its value for furthering SCI general objectives.

But it was also another opportunity to present and promote the Peace messengers programme to (mostly) European and Asian delegates. A workshop was organized on the first night, where a small dozen of participants received information about the programme. The second night, a 'market of best practices' was organized, where branches could present some activities or achievements they were particularly proud of. A short Peace Messengers session was organized, with a simple activity, aiming at showing that Peace Messengers activities could be run by volunteers with little or no training and facilitating skills.



Informal discussions were also the opportunity to identify interest from various branches and volunteers, and also hear that **SCI-Catalunya** has received funds from local authorities to start a Peace Messengers programme next year. Congratulations!

NATO's 60th birthday- time for retirement ?

SCI is not a political organisation, and as a pluralist organisation welcomes all political, ideological, religious and cultural beliefs and positions, as long as it does not contradict its vision and values. However, whether you are apolitical, a moderate or a radical anarchist, if you are a peace activist, you can't possibly support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. A military alliance, set up by the US to contain communism, and involved in various wars and crises, it has reinvented itself after the end of the Cold War to build the new world order as seen by the US successive governments, and has more than once undertaken military action without UN consent.

Next year, governments involved in the alliance will celebrate its 60th birthday on the French-German border, near Strasbourg. However, they won't be alone: a network of anti-military organizations have decided to organize demonstrations, conferences and a resistance camp nearby.

SCI as such, as far as we know, has not planned to be part of the campaign, but we encourage all Peace activists to be involved. Check the following webpage for contacts in your country:

<http://tinyurl.com/68g3kx>

and contact Yahu (greenturtle2globe@yahoo.co.uk) if you want to take action!

Peace Messenger of the (end of the) Year!

In every issue of the newsletter, we will now present one Peace Messenger, in order to give a human face to the network. If you would like to share your experience and be the next Peace Messengers interviewed, write to peacemessengers@gmail.com

All those who crossed her path know her as 'Mama Shark' and know that she could energize an undertakers' convention. Those who know her better also know that she's one of the most active CID-Macedonia volunteer and a coordinator of the SAVA international working group. It comes therefore as no surprise to know that she's also one of the pillars of the Peace Messengers Network. Let's give the mike tooooo... Ivana!



Your biggest surprise as a Peace Messenger?



My biggest surprise: that the Peace Messenger Project exists and actually has its functional continuation after the training in Novi Sad. This is the one of the projects with enormous follow up and outcomes that for sure justified its objectives. The effect one idea can have. The idea of peace messengers that entered in SCI and immediately spread its vibes - Positive vibes ☺

Your biggest emotion as a Peace Messenger?-Falling in love in the Peace Messenger Project. The moment transferring the message, and the feedback I get from the receiver is very strong emotion, it is a motivation to continue the path or help to change courses in it; happiness when I communicate and meet people; Compassion when people share their life stories; the enthusiasm of all peace messengers; satisfaction when help the volunteers to highlight ideas for peace and understanding or foster the process of action within the group; Pleased when I gain knowledge and new perspectives of life.

To sum up it feels like having the best energizer, shaking up your body and mind, just getting into you.

Your biggest hope as a Peace Messenger?

That all the Peace Messengers will get hot-air balloons :D, to continue the Peace Messenger Revolution!



Muzzamil getting ready to make keynote address (middle)

Peace activism beyond the workcamp

Non- violence award for Muzzamil, a long-time SCI Sri-Lanka activist

One of Sri Lanka's SCI activists, Muzzamil was awarded the ICPNA AWARD for Promotion of NonViolence by ANUVARAT GLOBAL ORGANISATION (ANUVIBHA) during the 7th International Conference on

Peace and Nonviolent Action held from November 10th -14th 2008 in Jaipur, India. This award was presented to by the Ex-President of India Dr. A.J.P. Abdul Kalam. You will find below an excerpt of his address:

" To address the world crisis of TODAY: let us set our foot this very day on the path of nonviolence as commanded upon us by the creator. Let us make it our lifestyle. Let us start practicing the nonviolent lifestyle based on love and affection. The nonviolent lifestyle based on compassion, the nonviolent lifestyle based on togetherness, caring and

respect and justice. If every one of us gathered here today could do this, start right now, then we would be providing an alternative nonviolent lifestyle to address the current world issues of economic depression, shortage of food, killing of all living beings and bring an end to all forms of destruction.

Yes, we can start right now, by serving only what we can eat and not throw away the excess that we could otherwise share with those who are in want, by having the minimum of dresses that we would actually be wearing and not by stacking many in our wardrobe without using them, by having a house that would be sufficient for our decent living and not having big houses with many luxuries that are hardly used or even not necessary for our existence, by being kind to everyone and anyone irrespective of religion, language, ethnicity, colour, caste, economic and social status, community or nation and etc., respecting them, expressing our gratitude and going out of the way to help those who are in need and devoting many other things in a similar manner in our lives. We shall then start living a life of togetherness and share together for a nonviolent life leading towards a sustainable world peace. And no doubt this would make our lives peaceful, even after death. “

<http://www.anuvibha.in> – the whole text of the address will be made available on the Peace Messengers webpage.

News from SCI France :



Starting-Block: new tools to raise awareness on social, cultural and economic human rights

[www. http://www.starting-block.org/](http://www.starting-block.org/)

You certainly know it: on December 10th, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A lot of events took place all around the world, big meetings and protests, concerts or more humble actions like the one SCI France took part in. Laële, long-term volunteer in SCI France's office, and I went to an information session about workshops dealing with social, cultural and economical human rights such as the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing and medical care, the right to education, etc. SCI was invited to this session by the organisation Starting-Block, a network of various but mostly student organisations. Starting-Block has two main projects : one is a programm aiming at making young able-bodied and disabled people meet each other through different activities (sport, excursions, actions against “wheelchair discriminations”...) and the second one is to raise awareness among young people on topics like (international) solidarity, civic responsibility, etc.

Starting-block volunteers do a lot of workshops in schools about children rights or human rights in general and are quite famous in France for organising socalled “insolent meals”, an interactive way to really grasp the North/South gap (like the “Sudestan” game created by SCI Belgium does about the debt). I won't tell too much about these “insolent meals” since I hope to organize some one day and it can only work if the participants do not have too much information!

Anyway, Starting-block gave us a lot of tools (games, publications, web sites, etc.) to organize sessions about this category of rights. You'll soon find more information about this on our Wiki.

facebook

Yes, yes, we know, Facebook is spied on by the CIA, or something like that, but OK, we still think it's a great place to meet and exchange. So, if you belong to this global network, join us in the **SCI Peace Messengers** group!

Peace Messenger branch contact persons:

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PVN-Albania:	Lorena	SCI-Romania :	Irina
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Write to peacemessengers@gmail.com to get individual contact details