

Nonviolent Peaceforce is a nonpartisan unarmed peacekeeping force composed of trained civilians from around the world. In partnership with local groups, Nonviolent Peaceforce field teams apply proven nonviolent strategies to protect human rights, deter violence and help create space for local peacemakers to carry out their work.

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## Sri Lanka

### Highlights

- NP around the world: read the activities of Field Team Members on the field
- News from Brussels, including conferences, recent publications and NP staff news
- NP Europe Member Organisations News: Training courses, political initiatives and much more
- The rising momentum for Civilian Peacekeeping in Brussels, a review of the events organized

The most recent report from the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission claims that the security situation in the north and east continues to be bleak and deteriorating for the civilian population. The military launched a new offensive against the LTTE in the island's northwest, in September, after a relative calm in fighting since early July, when the government captured Sri Lanka's Eastern Province from the LTTE, taking control of the region for the first time in 13 years.

In a **detailed interview** given on September 2nd, President Mahinda Rajapakse agreed that the Tamils do have genuine grievances, but asserted that any settlement of the ethnic conflict will have to be built on a unitary state. On the other hand, the war strategy of the government has taken its greatest toll on the very people whom the government claims to wish rescuing from the LTTE. The bodies of at least 50 people were found last month alone, with many still unaccounted for.

Reports of a death toll of hundreds of combatants and civilians are gradually surfacing.

Access the **full president's interview** here: [www.indiaenews.com/srilanka/20070902/68205.htm](http://www.indiaenews.com/srilanka/20070902/68205.htm)



**NPSL in Batticaloa** was greatly involved in the International Peace Day

activities on Sept 21st. Around 450 children from 3 vocational training centres and 2 orphanages (many of which experienced violence and abduction) participated in the celebration, actively supported by NP.

**NPSL in Valachchenai** participated to the Peace Day parents' vigil - a ceremony that was joined by local CBO partners and about 40 mothers and fathers, a local priest, and UNICEF representatives. Among the issues raised the demand to all armed groups for children to be returned to parents.



**NPSL in Trincomalee** has received requests from several religious leaders for facilitating meetings with NGOs and INGOs working on the protection and the establishment of a safe house for both disaster and conflict affected children, in an area where many incidents were recently reported: grenade and claymore attacks, killings and lootings.



**NPSL in Colombo** initiated the start of stakeholder and advocacy tracking project, that will be used to monitor advocacy and networking activities for local partners. It accompanied various victims of violence to human rights advocacy groups, police and embassies to seek assistance and expanded its network further to groups in Colombo as well as Kandy.

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For further information about our projects and links on NP activities [www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org](http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org)

# Philippines

Small scale armed skirmishes took place between Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and governmental militiamen in **Maguindanao** during the month of September. Another fire-fight took place in **Basilan** between the Philippine army and the Abu Sayyaf Group on September 26.

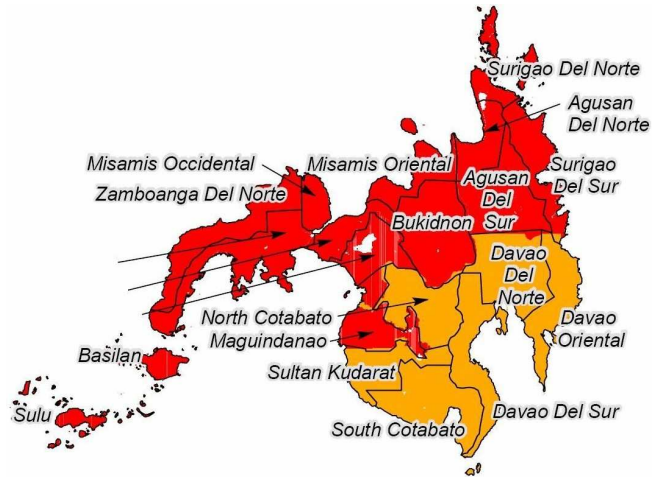
A **special meeting** between representatives of the Government of the Philippines and MILF Peace Panels took place in Cyberjaya, Malaysia on August 27, the same venue of the GRP-MILF Peace Talks in May 2001. The most relevant outcome of the meeting was to **extend** the geographical scope (to Basilian and Palawan, as originally decided by the Parties in September 2006, but also Sulu and Tawi) and the tour of duty of the **Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team (IMT)** for one full year, until August 2008.

**NP Sulu Team** was warmly welcomed and praised by the Governor of Basilan, the nearby island where the NP Sulu team has been deploying since July, for a special operation that succeeded in preventing the escalation of violence between armed forces and the

MILF. The team also visited a local NGO involved in various IDP and medical relief activities, which asked for NP accompaniment: Sustainable Health Improvement through Empowerment and Local Development, SHIELD.

regarding the situation of a child who was shot in the shoulder after being caught in the ensuing crossfire. NP kept a constant visible presence in the area throughout the crisis.

**“The NP Central Mindanao team contributed in helping to control subversive rumours by maintaining constant communication with civilians on the ground, local and international monitoring bodies, as well as all relevant authorities and parties involved”**



**Central Mindanao Team** - In the first few days of September, an encounter took place between the MILF and the Civilian Volunteer Organization (CVO) in Barangay Balanaken, causing hundreds of people to evacuate their homes.

**For more information read:** <http://moroland.net/?p=641> Ceasefire bodies defuse MILF and CVO clash

<http://moroland.net/?p=631> Gov't, MILF extend IMT mandate; Sulu, Tawi-Tawi in

NP contributed in helping to control subversive rumors by maintaining constant communication with civilians on the ground, local and international monitoring bodies, as well as all relevant authorities and parties involved. The team also informed and followed up with UNICEF



**Cotabato Main Office** - NP Main Office started off the initial phase of the human security/protection network by sharing relevant situation updates from the ground with its partner organizations, local/national/international NGOs, International organizations and other networks contributing for peace in Mindanao, Philippines. To facilitate the work of both field sites, the Main Office maintained regular communication updates with various top-level administrators of the GRP and MILF Coordination Committees on Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH), the MNLF political leadership, and all relevant mayors and Philippine Government officials.



## Guatemala

On September 10 it was announced that the second electoral round would be between Alvaro Colom of the Union National Hope (UNE), and Otto Perez Molina of the Patriotic Party (PP). The official results gave the UNE 26.87% of the votes, followed by 25.04% for the PP. This launched the countdown to the second round, scheduled for November 4.

Among the unresolved issues that will be passed on to the new government are the penetration of organized crime in the state institutions, the purging of the police force, and assaults



on buses and other violent crimes.

On September 22 the National Civilian Police (PNC) received a denunciation about the kidnapping of five young people in the neighbourhood El Gallito, Guatemala City. A few days later they were found dead. Thanks to information given by a witness about the presence of a police car, the investigators found members of the private security force of the

Director of the PNC were in the area the day of the crime. The information displayed by the GPS unit

in the vehicle led to the detention of Inspector Wilson Tovar and Agent Sabino Ramos, both accused of extrajudicial murder and abuse of authority, along with links to drug trafficking. This led to the Minister of the Interior, Adela Camacho Torrebiarte, announcing the decision to relieve Julio Hernandez of his responsibilities as Director of the PNC. Crimes such as the El Gallito incident and the murder of the Salvadorian Parliamentarians reported in April expose the involvement of members of the PNC in illegal enterprises and may continue to help untangle the complex network of violent criminal activity Guatemala has become entangled in.

**NP team** – While closely monitoring the aforementioned situations, NP travelled extensively with La Unidad in September accompanying them on several new cases in distant areas of the county, often for days at a time. The team also conducted its second out of town accompaniment of the women’s Consortium of Change in Action, which provides psycho-social and legal support to women who have suffered sexual

**In Guatemala NP continues nonviolent accompaniment for ‘La Unidad de Protección de Defensoras y Defensores de Derechos Humanos’**

## Colombia

According to the UNHCR, Colombia officially has some 2.2 million people who are registered as internally displaced. That number is only climbing. And so



is the violence. This year, 10,000 people have had to flee their homes in Narino department, next to a likely NP deployment

area, mostly due to armed conflict and violence. In October, Colombia’s Constitutional Court held hearings on the treatment and protection of indigenous people

in the countries most violent regions but has yet to put into place any sort of effective mechanisms for containing the violence

attributing to the displacement and deaths of the people there.

**NP work** - The fundraising efforts by NP consultant René Perea and NP Brussels office continued through September and October. If preliminary conditions are met, NP hopes to start the Colombia project in early 2008.

## Uganda

According to UNHCR, in northern Uganda alone, an estimated 916,000 people were forced to continue to live in refugee camps, 539,000 were able to return home, and some 381,000 people had moved to new



transit sites near their villages from the end of last June through September. There are some signs of progress with the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and Juba talks, which include the improved security that has created enabling environ-

ment for some IDPs to return home.

**NP work** – Oloo Otieno, a Project Coordinator with four years of field experience for NP, is currently leading a preliminary assessment group to prepare for a full NP team deployment in the country.

**The outputs of the ARCA project (Associations and Resources for Conflict Management Skills) are available online: [www.peacetraining.org](http://www.peacetraining.org)**

## News from Brussels

**NP Staff news** - NP Brussels is in the process of completing the selection for the following positions: French Translation Coordinator, European Fundraising Officer.

**Interns:** after having reviewed hundreds of cvs from around the world, three new interns started with NP Brussels as fundraising assistants: Sybille

Regout, Jake Good and Regina Hartig, respectively from Belgium, US and Germany.

More than 100 participants attended the Conference on "**Human Rights Defenders and Development Agencies**", which took place in Brussels on 15-16 October 2007. Front Line - The International Foundation

for the Protection of Human Rights Defender – and ECDPM, the European Centre for Development Policy Management, organised the conference with the support of the King Baudouin Foundation and the European Commission. All the documents related to the conference can be found on ECDPM's website: [www.ecdpm.org](http://www.ecdpm.org).

## Publications

After two intense and rewarding years, the **Associations and Resources for Conflict Management Skills (ARCA)** project has come to an end. The outputs of the project are now available on the ARCA webportal: [www.peacetraining.org](http://www.peacetraining.org), including a Guide to Peace Educators "Peace Training" (to be translated in several Eu languages), a Need Analysis and Event reports.

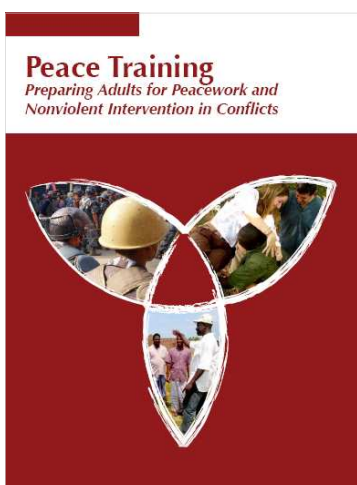
Sinhala and Tamil editions of the **Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation** are now avail-

able and can be accessed online: [www.berghof-handbook.net](http://www.berghof-handbook.net) The translation was organised by the Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies Sri Lanka Office and made possible by the support of the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, through the GTZ, and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. Print editions in both languages have been published by Vijitha Yapa Publications, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

**Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Si-**

**erra Leone:** Mapping Challenges, Responses and Future Entry Points, International Alert, October 2007. You may download the publication from: [www.international-alert.org/publications/313.php](http://www.international-alert.org/publications/313.php)

**The newest ISIS European Security Review**, No. 35, October 2007, is available here: [www.isis-europe.org/ftp/download/esr\\_35.pdf](http://www.isis-europe.org/ftp/download/esr_35.pdf) Transforming War Economies. Danielle Lalive d'Épinay/Albrecht Schnabel (eds.).



The ARCA Peace Training Guide

**The Austrian Study Center for peace and Conflict resolution** is announcing two courses that will be held both in February 2008. These are modules of the International Civilian Peace-keeping and Peace-building Programme (IPT). Feb 3-16: Core Course; Feb 17-29: Specialisation Course on Media Development. For more details: [www.aspr.ac.at](http://www.aspr.ac.at)

**PATRIR** has announced a two-day training session "Communication and learning in intercultural contexts" addressing the basics of inter-cultural communication, which will use discussions, real-life examples, music and theatre to illustrate intercultural differences. The Training Programme will take place November 5-6, and it is free of charge.

**The European Center for Conflict Prevention** through the Academy for Conflict Transformation located in Bonn, Germany, is offering an Advanced Programme that qualifies people to engage in professional work in the areas of conflict transformation, civil conflict resolution, Civil Peace Service and crisis prevention. It consists of 20 practice-oriented trainings of one to three days each of which is offered in German and in English. The details of all of the individual trainings of the Advanced Programme are online: [www.forumzfd.de/](http://www.forumzfd.de/)

**NOVA**, the Center for Social Innovation has closely cooperated with the Open University of Catalonia for the International Congress "Conflicts, Conflictology and Peace", held on 22-23 September. The congress itself was a success, and the presentations of Agnieszka Komoch from NP, Jochen Schmidt representing EN-CPS and Eplo, and Luca Gervasoni from NOVA were highly appreciated. They have been asked to speak of concrete practices and experiences in the next Congress, a year from now. For more details: [www.uoc.edu/symposia/pau/cat/index.html](http://www.uoc.edu/symposia/pau/cat/index.html)

**The forumZFD** continues to grow: the project department has recently submitted applications to reinforce Civil PeaceService work in the Western Balkans and in the Middle East, and hopefully in 2008 will start to work in a third project region, i.e. the Philippines/Mindanao. The Academy for Conflict Transformation offers a variety of short-term trainings, next to the regular long qualification courses, and the work with 220 trained peace consultant alumni. More info at: [www.forumzfd.de/](http://www.forumzfd.de/)

**The international Fellowship of Reconciliation** organizes an annual orientation of approximately one month at the IFOR international secretariat for two young women active in civil society organizations (CSOs).

**NEAG** Alternatives to Violence, together with EIRENE Netherlands and Peace Brigades International will launch a joint awareness raising campaign in January 2008. Thanks a persistent lobbying activity, the Dutch government created an opening for civil society in the Stability Fund. Until spring 2007 only 'governmental actors' were allowed to make use of these financial resources; now there is an opening for NGOs to submit an application through the Dutch embassy.

**The International Peace Brigade** is organizing a seminar, "Books or Bombs: Sustainable Disarmament for Sustainable Development," November 11-12. This will be followed with the annual Council meeting (Nov. 13). The events will be held at the prestigious Bibliotheca Alexandrina, and in cooperation with the Peace Studies Institute.



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[www.BuyPeaceBonds.org](http://www.BuyPeaceBonds.org)





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## Creating space for Peace

**CHECK OUR NEW WEBSITE:**  
[WWW.NONVIOLENTPEACEFORCE.ORG](http://WWW.NONVIOLENTPEACEFORCE.ORG)



**Top down:** Atif Hameed, group shot of the EP debate, Oloo Otieno, Tim Wallis and Christine Schweitzer at the EC conference

**Nonviolent Peaceforce** (NP) is an International NGO engaged in the creation of a large-scale international unarmed peacekeeping force, composed of trained civilians. In partnership with local groups, NP members apply proven non-violent strategies to protect human rights, deter violence and help create space for local peacemakers to carry out their work.

Launched in 1999 at the Hague Appeal for Peace and established at the convening event in Surajkund, India in 2002, NP brings together 85 Member Organisations from around the world and is endorsed by 8 Nobel Peace Laureates.

Our vision is to create a large-scale nonviolent peace force through field deployments, training and advocacy.



## Rising momentum for Civilian Peacekeeping in Brussels

October and November have been two very important months in Brussels political agenda for civilian peacekeeping. Nonviolent Peaceforce organized and took part actively in several events, debates, conferences, experts' seminars, high-level committees, including:

a) **"The EU as a global actor – The role of civil society"**, on 22-23 October, an experts' seminar at EC RELEX, with the special participation of NP veteran field team member in Sri Lanka, Pramila Sinha. The seminar focused on the implementation of the new Stability Instrument and particularly of the Peacebuilding Partnership. Sub-themes were: DAY 1- The EU response to Geopolitical risks and Trans-regional threats; The EU's Peace Building Partnership: increasing the involvement of NGOs; The EU's Peace Building Partnership: building the thematic capacity of NGOs. DAY 2- Involvement of NGOs in situations of crises or emerging crises; Information sharing and commu-



nications: exchange of know-how and usefulness of technology;

b) **"THE SEEDS OF PEACE: Civil Society Peacekeeping: Field Experiences, European Perspectives,"** on 6 November, a debate at the European Parliament, organised by NP and co-hosted by MEPs Luisa Morgantini (GUE/NGL) Angelika Beer (Greens/EFA), Thijs Berman (PSE), Thierry Cornillet (ALDE). The debate, organized to have a look at the groundbreaking experience of civil society peacekeeping missions on the field, proved to be engaging and very participated. Experts from the field and practitioners from around Europe exposed their views and presented the situation of civilian peacekeeping in their countries.

c) **"From Early Warning to Early Action: Developing the EU's Re-**

**sponse to Crisis and longer-term Threats,"** on 12-13 November, an international conference with more than 600 participants, and 3 NP speakers: Oloo Otieno, NP Uganda coordinator, Christine Schweitzer, NP Programme Director and Atif Hameed, NP Philippines Project Director. Many other participants came from NP member organisations in Europe and in the world, including PATRIR (Romania), ZFD (Germany), Peaceworkers project of International Alert (UK), NOVASC (Zimbabwe). Media material available here: [webgate.ec.europa.eu/tariqa/conference](http://webgate.ec.europa.eu/tariqa/conference)

d) a **Hearing about Civilian Peacekeeping**, on 21 November, organised by EPLO, at the CIVCOM, Council Committee on Civilian Crisis Management, with Marcel Smits, Project Director of NPSL and Alessandro Rossi, NP European Coordinator