



# International Center for Conciliation

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## Conciliation - The ICfC Newsletter

Volume 5 Issue 1



Conciliation

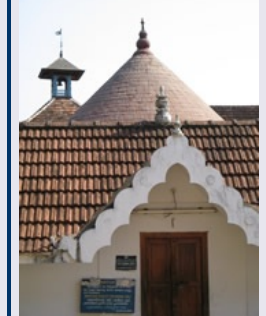
Volume 5,  
Issue 1

SPRING  
2010

### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



### NEWS AND UPDATES



The words of the Hebrew expression of gratitude and the jubilation attached to its ancient cadences echo in my mind: How thankful we are at this wonderful moment: "Sheheheyanu, vekiyemanu, vehigiyanu..." We are so grateful for renewal in meeting great challenges, for sustaining us against what deflected us from our mission, and for leading us now to new opportunities. We share this joyousness with you, our friends, funders, and fellows who have helped us define and pursue the ends and gather and utilize the means.

The International Center for Conciliation (ICfC) has been committed to helping groups of embattled people, caught in unsettled claims and grievances and loaded down by cumulative hatred, people who view one another through ancient prejudices and their new adumbrations that fuel those hatreds. We try to open the wellsprings of empathy, the channels of communication, the unutilized networks of identity and identification, and help them build foundations for shared action and a new sense of



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Donate



### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Save the date!

#### Voices from the Field

Boston, May 5 and June 23

Join us for for the third in the new speaker series Voices from the Field featuring ICfC fellow **Phil Gamaghelyan** and ICfC Associate Dr. **David Steele** and their contribution

community.

The challenges have been more than the consequence of the global economy that has dealt such a devastating blow to individual philanthropy and foundation funding. The despair that we all feel in watching the failures of governments and international agencies with huge resources to stop conflicts and to sustain peacemaking initiatives, even those that have limped along for years and suppressed flaming violence and even when they depend upon a "soldier behind every tree." In the face of such realities that daily stoke our despair in a steady stream of headline grabbing descriptions, what can a small organization do with responses that so much appear to be "too little, too late?"

In many places where we work, it is precisely our bottom-up approach that not only creates new realities and lends plausibility to optimism. It is the local community leadership that we train involving people who want to work with their old enemies to examine and ultimately free themselves of their pained memories and resentments that will support and shepherd the larger processes of change. A few well trained and determined individuals can release that optimism and catalyze that which makes the larger processes successful. Those are the people for whom we search and who we try to make more effective under different circumstances.

Last week we signed a major partnership agreement with Ossim Shalom, a professional organization of Social Workers for Peace in Israel with a membership of 1600 talented and committed and professionals. This momentous partnership will enable us to organize and run joint workshops in 6 diverse "hot spots" communities starting this May using our unique method of Historical Conciliation. We will launch additional four workshops once the first six are completed and show the positive result.

Ossim Shalom (OS) is at the forefront of improving the lives, strengthening the ties, and increasing the participation of all of Israel's citizens, including its minority members. It views Israel's incredible diversity as an asset, rather than an obstacle, and orients its professionals in directions towards projects that enable Israel to balance and realize its liberal, democratic, and pluralistic legacies. OS calls for using the basic tool of social work – dialogue – as a means to help resolve conflicts between Israeli Arabs and Jews. Acting in a highly diverse social environment, OS believes that bridging gaps between Jews and Arabs within Israel, as well as between Israelis and Palestinians, is essential to the peace process and to the advancement of welfare in Israel and in the region.

Cambodia Trip Report by Anuradha Desai

Stories of survivors from Cambodia: "This is My Story" and "Killing in My Village"

**FEATURED PROFILE:** Richard Koerner, ICfC Board Member

## PROJECT UPDATES

### Israel Update

By Anne Peckham, ICfC Intern

ICfC's pilot projects in the last three years in northern Israel have met with laudable success. We have created community rapprochement and strengthened faltering relations even where violence and escalation have threatened the peace in the region. Our workshops between Arab and Jewish neighbors in Yaad-Miar, in Pekiin in upper Galilee, and in the Hadar section of Haifa have transformed aggression and hostility into collaboration by inspiring joint youth and community programs. These successes have led to requests for our intervention by civil society actors and new communities and participants.

[Read more about the Israel program](#)

to healing historical traumas in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kenya, and Iran.

### ICfC on Facebook and Twitter

We are pleased to announce that ICfC has joined the social networking community! You can now follow us on **Facebook** and **Twitter** (@icfconciliation). Become a fan or start following us on these social networking sites to receive additional organizational updates.

### Fundraising Update

The year 2009 brought with it difficult news of economic downturn. Many worthy organizations were forced to cut back their services, let staff go, or even fold operations entirely. While economic circumstances required that ICfC retrench and hold back on launching programs, we survived. We are extremely pleased to announce that we were able to meet the challenge grant of \$75,000 from an anonymous donor, thanks to the generous support of our supporters like you. **Thank you.**

We begin 2010 not quite up to where we must be to realize our plans, but with a good start and with much encouragement. Our

Our work in Cambodia is moving at a steady pace and is demonstrating that indeed ours is the right approach when dealing with the survivors of Khmer Rouge, who have had to suppress their pained memories of the last 30 years. We could do more if we had more resources, since the kind of work we are doing is not being undertaken by many others. Our team of four field staff is forging ahead and assisting the rural population to get “unstuck” from their bad memories and move ahead. In this newsletter, our wonderful staff has written stories and reports that you will find of interest.

While we have been forced to scale back in some of our efforts in Southeast Asia and in Western Europe, we are in constant contact with our trainees and fellows and supporters who, using ICfC methods and materials, continue to do yeoman work, often under conditions of adversity, in confronting countrywide and regional violence and the chaos that emerges from natural disasters. On a recent trip to Amsterdam, we met with our old friends who are so much involved in making the new diversity of their city and country work and with them envisioned plans for new cooperative efforts. What a pleasure it is to work with established leaders of real vision.

The partnership between our respective organizations in Israel and elsewhere is an exciting model for intercultural and international efforts to flourish. It will expand the scale of operations dramatically and provide economies of scale and efficiency. Such partnerships will offer new funding opportunities that would not be available to either party on its own. Still, ICfC has to take its fundraising to new and difficult heights if we were to sustain meaningful partnerships and deliver high quality programs.

We call upon you, our friends, who “renew,” “sustain,” and “lead” the ICfC. Please support our intense efforts and help us make the most of the new plateau of activities and the accelerated pace at which we will be able to do peacemaking.

In Gratitude,

Hillel.



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## Cambodia: Justice and History Outreach Project Update

By Sophia Dien, International Fellow in Cambodia

The work of ICfC in Cambodia remains incredibly relevant to the masses of ordinary people, 80% of whom live in villages and small towns. Our Justice and History Outreach (JHO) Project occupies a unique space in the country.

Most programs run by other NGOs focus strictly on information outreach... What is missing from many of these initiatives is a type of pre-outreach effort in which time is invested in the rural community to listen to people’s pained memories, to foster their ability to communicate the gruesome past with their family members and community, and to acknowledge and validate their experiences. These efforts are the focus of the JHO project.

**[Read more about the History and Justice Outreach Project in Cambodia](#)**

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Cambodia program is actively engaging the rural population that wants to move forward after painful memories of Khmer Rouge atrocities (please see Cambodia update for more information). In Israel, we have entered into a new partnership with Ossim Shalom, Social Workers for Peace, to support our programs building Arab and Jewish dialogue. To launch our next set of ten workshops in this important and critical effort, we need to raise \$100,000 before June 15th.

A nonprofit with a large vision and fewer resources, ICfC fully relies on the loyal support of our friends and devoted followers. As we wipe our brow and get geared up for more hard work, we feel blessed to have your help and encouragement. It contributes mightily to our reputation, to what our work represents, and to our future as an organization that will contribute significantly to enduring peace.

Please join us in realizing this vision of building peace. No amount is too small or too big.



## STORIES FROM CAMBODIA



### "This is My Story"

By **Tim Minea**

Story of Mr.  
Nouch Mao,  
Age: 55  
Kampot Province



*Nouch Mao*

Before the Khmer Rouge came, my parents were farmers. Although we did not earn much money, we lived simply and happily. But very soon after they



## Cambodia Trip Report

By Anuradha Desai, ICfC Executive Director

Ut Kim Eng, a survivor of the Khmer Rouge, is a leader in women's health issues in the Tany village in Kampong Chham, a district in the eastern part of Cambodia. She welcomed us into her stilted bamboo hut, displaying the graciousness and hospitality shown to us by all of the Cambodians. Her warm smile was dampened, however, by a profound sadness as she began to tell us her story. She was thirteen when the Khmer Rouge blindfolded her and put her in a truck. Eng survived only by jumping out from the back of the truck and hiding herself in a basket – the rest of her family was killed.



While Ut Kim Eng's story is uniquely her own, the horror experienced by the villagers across Cambodia is universal. At the end of my first day in Tany, we went to see the site of a mass grave of 80 people. There are no signs of burial locations or official designation. Villagers simply say it is where they saw dead bodies being thrown.

Read more of the [Cambodia Trip Report](#)

## FEATURED PROFILES

**Richard Koerner**

arrived in our village, my family's happiness suddenly disappeared. Life changed drastically, forever.

My parents, my sisters, and my brothers were forcibly separated and made to work very hard in different labor and living groups. I was forced to abandon my vows as a Buddhist monk. The Khmer Rouge especially despised monks and religious people, describing monks as "parasitical worms who get food without ever working for it." They destroyed all Buddhist statues, banned religious practices, and turned the pagoda, once the center of celebration and village life, into a prison and torture center.

[Read more of "This is My Story"](#)



### "Killing in My Village"

Story of Mr. Kung Ny  
Age: 50  
Kampot Province



*Kung Ny*

The Khmer Rouge occupied my village in 1973 when I was about 13 years old. During that first year, they divided the people of my village into many work groups.

In 1974, the Khmer Rouge policy was to eliminate all of the people that they viewed as imperialist or capitalist. They believed that imperialists and capitalists exploited the poor, the working, and the farmer classes. They destroyed the pagoda and used it as a prison. They ordered the villagers and even the Achar (a religious layman) to destroy the Buddha statues. If we resisted their orders, we would be killed. An Achar from my village, a man named Khun, was ordered to destroy a Buddha statue. Later, he became a killer. It is hard for me to understand how a person who the people used to respect can become so cruel. It is hard to believe such



*Richard Koerner*

International Center for Conciliation (ICfC) is thrilled to welcome our newest member of the board, Mr. Richard Koerner, who brings his years of entrepreneurial and organizational experience in the private sector to ICfC, along with his passion to bring communities with divided narratives and deep conflicts together to build lasting peace.

Mr. Koerner co-founded High Speed Solutions Corp. [HSSC] in 1997, a high tech semiconductor company. He was instrumental in developing linkages between HSSC and leading experts in the technical community as well as major strategic partners, including Intel. These efforts led to the acquisition of HSSC by Intel in 2001. Subsequently, Mr. Koerner successfully managed HSSC under Intel's umbrella until his retirement in 2005.

Prior to that, Mr. Koerner was involved with several technology start-ups and founded Focus International, an international business consulting company offering a variety of services to companies interested in expanding their operations into foreign markets. The company's clients have included international companies such as Japan's Matsushita Electric and Germany's Siemens. Mr. Koerner's in-depth knowledge of the industry resulted in him being asked to supply expert testimony before Senator John Kerry's Senate subcommittee on the U.S. Government's role in supporting export activities of Small/Medium Enterprises [SME's] into foreign markets. In addition, Mr. Koerner participated as a panelist in the 1994 White House Conference on Small Business.

In 1972, Mr. Koerner conceived and co-founded NEC Electronics which became the principal American division of Japan's Nippon Electric Corporation, then the world's largest manufacturer of semiconductors. Using media exposure, public forums, and speaking engagements, he worked to make NEC accepted in the market place. Mr. Koerner negotiated an often adverse political climate to advance NEC to become the major semiconductor supplier in North America. As Senior Vice President and member of the Board of Directors until 1983, he expanded the American division to over 180 employees in areas including marketing, finance, administration, management information systems (MIS), human resources, and communications.

respect can become so much. It is hard to believe such a change!

[Read more of the "Killing in My Village" story](#)

From 1962 to 1972, Mr. Koerner was the Engineering Manager at Honeywell Information Systems in Billerica, MA. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering in 1961 from McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

Born in Poland in 1937, Mr. Koerner escaped to Romania with his immediate family in 1939 and stayed there for the duration of World War II. Although he returned to Poland after the war, difficulties in acquiring valid documentation caused his parents to arrange for his immigration to Israel in 1946. He joined other displaced children and orphans in Kibbutz Hulda for two years until his parents met him and they settled in Jabaliya, an Arab settlement on the outskirts of Jaffa. He later immigrated to Canada and subsequently moved to the United States.

Mr. Koerner joined ICfC's board last fall and has already become deeply engaged in building the organization. He is committed to offering intellectual and operational guidance as ICfC launches its expanded programs in Israel and elsewhere around the world.

We would like to receive your thoughts about the newsletter and our work. Please email us .

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