



Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* 2016 Working Retreat

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Stony Point, New York

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Cover Images; clockwise from top left: 1. Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* 2016 Working Retreat. Credit: Nicole Margaretten 2. *Peacemakers* Friar Ivo Markovic (Bosnia) with Hind Kabawat (Syria) and Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge (South Africa) at the retreat. Credit: Paul Colwell 3. Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* with CEO Joyce S. Dubensky and Board Chair Justin Foa. 4. Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* Pastor James Wuye with Friar Ivo Markovic in WNYC's Brian Lehrer studio. Credit: Shumita Basu / WNYC

Greetings,

Every few years, Tanenbaum convenes the *Peacemakers in Action Network* for what we now officially call a “Working Retreat.” For some, this does not feel like work. For the *Peacemakers*, all of whom I consider family, this is a time to breathe in the fresh air of Stony Point, NY, soak in a summer breeze, walk the meditative labyrinth, and to be safe — no longer surrounded by bombs or death threats. In short, their gathering is a time for hitting the “reset” button.

Don’t get me wrong. They do work during these Working Retreats. But they do so as a community of fellow religiously motivated individuals, who share a commitment to seeking peace in zones of conflict. During these weeks, the *Peacemakers* are reminded, that they are not alone. Indeed, that is one key reason that Tanenbaum is especially proud to facilitate the *Peacemakers’* time together — because too often they struggle in silos, isolated and lonely.

Throughout an intense week, they share lessons learned, failures, laughter, tears and fears. They break bread, and imagine new *Interventions* and ways of working together across borders to expand their impact. Together, they teach and learn from one another. Not surprisingly, as a group, they are voracious learners, eager to soak in what they can from their fellow peace experts and brave enough to ask hard questions, like: How does gender play a role in peacebuilding? What are some techniques used to circumvent and prevent violent extremism? What works — and what doesn’t?

The 2016 Retreat, like each before it, encompassed all this and more, including many personal memories of powerful and special moments. Personally, I will remember how, as a *Network* community, we struggled to be transparent about gender (this was not always easy) and found ways to say our truths and identify paths for better involving women peacebuilders. I also remember private moments. In particular, a time I was sitting by the meditation labyrinth and had a spontaneous conversation, tears and a hug with one of our *Peacemakers*, who lamented that she had not been able to bring lasting peace to her poor country. I will always remember that moment. And how afterward, she laughed with others, leaving the Working Retreat renewed and, always, ready to continue her peace work — no matter how illusive her goal for her people seemed.

I am grateful for my *Peacemakers in Action* family and for the humanity they bring to this world. I am also profoundly grateful to those whose support made it possible including the GHR Foundation and Andreas Hipple, KAICIID and Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and Fr. Nathanael Symeonides, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and Ambassador Ufuk Gokcen, Dr. Azza Karam at the United Nations Population Fund, Zanele Khumalo and William Keepin at Gender Reconciliation International, Odyssey Networks, the Brian Lehrer Show, the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, and our friends at the Stony Point Center. And finally, I am grateful to the Tanenbaum team, who worked day and night to make the 2016 Working Retreat possible: Justin Foa, Chairman of the Tanenbaum

Board of Directors, Judy Thompson, Treasurer of the Tanenbaum Board of Directors and Conflict Resolution Program Advisory Committee Liaison, Mark Fowler, Tanenbaum Deputy CEO, Michael McShane, *Network* Coordinator, Janie Dumbleton, Conflict Resolution Associate, Clayton Maring, Conflict Resolution Special Advisor, Ritu Mukherjee, Evaluation Program Assistant, and all our dedicated interns and Working Retreat volunteers.

The Report on the 2016 *Peacemakers in Action Network* Working Retreat follows. It is intended to share what we did, but also what we thought and learned. As such, all of us at Tanenbaum hope that this will contribute to the broad field of religious peacebuilding and to the peace work of our secular colleagues as well.

In Friendship,



Joyce S. Dubensky
CEO, Tanenbaum

INTRODUCTION



In her *Little Book of Strategic Peacebuilding: A Vision and Framework for Peace with Justice*, Dr. Lisa Schirch identifies a variety of the approaches that peacebuilding actors use in conflict and post-conflict contexts around the world (e.g., education and economic development). While these individuals are all working toward the same ultimate goal, their efforts are often unknown to each other. To crystallize a more holistic peacebuilding vision, Dr. Schirch notes the importance of providing peacebuilders with opportunities to discuss their work, share successes and challenges, and find ways to coordinate their efforts.

At the 2016 *Peacemakers in Action* Working Retreat, Tanenbaum created such an opportunity for its *Peacemaker in Action* award-ees — women and men driven by their faith to pursue peace and understanding in their communities, even when that means that their lives and/or liberty is at risk. At the Retreat, they had time to be together and to support one another with strategies, ideas, personal and emotional support, and active planning for targeted collaborations in areas of conflict. The 2016 Working Retreat marks the sixth time Tanenbaum has brought the *Peacemakers* together for capacity and skills-building sessions; it also represents the second Working Retreat since the *Peacemakers* formalized their *Network* in 2011.

This report details the time spent together by 17 *Peacemakers* from 13 countries at their 2016 Retreat, and explores the week's main themes: inclusion of women peacebuilders; and combating religious extremism. It is divided into three sections. The first examines the key findings and outcomes from Friar Ivo Markovic's case study on the "Role of Women in Post-War Reconciliation in Bosnia"; followed by a brief summary of the *Peacemakers'* Gender Reconciliation training. The second section provides an overview of Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer's sessions on "Responding to Violent Extremism and Interreligious Peace," followed by Tanenbaum's analysis of the lessons

learned from the *Peacemakers* and their approaches to preventing and countering violent extremism. The third and final section of the report highlights the growth and development of the *Peacemakers in Action Network*.

Recognizing the array of diverse, complementary peacebuilding approaches of the *Peacemakers* in our *Network* of religiously-motivated peace actors from 23 different conflict zones, Tanenbaum is committed to continue providing opportunities for the *Peacemakers* to strategize, coordinate their efforts and strengthen their *Network*. We are delighted to share the learnings, outcomes and what the *Peacemakers* hope to achieve after convening together at Stony Point in 2016.

WOMEN IN PEACEBUILDING

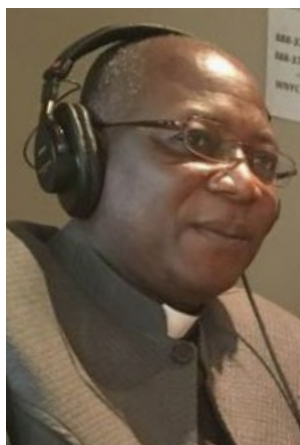
Introduction

Tanenbaum has been addressing gender challenges, specifically the important role of women in peacebuilding, with the *Peacemakers* in a range of ways since our second Working Retreat in 2004. Notwithstanding the import of this critical issue — one officially recognized by United Nations Security Council [Resolution 1325](#) on women, peace and security — and its real impact on peace, even some of our *Peacemakers* carry ingrained, unconscious attitudes that can have unintended consequences and even marginalize female religious peacemakers.

During Tanenbaum's time with the *Peacemakers* over the years, we have witnessed positive and productive attitude shifts regarding gender. However, as we focused more on women in peacebuilding, we have also noted sessions at our Working Retreats where some of the women felt disrespected. Given this, and with a strong desire to progressively move forward, Tanenbaum provided a space designed to build further capacity on gender, women, and peacebuilding.

Peacemaker Friar Ivo Markovic presented a case study on the "Role of Women in Post-War Reconciliation in Bosnia." Thereafter, Dr. William Keepin, founding Director of Gender Equity and Reconciliation International, and his colleague Zanele Khumalo, gender reconciliation workshop and training leader in South Africa, offered a gender reconciliation training. For part of the gender reconciliation session, *Peacemaker* Nozizwe Madlala Routledge and her husband, Jeremy

Routledge, a Quaker peacebuilder in his own right, co-facilitated with Dr. Keepin and Ms. Khumalo.



Tanenbaum *Peacemaker*
Pastor James Wuye (Nigeria) in WNYC's Brian Lehrer studio. Credit: Shumita Basu / WNYC

Role of Women in Post-War Reconciliation in Bosnia

Friar Ivo Markovic, a Catholic Franciscan Croat from Bosnia, has been a peace agent for decades. In fact, he was the first *Peacemaker in Action* identified by Tanenbaum in 1998. During the first day of the Working Retreat, Friar Ivo spoke to his work with women in post-conflict Bosnia. His dialogic session for his fellow *Peacemakers* mixed lecture with debate.

His session began with a foundational history of patriarchy and matriarchy, and the era of feminism in the 20th century. Then, he turned his attention to the war in Bosnia, and its impact on women during and after the country's conflict. In particular, Friar Ivo highlighted the systematic rape of women in Bosnian concentration camps, noting that the United Nations Security Council finally addressed "the massive, organized and systematic detention and rape of women, in particular Muslim women, in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992" with [Resolution 798](#). The lasting effects of such abuse include ongoing: humiliation; pain and suffering; a desire for death rather than to go on living; and the feeling or experience of societal rejection.

Friar Ivo revealed a profound story — a powerful example of how one woman struggled to overcome her personal trauma. A woman sought Friar Ivo's counsel, but she would sit with her back to the *Peacemaker* when speaking with him. After a few visits, Friar Ivo asked the woman why she would not face him. She turned to him and said, "you are the first man I am looking at in the eyes, since I was raped."

"In the aftermath of the war, many of them found the strength to transform their trauma into productive action, and felt compelled to work for peace.."

In his session, Friar Ivo explained how this woman is like the many women he encounters (and has encountered) in post-conflict Bosnia. Their stories are painful. Yet, in the aftermath of the war, many of them found the strength to transform their trauma into productive action, and felt compelled to work for peace. They formed committees for human rights and founded NGOs. Feeling neglected, marginalized, stigmatized and forgotten — even by their own government — women in Bosnia organized with a focus on empowering other

women, especially those victimized by the war. Today, Friar Ivo is a member of an organization, the Ecumenical Women's Initiative (EWI), which supports and encourages women's rights, peacebuilding and reconciliation, and belief-based ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue and cooperation in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. EWI has over 11,000 women participants.

Following his presentation, Friar Ivo facilitated a group discussion among the *Network*, inviting his fellow *Peacemakers* to respond to the Bosnian experience and share relatable experiences in their conflict or post-conflict contexts. Below, we've highlighted key *Peacemaker* insights, followed by the *Network's* recommendations for collaborative change-effecting activities.

COUNTRY	Key Insights
Afghanistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children of rape victims become street beggars; lack of government assistance to victims; NGOs, including orphanages, have tried to provide services to fill the gaps but lack necessary resources and capacity to adequately support the children.
Bosnia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women systematically raped in concentration camps during the Bosnian War (1992-1995) experienced humiliation, pain and suffering; many neglected, marginalized, stigmatized and forgotten.
El Salvador	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women traumatized by years of war in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala have been woefully neglected and have suffered as a result.
Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victims of Boko Haram have been impregnated; some are raped repeatedly at gunpoint. In addition to dealing with trauma, these women face the issue of stigma when returning home.
Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no programs in place to train religious leaders on how to address rape and its consequences.
South Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perpetrated primarily by official military and militia members, rape and killing of women and children has now become a part of the new country's culture of oppression.
Syria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both the government and groups like ISIS are utilizing <u>rape as a tool of war</u>. Women who return home to their families have committed suicide, as if they are responsible for their victimization. They have a sense of hopelessness. As a result of this violence against women, many of the women are deterred from engaging in political and humanitarian efforts to end the war.

Rape — especially systematic rape (of both women and men) in times of conflict — affects most of the *Peacemakers'* respective communities. After discussing, the *Peacemakers* coalesced around ways the *Network* could address an issue that heeds no borders

Network Recommendations

- Amplify the voice of women;
- Mitigate cultural stigmas that prevent women from speaking out after being raped by: educating the public; counseling victimized women; sharing stories through film; and utilizing sacred texts to underscore the importance of speaking about rape;
- Victim-to-victim (country-to-country/conflict-to-conflict) trauma counseling;
- Provide counseling for self-harm and suicide;
- Provide community services to children born out of rape, especially where government programs are lacking;
- Encourage rape victims to connect with *Peacemakers*;
- Identify rape victims from *Peacemaker* countries (e.g., Bosnia, Afghanistan, Syria and Nigeria) and bring them together to share their stories as inspiration for victims who are afraid or unable to raise their voices;
- Identify, engage and train religious leaders, trusted individuals with tremendous reach within the community, within their religious traditions;
- Educate about how religion can be a source of discrimination against women, e.g., gender-based preconceptions in respective religious traditions;
- Societal awareness-raising and capacity-building to destigmatize rape;
- Utilize the arts, e.g., share and make films to remind the world what happened;
- Share relevant films from *Peacemaker* countries;
- Utilize social media as a tool for trauma counseling, e.g., information sharing;
- Leverage resources (media, banks, private organizations) through advocacy and networking to help spread awareness around the world.

The *Peacemakers* agreed to continue communicating both on their

own and during future *Network* conference calls about how they could take concrete next steps to implement their recommendations through *Network* collaborations, or [interventions](#).

Gender Reconciliation

Friar Ivo's case study spurred a rich discussion among the *Peacemakers* about rape as a weapon of war and how women are victimized. The next full day was dedicated to a training in gender reconciliation, presented as an opportunity to bridge a "[new field of transformational healing and reconciliation between women and men](#)" within the context of understanding how and where women can be better recognized and included in peacebuilding.

At the beginning of the training, the four Gender Reconciliation International facilitators (including *Peacemaker* Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge and her husband, Jeremy Routledge) established their intentions and goals before sharing their experiences around growing up in South Africa and the United States. To encourage openness and to energize the participants, the facilitators led singing and movement exercises. Participants were encouraged to greet one another during the movement exercises to intensify the sense of connection.

What it would it look like to live in a "gender healed world."?

Early on, male and female participants paired together and shared their hopes and concerns about the session and the lessons they learned about gender and gender roles while growing up. Small groups then formed to discuss what it would look like to live in a "gender healed world." The ideas that emerged varied widely, including visions that addressed issues of violence to others that focused on psychological pressure, or expectations around physical appearance.

Among the many conversations and activities facilitated by the trainers, the participants were able to engage deeply around societal expectations and values placed on women and men. One poignant discussion addressed how societies can revere women, particularly in the role of mothers, yet still suffer from widespread sexual harassment and rape. One participant gave the example of a study conducted in South Africa, where there is a strong culture of maternal reverence, in which one third of male participants admitted to having raped a woman.

“The most contentious activity of the day was an exercise called ‘Silent Witness.’”

Throughout the day, the intimate and sensitive nature of the activities compelled some of the participants to leave the room to compose themselves or to wait for the next step of the reconciliation process. The most contentious activity of the day was an exercise called ‘Silent Witness.’ Split by gender, men and women lined up at opposite ends of the room, seated but facing one another. Questions were directed to each gender group; when a question involved something that had been experienced by an individual, the participant was invited to stand, if they chose. Questions addressed gendered issues with themes including bullying, abuse, sexual assault and political violence. (An adapted example of a question follows: Were you ever ridiculed for being too masculine? Too feminine?).

Most of the participants agreed that it was a powerful exercise, and that they were impacted by their experience. One noted, “I didn’t think I would stand for any of the questions because I had never given them much thought. No one had ever asked. But I stood for so many.” Other participants expressed appreciation that the exercises throughout the day acknowledged the impact of societal gender roles on men and not only on women. Several expressed interest in adapting the day’s exercises for their own work and cultural contexts.

However, a number of the participants also had personal as well as cultural objections to the way ‘Silent Witness’ was presented. In discussing their reactions, some voiced moral concerns about asking such personal questions without enough forewarning, while others disapproved of having to answer such questions in that particular setting. As the group debriefed the exercise and the experiences they had had, the openness and connection built over the day appeared to be in danger of crumbling. Instead, the *Peacemakers* exhibited resiliency and demonstrated their mutual trust as they shared their reactions. They spoke honestly about their experiences and put forth ideas on how the materials could be adapted in the future to fit the wide variety of contexts in which the *Peacemakers* work.

After a short closing exercise, tensions lessened and the community moved forward with clear intentions and a commitment to have further discussions on the inclusion of women in peacebuilding. Powerfully, the debrief that started at the close of the session continued in a range of ways over the days that followed. *Peacemakers* Imam

Ashafa and Pastor James spent time debriefing with the facilitators to better understand their model and consider how it could be adapted for their work in Nigeria. Others spoke in small groups continuing to reflect on the gender issues raised and their responses to them. Later in the week, most joined for an optional discussion in which the *Peacemakers Network* shared more about the session, the impact of gender disparities on them and their work, and how it even affected them as members of the *Network*.

This conversation and the power of the individual *Peacemakers* to tackle a challenging shared experience and work through their reactions, was ultimately viewed as a sign of the *Network's* strength. Individual and group relationships are intact if not stronger.

Before the program began, Tanenbaum staff and volunteers had passed out surveys for the participants to establish a baseline from which to measure the impact of the training. The same survey was administered immediately following the training and will be conducted once more in November 2016 to gauge the short-term effects of the training for the participants. *Peacemakers* who were not able to attend the training have also been asked to take the surveys at the same times to serve as a control group.

Below, we detail the analysis and key findings from the work done around our other prominent Retreat theme — extremism.

EXTREMISM

During the *Peacemakers in Action* Working Retreat, Tanenbaum worked with the *Peacemakers* to identify trends, successes and failures in preventing violent extremism (PVE) / combating violent extremism (CVE) programming. While many of the *Peacemakers* make a point of not naming their efforts as “PVE” or “CVE,” they identified some of their end goals as including the reduction or prevention of violent extremism. Significantly, many of the *Peacemakers* voiced concern about the language of “PVE” and “CVE” now infiltrating the peacebuilding community, and actually resist identifying their programs within that umbrella.

Peacemaker Dishani Jayaweera from Sri Lanka shared the following sentiments after learning the panel's title for her presentation at the

UN — *Alternative Approaches to Combating Extremism: Grassroots Initiatives of Religious Actors and Peacemakers* — at the *Peacemakers* July 13, 2016 UN event^{iv}.

“The word combating [does] not goes with my value system. It is a security /military sector word.... not [a] peacebuilding word. [I am] deeply concerned about the words we are using.... words are the mirror of our beliefs and values..... it would be good if you could find a peacebuilding terminology... we [are] never combating with extremists.... either we engage with them or we promote non-violent mechanisms to engage in injustice and conflicts.”

To better understand the language, concepts, strategies and goals underpinning “PVE” and “CVE” programs and initiatives, Tanenbaum invited Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, renowned peacebuilding scholar and practitioner, and trusted friend to many of the *Peacemakers*, to lead two training workshops for the *Peacemakers* on extremism and developing effective responses to this critical global challenge. Dr. Abu-Nimer’s sessions, “Responding to Violent Extremism and Inter-religious Peace,” addressed the following questions:

1. What is CVE and PVE?
2. What are the limitations and strengths of CVE and PVE strategies, policies and programs?
3. Why do religious actors have a role in CVE and PVE?
4. What are the dynamics of manipulating religious identity?
5. What are effective approaches and lessons learned in responding to CVE and PVE?

Dr. Abu-Nimer explained that both CVE and PVE are efforts — clear, structured strategies, policies, and programs designed to interrupt radicalization and recruitment toward violent extremism — introduced by governments during the last two decades. Notable examples include anti-terrorism coordination, broad community education, targeted messaging programs and counter-recruitment strategies.

These systematic governmental interventions received broad sup-

port from the UN, its member states, INGOs and think tanks. Encouraging partnerships and cross-border efforts, policymakers focused on: assessment, policy development, implementation, and evaluation. For years, this was pursued through traditional hard power tactics — intelligence gathering, military force, and law enforcement — until governments began to shift their focus to include more rule-based and community-based strategies in recent years.

These secular, security-driven CVE and PVE solutions have proved antagonistic to religion and religious identity, in part reflecting that certain extremists self-define as theologically-based. Moreover, when there was engagement with religious leaders, it was often problematic. For example, religious leaders are often instrumentalized (e.g., asking a Muslim leader for a blessing or to issue a fatwa in support of a policy); this offers the appearance of community engagement but, in reality, religious leaders have been excluded from the decision-making table. This reality isn't lost on community members and religious adherents, who often look to their religious leaders for guidance and answers.

“Religious leaders or peacemakers not only have the well-earned trust of their communities, but they are able to use their religious identity to positively shift perceptions along the conflict-peace continuum.”

To bridge the gap between the secular and the religious (and to increase the likelihood of finding solutions that will work), religious leaders and community actors must be genuinely involved in framing the CVE and PVE approaches used in their communities, particularly when they're externally imposed from the national, regional or international levels. Religious leaders or peacemakers not only have the well-earned trust of their communities, but they are able to use their religious identity to positively shift perceptions along the conflict-peace continuum.

As part of Dr. Abu-Nimer's session, he then asked the *Peacemakers* to identify two to three concrete examples in which *they* or *their communities* had been negatively manipulated by religious leaders, political leaders, or both. The *Peacemakers* formed small groups and then shared the following examples of corruption, discrimination and “othering” with their colleagues:

- In El Salvador and other Latin American countries, in the wake of the Conference of Latin American Bishops in 1968, oligarchical and military elites conflated Liberation Theology (a theology

focused on caring for and giving voice to the poor), with Marxism or Communism in order to maintain power and justify persecution of Liberation Theology supporters;

- The manipulation of children through early education, i.e., Islamic history, in Pakistan. Children are taught that only Shia Muslims are to be trusted — all other Muslim groups (e.g., Sunnis) are not trustworthy;
- Today, in post-colonial Indonesia, children are taught that Christians — a historically privileged few — remain a threat to Muslims;
- In Nigeria, post-colonial segregation by religion, dividing Muslim and Christian residents, was further institutionalized as religious leaders differentiated and attempted to isolate the other; and the politicization of religion through the promotion of Sharia law by political actors seeking office — young Muslims were encouraged to campaign in support of establishing Sharia law in Northern Nigeria;
- Politicians providing gifts to religious leaders during election seasons in the Balkans to influence voting outcomes among constituents;
- Manipulation of history and statistics in Ethiopia. Christians and Muslims respectively claim Ethiopia is the oldest Christian country or the oldest Muslim country in the world. And both groups believe Ethiopia is home to more of their respective adherents. Each group competes to be the first and the most populous in the country;
- Manipulation of Christian ideology through media, i.e., radio, to justify Apartheid in South Africa and to counter international condemnation (e.g., anti-U.S. rhetoric). Today, in democratic South Africa, the President claims the ANC will be here until Jesus comes;
- Islamophobic rhetoric by politicians in the United States is influencing treatment of Muslims, political allegiances, and attitudes toward foreign policy.



Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer,
American University Credit:
Nicole Margaretten

Dr. Abu-Nimer's primary objective, through this group exercise, was to further sensitize the *Peacemakers*, as leaders in their communities, to the ways religious identities are manipulated and to develop immunization against such manipulation. Furthermore, he reminded everyone that those who speak out or work against the manipulative agendas of powerful actors face risks, even harm, for their counteractions.

Effective approaches in responding to CVE and PVE

Throughout the week, the *Peacemakers* reflected on their time with Dr.

Abu-Nimer. At a later session, Tanenbaum staff revisited the C/PVE discussion, asking the *Peacemakers* to share an example of how each had addressed extremism, one that worked well and one that has not. The *Peacemakers* were asked to elaborate on the methodology behind these efforts; the action taken; its objectives; the impact and the intended and unintended consequences. (Since the *Peacemakers* are innovative and able to adapt quickly, they also shared ways in which they course corrected — evidence of an important quality of successful peacebuilding activities and programming). Their stories and the lessons gleaned from this exercise can inform the field's projects, programs and initiatives designed to prevent and combat extremism (PVE / CVE).

Tanenbaum identified certain trends in the “successful/high-impact” techniques identified by the *Peacemakers*. Many included techniques previously observed in addition to some new approaches, including:

- Media and communications engagement (radio, writing)
- Sharing religious traditions and teachings
- Women-led and women-focused initiatives
- Use of religious text

■ **Media and communications engagement (radio, writing)**



Tanenbaum *Peacemaker*
Dr. Sakena Yacoobi
(Afghanistan). Credit:
Alissa Everett

Peacemakers report that engaging media and utilizing communications strategies have aided in their efforts to prevent violent extremism and /or raise awareness that reduces violent extremism. Three *Peacemakers* (duo Pastor James Wuye and Imam Muhammad Ashafa of Nigeria and Sakena Yacoobi of Afghanistan) have started radio programs in their conflicted home countries.

In Nigeria, the Community Peace Action Network (CPAN) uses text messaging, WhatsApp or call-in lines to rapidly share information. Community peace observers, who live within the community and have access to community norms and knowledge, identify and spread information of early warning signs of conflict as well as information on actual conflicts where rapid responses can mitigate the harm. Thus, for example, they report instances of violence, rumors of possible attacks, hate speech, and other forms of violence that could foment

widespread conflict. Their messages are collected and used to coordinate responses, which often include communications strategies involving the radio program, bulk text messages and print material.

In 2015, Sakena Yacoobi launched Radio Meraj 94.1 FM in Afghanistan. Sakena reported to Tanenbaum that her station has already reached 2 million people. The programs focus on presenting concepts of love and forgiveness that may inspire people to shift and even transform their ideologies. Like her fellow *Peacemakers in the Network*, Sakena is working to use the public airwaves as a vehicle for change to prevent violent extremism, especially among youth, before it takes root.

In another part of the world, *Peacemaker* Rev. Jacky Manuputty of Indonesia uses social media to counter violent extremism. Jacky's interreligious group, *Peace Provocateurs*, focuses on dispelling rumors through text messages, WhatsApp messages and other forms of social media.

“Using the same communication platform as violent extremists requires an adaptability to notice trends and where people (especially youth) gather information.”

Peacemakers identify ways in which violent extremists are using media and communications and then tap into those same mechanisms to counter their messages of hate or proactively work to prevent conflict and extremism. Using the same communication platform as violent extremists requires an adaptability to notice trends and where people (especially youth) gather information.

In addition to radio programs and social media, the written word has been a powerful communication tool for the *Peacemakers*. Two of them — Friar Ivo Markovic and Yehezkel Landau — cite essays, articles, blog posts and interviews as ways they engage in PVE / CVE activities.

This trend — the use of media and communications in PVE and CVE — underscores why these activities are important when trying to address the threat of violent extremism. Effective *Peacemaker* initiatives with radio, social media and other communication strategies reinforce the need to turn the tide and counter those opposed to peace.

■ Sharing religious traditions and teachings with others / interfaith group activities

The majority of *Peacemakers* addressing PVE / CVE believe that sharing traditions and/or religions and having meaningful engagement with “the other” is an important approach for breaking down barriers and re-humanizing those associated with violent extremism.

Peacemaker Maria Ida “Deng” Giguinto of the Philippines describes The Bridge Project, which focuses on understanding the self as preparation for engaging with individuals and groups from other religions. Participants use self-checking words and at the end of a workshop engage in a joint Iftar across religions (during Ramadan, a meal after sundown to break the fast). This gathering provides a common space for groups and individuals of multiple religions to convene.

“Solutions to social problems can often be found and the relationships that emerge can have ripple effects of understanding that ease conflicted communities.”

Similarly engaging religious leaders across different faiths, *Peacemaker* Yehezkel Landau, who worked in Israel/Palestine for over 30 years, promotes interfaith leadership through training workshops with Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders in the U.S. By using a “train the trainer” model, his students then return to their respective communities and lead their own trainings and workshops. The ripple effect of the “train the trainer” model exponentially spreads understanding of interfaith interactions and sharing of religious traditions and teachings beyond polite exchanges and outside of established comfort zones.^{vii}

Interfaith group activity is a technique also used by *Peacemaker* Rev. Jacky Manuputty, who once studied with Yehezkel. Jacky described to Tanenbaum his “Peace Sermon” program, in which he gathered diverse religious leaders to discuss their common social programs. Following the session, the leaders were encouraged to draft their own sermons for Friday prayer (Muslim leaders) and Sunday service (Christian leaders) based on the common issues discovered in the interreligious group setting. Uniting religious adherents who are viewed as holding opposing views, and facilitating their realization that they share common social problems (such as threats of violence and extremism), can result in collaboration that helps establish bonds of community. Over time, solutions to social problems can often be found and the relationships that emerge can have ripple effects of

understanding that ease conflicted communities.

Other *Peacemakers* find dialogue to be a constructive tool for initiating contact and resolving conflict in historically conflictual communities. Though this does not always yield results, the *Peacemakers* noted it as a continuous process that requires course correction and hope.



Tanenbaum *Peacemaker*
Dishani Jayaweera (Sri Lanka) speaks at the United Nations. Credit: Andreas Hipple

■ Women-led and women-focused initiatives

Many *Peacemakers* describe how they promote women's rights and participation in peacebuilding. This is true of both male and female *Peacemakers*. That said, there is a high level of activism on this issue among the women in the *Network*. For example, Dishani convenes religious women activists and community leaders from multiple traditions; she then focuses on creating a safe space for them to work together on reconciliation. Coming from war-affected areas, she works with the women on peacebuilding skills and how to create an open-hearted safe space of healing. Together, they then engage in planning for the future and how to bring their new skills to their communities.

“In times of war and violent extremism, women give voice to their own experiences.”

In a different way, *Peacemaker* Hind Kabawat of Syria has made it a calling to ensure that women's concerns are part of the peace negotiations for Syria. As a member of the Syrian Opposition's High Negotiation Committee, Hind has prioritized women's inclusion. She created a women's advisory group, and works with them to understand their perspectives and needs. Hind brings their ideas forward in the negotiations process. She knows that, in times of war and violent extremism, women give voice to their own experiences and that those experiences are different from those of men. Ensuring a space at the table and valuing all voices is a trend in the activities of the *Peacemakers* and is increasingly part of their repertoire in contexts of violent extremism.

Friar Ivo Markovic has likewise started initiatives in Bosnia to garner cooperation with women amid the threat of rising violent extremism in Europe. He describes meeting with groups of mothers, sisters, wives and widows, who have since formed committees for human rights and founded NGOs.

Amid post-conflict areas, engaging all parts of society, including women, is integral to addressing concerns and countering violent extremism. Tanenbaum *Peacemakers* are on the frontlines, making this point through their daily actions.

■ Use of religious text

In a time when sacred scripture is manipulated and misinterpreted, many of the *Peacemakers* promote the messages of peace, hope, equality and love from their religious traditions in workshops, schools and trainings. While violent extremists manipulate text to promote hate and violence, *Peacemakers* have programs and activities in place to educate and share information and knowledge about their religious texts and teachings.

Through his Madrasa Enhancement Project in Pakistan, for example, *Peacemaker* Azhar “Azi” Hussain provides madrasa leaders who attend his trainings with information that encourages interest in modern learning. Starting from religiously grounded ideas and ideals drawn from the Qur’an on religious tolerance and human rights, Azi establishes trust as the trainer with the trainees. He then helps them explore modern learning and tools for doing so, while maintaining the Islamic identity of their madrasas. Additionally, Azi counsels the madrasa leaders/trainees on how to respond to dangerous concepts not rooted in Qur’anic text and teaching, as used by violent extremists in some contexts. Ultimately, these leaders are able to reimagine their madrasas using tolerance and human rights concepts from the Qu’ran and adding natural and social sciences into the curricula to promote critical thinking. Azi reports that the project has reduced attacks on Christian places of worship in Pakistan, as well as reducing sectarian violence in Pakistan.

■ Lessons learned in responding to CVE and PVE

Arguably just as important, but less often discussed and less valued, are the unsuccessful *Peacemaker* projects, programs, and/or initiatives. Because both the *Peacemakers* and the peacebuilding field can learn from mistakes, missteps, and underwhelming results, Tanenbaum believes in acknowledging shortcomings to advance future initiatives and projects.

We therefore asked the *Peacemakers* to reflect on the shortcomings of one of their projects or programs, and to detail how and why a project veered off course or did not produce a desired outcome. The responses were interesting. Many of the *Peacemakers* focused on how they had course corrected rather than on the problems and failures themselves. We believe this reflects both their adaptability and focus on solutions, as well as the human discomfort with focusing on failures. That said, from the information that the *Peacemakers* shared, we did identify some trends among failed efforts, including failures to:

- Identify trust-worthy and effective facilitators and dedicated participants
- Know/recognize the right context/timing for engaging religious leaders or religiously motivated individuals
- Present appropriate content (i.e., presenting content that was too sensitive)
- Take the time to understand longer-term impact

“Failure to timely identify effective facilitators and dedicated participants makes it hard to establish trust, while not recognizing the right context for engaging religious leaders or religiously motivated individuals reduces the chance of success.”

Failure to timely identify effective facilitators and dedicated participants makes it hard to establish trust, while not recognizing the right context for engaging religious leaders or religiously motivated individuals reduces the chance of success.

When discussing failures, the *Peacemakers* talked about the importance of developing a program so that trust can be established among participants and trainers, facilitators and/or leaders. The majority of *Peacemakers* explained that one reason a program or activity would be unsuccessful was due to an ill-suited facilitator, participant and/or the wrong context in which to engage religious leaders or religiously motivated actors.

Imam Ashafa shared how one training of religious leaders in “CVE” (combating violent extremism) didn’t work because the activity used a secular approach and non-religious group leaders to address religiously motivated violent extremism. The religious leaders within the group were not receptive to a secular facilitator and source. Imam

Ashafa thus advised the facilitators of the workshop about the incorrect choice of facilitators and participants.

Sakena Yacoobi similarly shared how a teacher who was brought in from outside the community was not trusted and did not succeed. If the trust is not there and is not established, it is incredibly difficult to discuss challenging and sensitive issues. Azi Hussain agreed, noting that because some participants do not like his project, he works to respond to their reservations and concerns. As a seasoned facilitator who knows his audience and community, he establishes trust gradually with workshop participants. He has witnessed how a lack of facilitator trust can introduce unfavorable dynamics, especially when addressing challenging topics with madrasa leaders, such as how to address concerns of violent extremism.

“*Peacemakers* made clear that trust is foundational in their work.”

Overall, the *Peacemakers* made clear that trust is foundational in their work. And one way to establish it, is by finding the right facilitator and participants, as well as making sure that the content is delivered when participants are ready to receive it.

■ Sensitive content

Violent extremism is a sensitive topic. *Peacemakers* who have initiatives to combat it realize this and know that delving deeply into the root causes of the phenomenon can create tensions. *Peacemaker* Yehezkel Landau described one such initiative that went awry, and how he was able to course correct. During a Jewish, Christian and Muslim series of trainings, a “conflict spectrum exercise provoked strong resistance – many participants balked, refusing to do the exercise focused on Israel/Palestine.” The subject was fraught and participants were not prepared to confront one another on it. While this was an unsuccessful piece of his program, Yehezkel used a role play exercise with interfaith teams representing Israelis, Palestinians and Americans to reduce the resulting tensions. The exercise allowed all sides to re-humanize one another.

In this, the *Peacemakers* have faltered where trainers worldwide falter. Presenting sensitive context too quickly or in the wrong context for the audience can cause a misstep. What we have seen among the *Peacemakers*, however, is a capacity to readjust and creatively

course correct. Another way to address this potential challenge, of course, is to pre-assess where projects could go awry to adjust or, at least, begin to anticipate potential solutions.

■ It takes time to understand impact

While it may be better categorized as a challenge rather than a failure, the *Peacemakers* expressed that it can be difficult to assess the impact that a combating extremism project, program, or activity has on the community receiving the intervention. When trying to measure impact and collect necessary data-driven results (for grants and programming), the impact may not be immediately evident. Indeed, it can take significant time to fully assess and understand the longer-term effect of a project.

Peacemaker Dishani Jayaweera is still in the process of understanding the impact of her work with religious women activists and community leaders in reconciliation and conflict transformation. She notes that her team expected this. They recognize that understanding the real impact will take time.

To move forward in deciding if a longer-term initiative will have the desired impact in countering violent extremism, it's important to define the measures of success. Success could mean changes in attitudes and behaviors, or a documentable reduction in violence in a certain area. Assessing impact requires clarity on the measure of impact and the time to assess it.

**“In the dark days
of conflict and
war, peacemakers
ignite bright
beacons of hope,
accomplishment
and hard work
from all areas of
our world...”**

■ Inspiring Others

The *Peacemakers* work both within and outside of their communities to reduce threats of violent extremism. Their programs address the issue differently, but all aim to achieve what Johan Galtung termed “positive peace,” which moves beyond the simple cessation of violence. Rather, it is the “integration of human society.”^{viii}

Building a peaceful and resilient society requires not just Tanenbaum *Peacemakers*, but peacemakers all over — those named and unnamed. In the dark days of conflict and war, peacemakers ignite bright beacons of hope, accomplishment and hard work from all

areas of our world, leading programs and activities to that combat violent extremism. From Sakena's radio station in Afghanistan to Dis-hani's initiative with women conflict transformers in Sri Lanka, Tanenbaum *Peacemakers* actively promote change and pursue peace in their respective home contexts — and this often means finding ways to combat violent extremism or confront it through peacebuilding.

By recounting their successes and lessons learned with one another, the *Peacemakers* gathered from 13 countries at the Retreat made it possible for Tanenbaum to share what they have learned with other peacemakers all over the world. Through this report, Tanenbaum hopes to contribute to and reinforce the knowledge in the field for establishing PVE / CVE programming so that activists and program creators may take note of ideas, initiatives and execution that have worked and might be effective again.

In addition to the sessions dedicated to the Retreat's two main themes — working with women in peacebuilding and extremism — the *Peacemakers* reflected on their evolving *Network*. In the following section, we highlight the identified strengths and weaknesses of the *Network*, and the *Peacemakers'* collective vision for the future.

GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND THE NETWORK IN ACTION



Introduction

In 2015, Maria Ida “Deng” Giguiento and Sheikh Abdulrahman Al-Marwani became the 29th and 30th recipients of the *Peacemakers in Action* award: the newest members of the growing *Network*. While Deng traveled from the Philippines to be with her fellow *Peacemakers* at the Retreat, Sheikh Al-Marwani was unable to leave Yemen, where an often forgotten war continues to take the lives of too many Yemenis (in January 2017, the death toll passed 10,000). Despite his absence, Sheikh Al-Marwani has already had an impact on the

Network. He regularly participates in the *Network*'s bimonthly Skype calls and has started to discuss ways he can collaborate with his fellow *Peacemakers* on future projects or *Network* interventions. The strong *Network* engagement by Deng and Sheikh Al-Marwani underscores the transition of Tanenbaum *Peacemakers* from a loosely connected group of award recipients to an active, engaged *Network* of strategic peace collaborators.

Network Business

Toward the end of the retreat week, *Peacemaker* Rev. Bill Lowrey led a two-hour session focused on “*Network* Business.” Bill provided a brief refresher on the keys to forming, cultivating and facilitating a formal network before reviewing the *PIA Network*'s previously agreed upon purpose, structure and various activities. After his talk, Bill asked the *Peacemakers* to form cluster groups to identify the *Network*'s strengths and weaknesses. The *Peacemakers* produced the following:

Strengths

- Connections, sense of a family
- Becomes a way of life (being a *Peacemaker in Action*)
- Publicity
- Learn from other *Peacemakers/Network*, share best practices from their own experiences, wisdom, skills and expertise – huge potential to tap collective skill
- Emotional and moral support
- Maintaining global and international perspective
- Facilitators and the *Network* – access to resources you can use in programs
- Access to materials/resources
- Immediacy of information, being able to know what is happening in other parts of the world
- Tool for friendship and knowledge
- Diversity, people across faiths, culture, race come together to look at how to address the sanctity of religion
- Creates opportunity for long lasting relationships
- Shared values of sharing peace in society

Weaknesses

- Lack of funding
- Insufficient intimacy among *Peacemakers* because of infrequent gatherings; there is not enough opportunity to talk with one another personally and get to know one another
- Insufficient international gatherings
- Connection on Skype calls, the *Network* is fragile
- Language barriers
- Lower priority than regular work — because of other factors, *Peacemakers* cannot focus their priorities on Tanenbaum;
- Geographic distance between *Peacemakers* makes it difficult to maintain communication
- Not everyone shows up to Skype meetings, need to do better at participating
- Nature/time differences

Some of the weaknesses listed above reflect the natural, shifting participation of network members at different points in time. Bill reminded the *Peacemakers* that not everyone will engage the *Network* in the same way. At times, some will be in the *periphery*, recipients of the award but operating more on their own. However, peripheral members are still aware of *Network* interactions and activities and can become more active within the *Network* when they're ready and able.

Before selecting the *Network's Leadership Council* for the next two years, the clustered groups brainstormed their vision for the *Network's* future. Goals included:

Vision for Network's future

- Increased funding
- More activity among/between *Peacemakers*
- Tanenbaum to help *Peacemakers* form connections with international organizations
- Connect *Peacemakers* to organizations that train religious leaders and diplomats
- Include Tanenbaum as a partner for proposals with *Peacemakers*
- More use of social media and upgrade of communication techniques

- Visit more *Peacemakers* from Latin America
- U.S. *Peacemakers*
 - See what people in the U.S./Western Europe are doing
- Provision of sub-grants for *Peacemakers*
- Provide seed grant for innovation in peacemaking
- Younger *Peacemakers* in the *Network*
- More distribution in terms of geography of *Peacemakers*
 - Targeted efforts to identify *Peacemakers* in Latin America
- Greater action from *Peacemakers* on the ground
- Exchanging visits between *Peacemakers* (e.g., more interventions)



Tanenbaum *Peacemaker* Maria Ida “Deng” Giguiento (Philippines) speaks during a group session with *Peacemakers* Dr. Yehezkel Landau (Israel/Palestine) and Reverend Jacklevyn “Jacky” Frits Manuputty (Indonesia) along with Jeremy Routledge and Tanenbaum CEO Joyce Dubensky. Credit: Nicole Margaretten

2016-2018 *Leadership Council*

During the course of the week, Bill sought out the *Network*’s current *Leadership Council* members to gauge interest in continuing their service to the *Network*. He also had conversations with other *Peacemakers* to identify who wanted to help guide the *Network* over the next few years.:

- Jamila Afghani*, Afghanistan
- Hind Kabawat, Syria
- Rev. Jacky Manuputty, Indonesia
- Pastor James Wuye, Nigeria
- Friar Ivo Markovic, Bosnia
- Dr. Yehezkel Landau, Israel/Palestine
- Deng Giguiento, Philippines
- Ricardo Esquivia, Colombia
- Azi Hussain, Pakistan

* Jamila was not present at the Retreat. To lessen the gender imbalance on the *Network Leadership Council*, the *Peacemakers* asked Tanenbaum to invite Jamila to serve in the days after the Retreat.

Peacemakers Condemn Another Horror

Once the *Peacemakers* concluded their business session, everyone prepared for the Retreat’s final dinner. Held in Stony Point’s beautifully decorated auditorium, the *Peacemakers* and Tanenbaum staff and volunteers gathered together for a special meal and to reminisce on another meaningful and productive week. Tragically, as the dinner got underway, word started to spread about an attack in Nice, France during the city’s Bastille Day celebration. Immediately, the

Peacemakers took collective action, debating how the *Network* could respond to the latest mass killing. The group's discussion led to the following *Peacemakers* statement that they collectively issued:

"With a resounding and unified voice, we – a network of religiously-motivated *Peacemakers* from 20 armed conflict and post-conflict regions around the world – condemn today's mass fatal incident in Nice, France.

"Spanning different religions and beliefs, we know the suffering and devastation engendered by extremism. As *Peacemakers*, we stand together as a positive alternative to the forces of destruction.

"We ask that you join us in responding to today's event and all acts of violence – whether conducted in the name of religion, national interest or otherwise – with acts of kindness and building bridges across faiths. Together, we can counter forces of hate with the power of peace."

Tanenbaum Peacemakers in Action Network



Tanenbaum *Peacemaker*
José "Chencho" Alas
(El Salvador) with Pope
Francis. Credit: KAICIID-
Pontifical Council

José "Chencho" Alas, El Salvador
Imam Muhammad Ashafa, Nigeria
Ricardo Esquivia Ballestas, Colombia
Archbishop Abuna Elias Chacour, Israel/Palestine
Maria Ida (Deng) Giguiento, Philippines
Azhar Hussain, Pakistan
Dr. Ephraim Isaac, Ethiopia
Dishani Jayaweera, Sri Lanka
Hind Kabawat, Syria
Dr. Yehezkel Landau, Israel/Palestine
Reverend William Lowrey, Sudan
Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, South Africa
Reverend Jacklevyn "Jacky" Frits Manuputty, Indonesia
Friar Ivo Markovic, Bosnia
Najeeba Sirhan, Israel/Palestine
Pastor James Wuye, Nigeria
Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, Afghanistan

CONCLUSION

The impact of the 2016 Retreat is discernible in the various *Network* collaborations (e.g., [Nozizwe's invitation from Ricardo](#) to speak at the 1st International Peace Studies Conference at the University of Cartagena in Colombia) that have followed and the current concretization of nascent ideas, first vocalized in July, into future plans of partnership among Tanenbaum's scattered *Peacemakers*.

The value of the *Network*, for the *Peacemakers* and the communities they serve, is also visible in their determination to formulate a plan that will allow the *Network* to become self-sustaining as members grow older. Investment in the future of the field of religious peace-building via a functional and fluid *Network* remains a high priority among *Peacemakers*. The unique bond among Tanenbaum's community of practitioners, who often must act in isolation, carries on well beyond the bounds of Stony Point. It is our hope and expectation that renewed and new bonds will now provide solace to members who are working in manifest conflicts or who lack the local support that is so emotionally important for practitioners of peace. Also notable, and rewarding for Tanenbaum, is the continued strengthening of bonds between Tanenbaum staff and the *Peacemakers*. This deepening of trust is yet another key to the *Network's* future and its ability to thrive beyond changing participants and facilitators — and its growth and permanence is another step forward.

Ultimately, we hope the *Peacemakers* will carry their new ideas and skills, exchanged at the retreat, to their regional work, thereby maximizing the benefits of the *Network*, and passing along innovative ideas to their local peers.

Appendix A — Global Exposure and Media Opportunities

Meet the Peacemakers (Reprinted from Tanenbaum)

July 22, 2016

The week from July 9th to the 16th was a special one for Tanenbaum. We had the rare opportunity to visit with the diverse and passionate women and men, who are dedicating their lives to promoting peace, religious understanding, and a safer world – Tanenbaum’s *Peacemakers in Action*. This opportunity arises only once every few years, when we convene the *Peacemakers in Action Network* for a Working Retreat, where they have the chance to network in person and learn from each other, as well as from other experts in the field. This year, we were excited to have 18 *Peacemakers* with us, from global conflicts including Syria, Colombia, Nigeria, and the Philippines.

In the middle of the Retreat, we spent a day in Manhattan. While there, some *Peacemakers* presented their work at the [United Nations](#), while others discussed extremism, women’s issues arising in their work, and what the *Peacemakers in Action Network* has done for them on [The Brian Lehrer Show](#).

That evening, Tanenbaum leaders and friends met the *Peacemakers*. It was a moment to hear stories directly from the *Peacemakers*, as they shared their own experiences in battling extremism, conducting post-trauma counseling of those released from terrorists, and using music to heal post-conflict communities. Our Board Chair, Justin Foa, graciously opened his home for the event, which was sponsored by GHR, KAICIID, the Greek Archdiocese of North America, and Winebow. Without these wonderful partnerships, none of this – the Working Retreat or the Meet the *Peacemakers* evening – would have been possible.

**“Tanenbaum
Peacemakers
remind us that
there is reason
to hope.”**

Today, we so often feel helpless – and hopeless – as we face random acts of terror, hatred and exclusion. Tanenbaum *Peacemakers* remind us that there is reason to hope. To those of you who were able to be with us at the [UN](#), who listened to [The Brian Lehrer Show](#) or who joined us to meet the *Peacemakers*, we thank you. And to those of you who could not be with us, we hope to see you soon.

**Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* Speak at United Nations
(Reprinted from Tanenbaum)**

August 8, 2016

Leading grassroots peacebuilders and Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action*, from six of the world's conflict zones, made a celebrated appearance at the United Nations on Wednesday, July 13, 2016.

The event, "Turning the Tide: Engaging Religiously-Motivated Peacebuilders in Conflict Zones," addressed two topics: alternative approaches to combating extremism and ways that grassroots peacemakers build relationships and trust with community members, diplomats and government officials.

The first panel featured Tanenbaum *Peacemakers* Ms. Maria Ida "Deng" Giguiento (Philippines), Mr. Azhar Hussain (Pakistan), and Ms. Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge (South Africa), as well as H.E. Mr. Rubén Ignacio Zamora Rivas, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations. H.E. Mr. Kai Sauer, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations moderated the first panel.

Peacemaker Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge highlighted the need for multi-faith peacebuilding in South African communities. She noted how, "The interfaith movement between Christians, Muslims and Hindus, created in the struggle to end apartheid, continues today, providing a moral canvas for our government."

**"I always perceived
them as the enemy.
But I was taught
to pray for my
enemies."
- Tanenbaum
Peacemaker
Deng Giguiento
Philippines**

Tanenbaum's most recently awarded *Peacemaker in Action*, Deng Giguiento, discussed how she advises military leaders as a peacebuilder in the Philippines. She described once believing that she couldn't work with the military: "I always perceived them as the enemy. But I was taught to pray for my enemies." Following prayer with action, Deng sees positive results as she trains both military and community members with the hope of building a "lasting peace in Mindanao."

The second panel reviewed innovative approaches to tackling violent extremism and the prominent but frequently overlooked role of women in this field. Panelists included *Peacemakers* Mr. Ricardo

Esquivia (Colombia), Ms. Dishani Jayaweera (Sri Lanka), and Dr. Sakena Yacoobi (Afghanistan), as well as Ms. Faiza Patel, Co-Director of the Liberty and National Security Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law School, and Mr. Andrew Tomlinson, Director & Quaker U.N. Representative. Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women moderated.

Ms. Lakshmi began the panel by discussing how “Essentially religion is about humanity. It is about rights and it’s about the equality of all creatures.” Then Sri Lankan *Peacemaker* Dishani Jayaweera described how she created the Female Religious Leaders Initiative after working with 300 male religious leaders from diverse faith traditions. She began the initiative “to explore the role of female religious leaders in peacebuilding and reconciliation” and their “interpretation of religion and spirituality.” Her work aims to include women in the religious peacebuilding process, essential for creating lasting peace.

“If we really want to bring peace – it is not through guns, it’s not through tanks, it is through education.... education is the key issue that brings transformation.”

**- Tanenbaum
Peacemaker
Dr. Sakena Yacoobi
Afghanistan**

Peacemaker Sakena Yacoobi, who has founded numerous schools in Afghanistan, expressed, “I really strongly believe that women are the victim in every country, women and children.” And she gave insight into the solution, “If we really want to bring peace – it is not through guns, it’s not through tanks, it is through education.... education is the key issue that brings transformation.”

Peacemaker Ricardo Esquivia (Colombia) spoke about the importance of including both communities and government offices in the peacemaking process to combat extremism. “[We] use a pedagogy of nonviolence to teach communities about non-violent action, and we mobilize [groups] to interact through dialogue and direct negotiations with local and national governmental officials.”

Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* Pastor James Wuye with Friar Ivo Markovic in WNYC's Brian Lehrer studio. Credit: Shumita Basu / WNYC



The event at the UN was part of the 2016 Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action Network* Retreat, which brought together *Peacemakers* from all over the world to exchange ideas and best-practices in peacebuilding. This year's retreat focused on combating violent extremism and women in peacebuilding.

We extend our gratitude to the event's sponsors: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), KAICIID, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (GOA), and the GHR Foundation.

Tanenbaum's Peacemakers in Action featured on WNYC's The Brian Lehrer Show (Reprinted from [Tanenbaum](#))

August 4, 2016

On Wednesday July 13, award winning radio talk show host, Brian Lehrer, seized the opportunity to interview two Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action*, **Pastor James Wuye** of Nigeria and **Friar Ivo Markovic** of Bosnia-Herzegovina. ([Click here to listen to the show](#)) Known for thoughtful, candid and sometimes difficult conversations, Brian Lehrer's daily radio talk show on WNYC, The Brian Lehrer Show, received a George Foster Peabody award in 2007 for "Radio That Builds Community Rather Than Divides". In 2015, Tanenbaum honored Brian Lehrer as a Media Bridge Builder. In 2016, Lehrer interviewed Nigerian *Peacemaker* Pastor James Wuye who started his peace work by helping teach warring religious youth militias to resolve their conflicts peacefully. Today, Pastor James is busy with his innovative peacemaking work against Boko Haram with his former enemy, now close friend *Peacemaker* Imam Muhammad Ashafa.

Also on the radio show was *Peacemaker* Friar Ivo Markovic, a Bosnian Croat Franciscan Catholic who fostered peace in Bosnia following the

collapse of the former Yugoslavia. His innovative peace work continues through the use of the arts to promote peace, for example, by bringing young people together from diverse backgrounds and religions.

To begin the interview, Lehrer asked Friar Ivo about the violent sectarian conflict that followed the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1992. Friar Ivo recalled those days. *"It was a terrible time. War between three sides. Three religions. Three nations, and I felt obliged to do something."* Friar Ivo described how he had conveyed critical information to the outside world about the war, and how, in those dark days, he wanted to show the *"positive power"* of religious belief. When Brian Lehrer asked Friar Ivo about his interreligious choir based in Bosnia, Friar Ivo described the choir as *"a symphony"* of religious diversity, and shared how participation in the choir promotes reconciliation as choir members spend time with individuals from different faiths.

Next, Brian Lehrer asked Pastor James Wuye about his transformation from violence to reconciliation: *"Pastor James, I read that you did not start your religious career wanting to make peace. That in 1992, violence broke out in Kaduna between Christians and Muslims and as a Christian pastor you wanted to fight and kill Muslims at one time. Is that true? Can you describe that time?"*

Pastor James replied, *"When I was younger I was a Christian activist. There were challenges in those days, misunderstandings between people of opposite religions usually escalated into violent killing of people or destroying places of worship. It became imperative to me as a young person to learn to defend the church...Listeners cannot see that I have an artificial limb here which I lost as a result of my effort to protect the church from young Muslims who were wrongly programmed to hate. With that kind of hate, hate begets hate."*

Brian Lehrer then asked, *"How did you change? How did you go from killing each other's family members to brokering peace?"* And Pastor James continued, *"I had a turning point... my leader told me, 'James you cannot preach Christ with the kind of hate that you have for the Muslims. You have to love them, you have to forgive them, you have to learn to do what Christ would have done if he were here.' And that was the magic."*

It was this realization that moved Pastor James to begin working with former enemy (and now his fellow Tanenbaum *Peacemaker*) Imam Muhammad Ashafa. Together, they created the [Interfaith Mediation Centre](#), a grassroots organization that trains Nigeria's militia-involved youth, along with women, religious figures and tribal leaders to become civic peace activists. Pastor James is dedicated to providing hands-on trainings, but he also believes that *"the strongest weapon you can use against your enemy is to love your enemy excessively...you can disarm your enemy through love."*

Brian Lehrer also asked Pastor James spoke about his work with victims of Boko Haram. Pastor James revealed how he has to ask families very difficult (but important) questions: *"If your daughter arrives today with a baby from their captor, what will you do?"*

Brian Lehrer is a master; he elicited core truths from the powerful stories of two Tanenbaum *Peacemakers*. He concluded by putting their connection to Tanenbaum into context and asking more about Tanenbaum's *Peacemakers in Action Network*, and *Network* interventions, including the 2014 Syrian intervention when *Peacemaker* Hind Kabawat (Syria) invited her fellow *Peacemakers* Friar Ivo and Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge (South Africa) to train Syrian peace activists.

[Hear our *Peacemakers* in their own words – Click here](#) to listen to the full, 20-minute recording.

We want to express special thanks to Brian Lehrer and WNYC for their curiosity and for giving the Peacemakers the opportunity to share their work with New York.

Appendix B — Retreat Attendees

Peacemakers in Action

Maria Ida "Deng" Giguiento, Catholic, Philippines
 Dishani Jayaweera, Buddhist, Sri Lanka
 Sakena Yacoobi, Muslim, Afghanistan
 Elias Chacour, Catholic, Israel/Palestine
 Najeeba Sirhan, Muslim, Israel/Palestine
 Ivo Markovic, Catholic, Bosnia-Hezegovina
 José "Chencho" Alas, Catholic, El Salvador
 James Movel Wuye, Protestant, Nigeria

Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa, Muslim, Nigeria
Yehezkel Landau, Jewish, USA/Israel
William Lowrey, Presbyterian, USA/South Sudan
Ephraim Isaac, Jewish, Ethiopia
Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, Quaker, South Africa
Ricardo Esquivia, Mennonite, Colombia
Azhar “Azi” Hussain, Muslim, Pakistan
Hind Kabawat, Christian, Syria
Jacklevyn “Jacky” Manuputty, Protestant, Indonesia

Special Guests

Lillian Hall, wife and interpreter for Ricardo Esquivia
Jayanta Seneviratne, husband of Dishani Jayaweera

Outside Experts

Jeremy Routledge, Deputy Director, Embrace Dignity
Mohammad Abu-Nimer, PhD. Senior Advisor, KAICIID
Zanele Khumalo, Program Officer and Facilitator, Gender Reconciliation International
William Keepin, PhD. Founding Director, Gender Reconciliation International

Tanenbaum Staff and Volunteers

Joyce Dubensky, CEO
Mark Fowler, Deputy CEO
Janie Dumbleton, Program Associate, Conflict Resolution
Michael McShane, Network Coordinator, Conflict Resolution
Nicole Margaretten, Communications Manager
Lindsay Wasserberger, Communications and PR Assistant
Alexandra Konigsburg, Institutional Giving Associate
Ritu Mukherjee, Intern, Conflict Resolution
Andrew Chang, Intern, Conflict Resolution
Rachel Chang, Intern, Development
Ellie Green, Intern, Communications
Mary Seo, former Intern and Volunteer, Conflict Resolution
Taylor Paul Colwell, Volunteer, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese
Theodore Pritsis, Volunteer, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese

Appendix C — Retreat Sessions

Session 1: Introduction to the 2016 *Peacemakers in Action* Working Retreat/Ice Breakers

- Joyce Dubensky commenced the Retreat by welcoming everyone; she honored those who are not with us (deceased *Peacemakers* and community members) and acknowledged the *Peacemakers* who were unable to attend.
- Standing in a circle and holding hands, everyone shared their wish for the Retreat.
- Mark Fowler established the Retreat's ground rules, combining a standard set of guidelines with *Peacemaker* suggestions for the week.
- The *Peacemakers* then rotated through intimate group conversations to catch up with one another and to welcome new *Peacemakers* into the *Network* community.



Peacemakers Friar Ivo Markovic (Bosnia) with Hind Kabawat (Syria) and Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge (South Africa) at the retreat.
Credit: Paul Colwell

Session 2: The Role of Women in Post-War Healing and Reconciliation in Bosnia

Led by Ivo Markovic

- Friar Ivo shared with his fellow *Peacemakers* his work with women in post-conflict Bosnia.
- His dialogic session mixed lecture with debate; offering a foundational history of patriarchy and matriarchy and the era of feminism, Friar Ivo then turned his attention to the war in Bosnia and its impact on women both during and after the conflict.
- After concluding his presentation, Friar Ivo facilitated a group discussion among the *Network*, inviting his fellow *Peacemakers* to respond to the Bosnian experience, as well as to speak to relatable experiences in their homelands. This led to a rich discussion.

Session 3: Network Intervention Briefings

By Hind Kabawat, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge and Friar Ivo Markovic, Dishani Jayaweera, Pastor James Wuye and Imam Muhammad Ashafa

- The five *Peacemakers* (Dishani's attendance at the Retreat was delayed a few days) discussed the two most recent *Network* collaborations — the Syrian intervention and the Sri Lankan intervention.
- From these two briefings, the *Peacemakers* learned more about the important work their fellow *Peacemakers* are doing on the ground together.

- At the end of the session, Mark encouraged each one of them to use the rest of the week to brainstorm and hold personal, informal conversations with each other about their ideas for future collaboration.

Session 4: Gender Reconciliation I

Led by Jeremy Routledge, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, Will Keepin and Zanele Khumalo

- The full-day gender reconciliation training was an unique opportunity to bridge a “new field of transformational healing and reconciliation between women and men” with understanding how and where women can be better recognized and included in peacebuilding.
- In the morning session, the four Gender Reconciliation International facilitators (including *Peacemaker* Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge and her husband, Jeremy Routledge) established their intentions and goals. To encourage openness and to energize the participants, the facilitators led singing and movement exercises.
- During one exercise, participants paired with someone of another gender to discuss their hopes and concerns about the reconciliation as well as the lessons they learned about gender and gender roles while growing up. Small groups then formed to discuss what it would look like to live in a “gender healed world”.

Session 5: Gender Reconciliation II

Led by Jeremy Routledge, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, Will Keepin and Zanele Khumalo

- In the afternoon session, women and men were split by gender for a controversial exercise called ‘Silent Witness.’
- Questions were directed to each group addressing issues of gender; themes included bullying, abuse, sexual assault and political violence. Most agreed that it was a powerful exercise and multiple *Peacemakers* expressed interest in adapting the day’s exercises for their own work and cultural contexts.
- Participants expressed appreciation that the exercises throughout the day acknowledged the impact of societal gender roles on men as well as women. However, participants also had both personal and cultural objections to the way ‘Silent Witness’ was presented.

Session 6: Combating Violent Extremism I

Led by Mohammed Abu-Nimer

- To better understand the language, concepts, strategies and goals underpinning “PVE” and “CVE” programs and initiatives, Tanenbaum invited Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, renowned peace-building scholar and practitioner, to lead two training sessions for the *Peacemakers* on extremism and developing effective responses to this critical global issue.
- In his first session, Dr. Abu-Nimer addressed the following questions during his presentation:
 - What is CVE and PVE?
 - What are the limitations and strengths of CVE and PVE strategies, policies and programs?
 - Why do religious actors have a role in CVE and PVE?
 - What are the dynamics of manipulating religious identity?

Session 7: Combating Violent Extremism II

Led by Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer

- In the second session, Dr. Abu-Nimer asked the *Peacemakers* to identify two to three concrete examples in which the *Peacemaker* or the *Peacemaker's* community had been effectively manipulated by religious leaders or political leaders or both.
- The *Peacemakers* formed break-out groups and then presented their answers to the entire room.

Session 8: Counter-narratives in Pakistan

Led by Azi Hussain

- Azi presented on his work in Pakistan, specifically his Pakistan Religious Education Enhancement program.
- Azi highlighted his engagement with madrasas, as well as his training of imams and five new teacher training centers his organization — the [Peace and Education Foundation](#) — has established.
- Azi's foundation has created a textbook for madrasas called *Peace Education and Islam*. Over 150,000 copies have been published and over 40,000 copies have been distributed to partners, teachers and madrasas.

Session 9: Laudatao Si' Training

Led by Chencho Alas

- Inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment and climate change, *Laudatao Si'*, Chencho has given workshops in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras on the Pope's letter and the importance of ecology and "mother earth."
- At the Retreat, Chencho conducted his *Laudatao Si'* training for the *Peacemakers*.
- Chencho asked the *Peacemakers* to form groups and reflect on and share a "beautiful, *deep* living experience that you have had in your life dealing with Mother Earth."

Session 10: Power of Education: Building Trust through Rumi

Led by Sakena Yacoobi

- Sakena shared with her fellow *Peacemakers* that she learned education could empower people and through education she could effect change.
- Sakena explained that the success of her programs is built on trust, as well as cultural sensitivity.
- As a new approach, Sakena and her organization have introduced the power of poetry and the embedded concepts of love, forgiveness and sharing. Through a ground-breaking conference, in which poets from all over Afghanistan were invited to attend, Sakena realized that poetry is a gateway to peace for communities everywhere.

Session 11: Network Business

Led by Bill Lowrey

- Bill provided a brief refresher on the keys to forming, cultivating and facilitating a formal network before reviewing the *PIA Network's* previously agreed upon purpose, structure and various activities.
- After his lecture, Bill asked the *Peacemakers* to form cluster groups to identify the *Network's* strengths and weaknesses.
- Before selecting the *Network's Leadership Council* for the next two years (or until the next Working Retreat), the clustered groups brainstormed their vision for the *Network's* future.

Session 12: Evaluation and Retreat Closing

Led by Mark Fowler

- The *Peacemakers* completed an evaluation survey to give their feedback on the Retreat, and Mark facilitated a conversation among those who wished to share their thoughts out loud.
- Mark also led the community through a final reflection on the words and feelings that best summed up the Retreat.
- The *Peacemakers* said their final goodbyes with hugs and pictures

REFERENCES

- i. [Dr. Lisa Schirch](#) is a member of Tanenbaum's [Conflict Resolution Program Advisory Council](#) and has worked closely with some [Peacemakers in Action](#), including the newest member of the *PIA Network*, Maria Ida "Deng" Giguiento from the Philippines.
- ii. Schirch, L. (2005), p. 11. *Little Book of Strategic Peacebuilding: A Vision and Framework for Peace with Justice*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.
- iii. Jewkes, Rachel et al June 2009 'Understanding men's health and use of violence: interface of rape and HIV in South Africa' *Medical Research Council*
- iv. To learn more about Dishani's panel and the entire *Peacemakers'* UN event, "Turning the Tide: Engaging Religiously-Motivated Peacebuilders in Conflict Zones," as well as other July 13, 2016 Retreat programming in New York City, please see Appendix A below.
- v. Dr. Abu Nimer is a Senior Advisor to KAICIID and a professor at the School of International Service at American University. He also serves on Tanenbaum's Conflict Resolution Program Advisory Council.
- vi. CPAN is the Interfaith Mediation Center's (IMC) Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) system; *Peacemakers* Pastor James and Imam Ashafa are the co-founders of the IMC.
- vii. Creating safe spaces for sharing and engagement in interreligious and/or interfaith activities must be established along with intergroup trust and trust of the facilitator, trainer, gatherer, etc.
- viii. (Galtung, 1964: 2)