



International Ecumenical Peace Convocation

Kingston | Jamaica | 2011



Mittwoch, 18. März 2009

This is a summary presentation of what the DOV and the IEPC aim to accomplish. The WCC is since its beginnings in 1948 concerned about peace and justice. But never before has violence preoccupied the ecumenical movement so much.

Glory to God and Peace on Earth



May 17 - 25, 2011



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The motto of the IEPC comes from the angels' song at Christmas. The Glory of God and peace on earth are directly related to one another. It is by making peace that people give glory to God. War and violence are violating God's glory.

Violence



- 👊 kills 4500 people every day
- 👊 is a major cause of mortality among people between 14 and 44 years old
- 👊 leaves unknown numbers injured
- 👊 causes enormous cost to society
- 👊 threatens the entire human race



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The media are full of images and stories of violence. Violence is in the headlines every day. In 2002 the WHO has published its World Report on Violence and Health and its findings are sobering. The victims of violence mentioned here are victims to physical violence. One can count the dead, but it is hard to quantify the long term damage violence does to individuals, families, social fabric and infrastructures. Did you know that in Europe, women between 16 and 44 have a higher risk of being victims of violence than being victims of cancer or road traffic accidents?

The nature of violence

 physical

 psychological

 sexual

 deprivation/neglect




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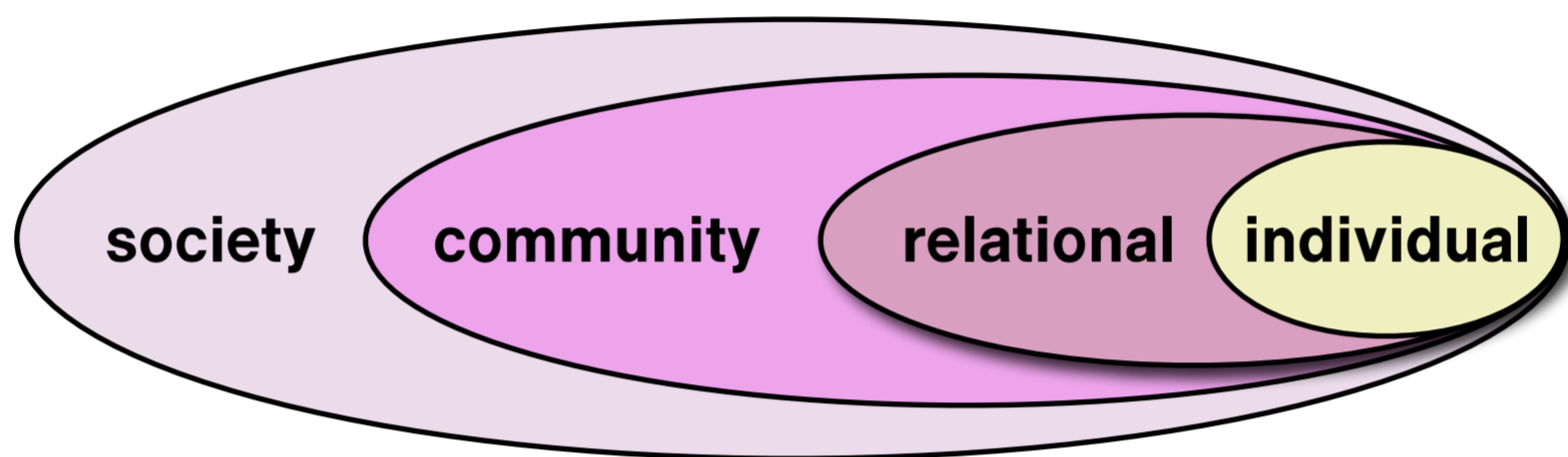
The WHO differentiates between four types of violence. Physical violence is more easily detectable than psychological or indirect violence. What is commonly known as structural violence, the WHO calls violence by deprivation or negligence. World hunger for instance belongs to this fourth category.

Types of violence

 individual (against self)

 interpersonal (at home, intimate partner)

 collective (war, terrorism)



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These are world averages...

50% of deaths are due to individual violence

30% interpersonal

20% collective

All the levels of violence are interconnected. Violence, whether physical or psychological, can generate further violence on another level. Factors of violence are found on all levels.



Violence prevention – a public health priority



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Following the WHO report, the World Health Assembly passed a resolution which makes violence prevention a public health priority. Member states are thus required to implement violence prevention measures, and churches can take action to foster such measures, or assist in them. The motto of the WHO's violence prevention campaign is «Violence is preventable – not unavoidable.»

Decade to Overcome Violence

 In 2001 the WCC launches the DOV

 "Churches seeking reconciliation and peace"

 The DOV aims to move peace from the periphery into the center of the church



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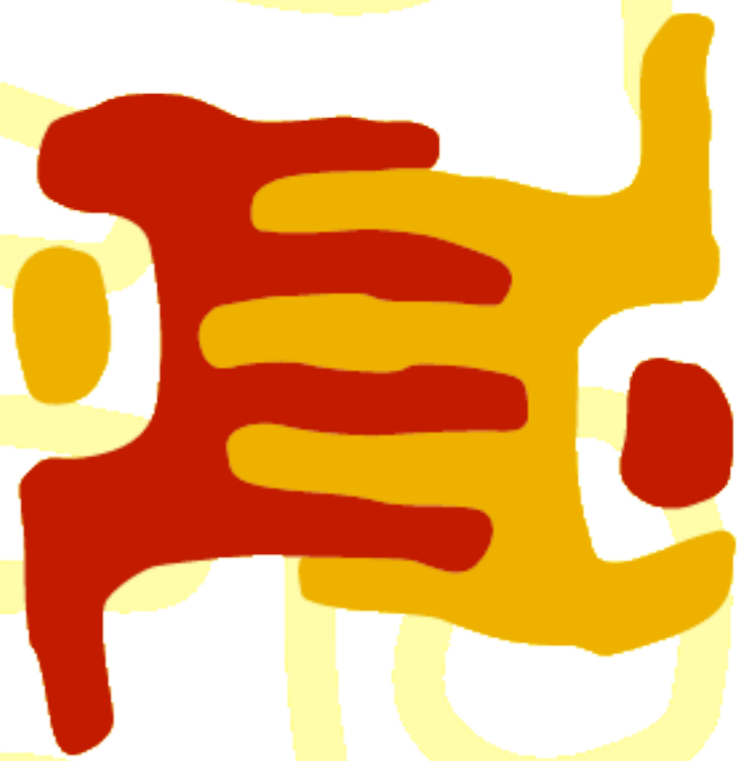
The DOV grew out of two WCC programmes: the programme to combat racism, and the decade of churches in solidarity with women. After the end of apartheid churches asked the WCC to commit itself to overcoming violence. Violence is known to continue after armed conflict ends. Actually, churches had asked in the 60s that the WCC study nonviolent means to promote social change. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi had inspired the ecumenical movement. However, nonviolence has not taken deep roots in churches. They were preoccupied by other concerns, such as racism, post-colonial wars, dictatorships, the cold war, but also internal issues. Learning nonviolence as a way of life, and even recognizing its power and potential, is a major challenge for the ecumenical community today.


The context

- ☞ Confusion between violence and conflict
- ☞ War is no longer a (regulated) institution
- ☞ No one has the monopoly on violence
- ☞ The threshold to violence is lower
- ☞ Proliferation of small arms & light weapons
- ☞ Violence is big business
- ☞ A deep fascination with violence
- ☞ Violence rises to its extremes
- ☞ Human capacity for self-destruction

Churches and their leaders are used to issue statements condemning violence and calling for peace. But often concrete action is missing. Here are some facts which indicate that violence today is not a matter that can be addressed by moral or ethical appeals. Nor is violence simply due to conflict. There are many more factors and the issues are very complex.

PEACE IS IN OUR HANDS
 CULTIVONS LA PAIX
 CULTIVEMOS LA PAZ
 السلام بين أيدينا
 Мир в наших руках
 让我们播种和平



 The DOV is the ecumenical parallel to the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World




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The good news is that violence is no longer ignored today. Violence has become a concern of civil society which is increasingly refusing to accept violence as a given, and is taking on violence prevention.

Mandate of the WCC General Assembly for 2010/2011

 A consultative process towards an ecumenical declaration on just peace


 An International Ecumenical Peace Convocation to mark the end of the Decade and to encourage churches to a continued commitment....



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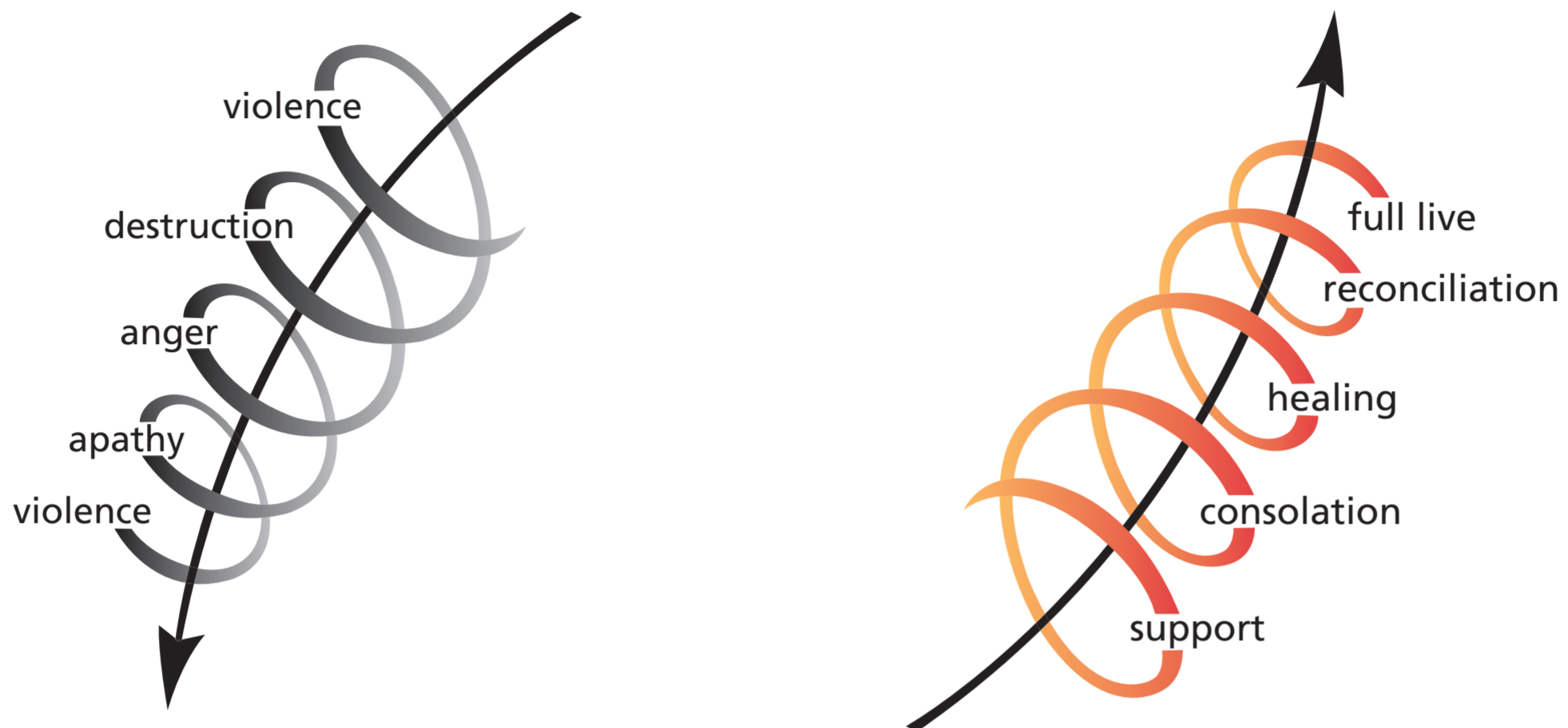
The General Assembly of the WCC in Porto Alegre 2006 decided to mark the end of the DOV with a wide process of consultation and a significant event. The aim is to engage churches in a commitment to overcoming violence and building peace beyond the Decade.

Mission of the IEPC

 The IEPC will bring together a wide spectrum of people to celebrate peace as a gift from God and a responsibility of the Church. It seeks to assess and strengthen the churches' position on peace, to provide opportunities for networking and to deepen our common commitment to reconciliation and peace.



Reversing the spiral of violence



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Dom Helder Camara, Bishop of Recife, Brazil in the 60s, used the image of a spiral to describe violence. The ultimate goal of the DOV and the IEPC is to turn the spiral of violence, destruction and death, upside-down into a spiral of life and healing.

What is the IEPC

 **a space** to celebrate God's gift of peace

 **an occasion** to inspire one another

 **a time** to recommit ourselves to a culture of peace and nonviolence



Ethos and Integrity






- 🤝 Respect peace locally
- 🤝 Modesty and simplicity
- 🤝 Concern for the environment
- 🤝 Strong link with local community



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The Venue

-  Hosted by the CCC and JCC
-  Kingston, Jamaica
-  University of the West Indies
-  Strong civil society links
-  Theological faculties



Four Themes

 Peace in the Community

 Peace with the Earth

 Peace and the Marketplace

 Peace Among the Peoples



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These four themes will provide a framework to the IEPC. The subjects and issues of the DOV will find their place here, from conflict transformation to nuclear disarmament, from forgiveness to care for nature. Experiences will be shared and stories will be told, so that participants will not only take home splendid memories but also practical tools for peacemaking.

1. Peace in the Community

Peace begins with oneself and at home. Our self-understanding and our relationships with those around us are essential for how we relate to the wider world. Christians affirm that peace on earth begins at home. But what are the practical implications of such an affirmation, especially in light of violence against women or racism?

2. Peace with the Earth

Peace on earth includes peace with the earth. The human calling is for responsibility and care towards nature. Today's challenges in regard to ecology, climate change, and natural resources make it urgent to consider our views and actions. What are Christian ways to care for creation? What people of faith they do on both the personal and the collective levels?


3. Peace and the Marketplace

Some see no way for the market to be peaceful, others see it as the way to peace and prosperity. The crisis of the early 21st century compel us to take a critical look at our core assumptions about wealth and poverty, growth and sustainability and how they are obstacles to justice and generate violence. What is the role of Christians in the world's markets, both as participants and in their ministry of reconciliation?

4. Peace Among the Peoples

Reconciliation is a crucial call of our time. Yet the nuclear threat is far from having disappeared; military spending keeps increasing and hostilities are simmering in many places. What does the Church practically have to offer for peace in a world where armed conflict often appears as an easy and exclusive resort?

Participation

-  Member churches
-  DOV Network
-  Peace Activists
-  Local Community
-  Stream participants
-  Peoples of other faiths



Convocation Planning Committee (CPC)

 DOV Reference Group

 Caribbean, Jamaica







 Youth

 Specialised Ministries

 Spiritual Life Working Group



Finance

-  Total cost of CHF 3 million
-  Member Churches
-  Specialised Ministries
-  Campaign in congregations
-  Foundations
-  Other ...

What can we expect from the IEPC?



 Celebration of peace

 Stories of peace making

 Treasures & toolboxes for peace makers

 A stronger commitment to peace & justice








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The IEPC will be a celebration of initiatives taken during the Decade, a kind of harvest festival. There will be opportunities for encouragement and resourcing. The IEPC's mission is to engage churches and the entire ecumenical movement in a commitment to just peacemaking and nonviolence.

On the photo the group of the Jamaica Violence Prevention Alliance.

What does the WCC do?

-  Living Letters (solidarity visits)
-  Thematic consultations
-  Invitation to write a peace declaration
-  Consultative process towards an ecumenical declaration on just peace
-  EAPPI, Water Network, AGAPE, IDPP...







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The WCC has only modest means for the preparation of the IEPC. The projects listed here are possible because partners on the local, regional and international level are engaged.

EAPPI = Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Israel and Palestine

IDPP = International Day of Prayer for Peace – September 21

How can you prepare?

-  Study and discuss the Initial Statement
-  Collect and share practical examples
-  Let the WCC/DOV know your story
-  Follow the news for peace



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You are invited to participate one way or another. There are many possibilities. Perhaps you can become involved in organizing a smaller or larger parallel event to the IEPC, linked in with Kingston...

Open your eyes to see beyond the terrible news and see the signs of peace, of nonviolence and of justice. They are real and multiply. Do you believe peace is possible?

www.overcomingviolence.org



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