

# Peace-building through Ecumenical and Interfaith Dialogue

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## **ABSTRACT**

The process of peace building is complex and multidimensional. This is particularly so in contexts of conflict, for which three interconnected phases of peace building have been identified: conflict prevention and de-escalation, crisis management and cessation of hostilities, and consolidation leading to a stable peaceful order. These phases are connected with a number of factors which are required for, or significantly contribute to, peace on both the individual, internal level (for example, trust and forgiveness) and on the broader, social level (for example, disarmament and justice).

Similarly complex, ecumenical and interfaith dialogue comprise a range of characteristics (for example, honesty, openness, mutual acceptance and respect), and take various forms, including the dialogue of religious experience, the dialogue of action and the dialogue of life. The link between such dialogue and peace building is the topic of this paper. By examining case studies from Bougainville, PNG and South Africa (the Truth and Reconciliation Commission), some of the diverse ways in which ecumenical and interfaith dialogue can contribute to peace building and its associated factors across all phases are revealed.

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The focus of this paper is the contribution of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue to peace building. In considering this question I will first explore some key conceptual aspects of the topic, and then examine two case studies.

It is a paradox that historically religions have often been implicated in violence and conflict, either as a direct cause or as an associated factor,<sup>1</sup> but have also contributed to building peace, although this contribution is not always easy to evaluate or quantify.<sup>2</sup> In a speech delivered at the conclusion of the Interreligious Assembly hosted by the Vatican in October 1999 to several hundred invited guests from twenty religions, Pope John Paul II stated,

Any use of religion to support violence is an abuse of religion. ... Religion and peace go together: to wage war in the name of religion is a blatant contradiction. Religious leaders must show that they are pledged to peace precisely because of their religious belief. The task before us therefore is to promote a culture of dialogue.

Individually and together, we must show how religious belief inspires peace, encourages solidarity, promotes justice and upholds liberty.<sup>3</sup>

In these comments Pope John Paul II shows that religious belief can form an inspirational basis for peace and highlights the need for dialogue to build peace.

Dialogue can be understood in various ways. The Vatican document *Dialogue and Proclamation* describes three meanings.<sup>4</sup> On the one hand, dialogue can refer at the purely human level to “reciprocal communication, leading to a common goal or ... to interpersonal communion.” On the other hand, it can mean “an attitude of respect and friendship” ideally permeating all activities which are part of the evangelising mission of the Church with “the spirit of dialogue”. Finally, in contexts of religious plurality, it denotes “all positive and constructive interreligious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths which are directed at mutual understanding and enrichment, in obedience to truth and respect for freedom.” This final definition points to a number of characteristics of dialogue, namely, that it is positive and constructive, includes “relations” in general rather than being restricted to conversation, has the aim of mutual understanding and enrichment, and involves truth and respect. Teasdale further characterises such dialogue as honest, open, active communication, presupposing mutual acceptance and generosity of heart, and encompassing the possibility of being changed (“converted”) by the truth of the other.<sup>5</sup> This paper will concentrate on *Dialogue and Proclamation's* final sense of ‘dialogue’, which, given the focus of that definition on “interreligious relations”, may be qualified using the terms ‘interreligious’, ‘ecumenical’ or ‘interfaith’ dialogue, although it is the latter two which are of particular interest in this paper. These three terms are sometimes confused or used interchangeably, but have been usefully distinguished by Beversluis as follows: ‘interreligious’ signifies that the participants represent a religious community in some semi-official or official role in a deliberate institutional or clerical encounter; ‘ecumenical’ refers to interactions among members of Christian denominations; and ‘interfaith’ denotes relationships and encounters between members of different religious, spiritual, philosophic,

faith and other communities, with an emphasis on the interpersonal and experiential nature of such interactions.<sup>6</sup>

*Dialogue and Proclamation* goes on to identify four forms of dialogue, without placing them in any order of priority.<sup>7</sup> First, the *dialogue of life*, which refers to being in and experiencing together all aspects of human life “in an open and neighbourly spirit”. The *dialogue of action* describes the practical collaboration of people working together on issues of concern to humanity such as peace. Thirdly, the *dialogue of theological exchange* is academic dialogue involving specialists seeking to deepen their understanding and appreciation of their religious traditions and spiritual values through, for example, discussion of beliefs, doctrinal differences and ethics. Finally, the *dialogue of religious experience* denotes an affective sharing by people of the riches within their own religious traditions, including through shared spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation and song.<sup>8</sup> The various forms of dialogue are interconnected,<sup>9</sup> and other forms may be identified, such as the *dialogue of salvation*<sup>10</sup> and Teasdale’s *dialogues of friendship (or love)*, and *play*.<sup>11</sup>

In the statement quoted above, as often in his papacy,<sup>12</sup> Pope John Paul II pointed to the link between dialogue, religion and peace. Just as “dialogue” can have different meanings and take different forms, so also “peace” is a complex, multidimensional concept. A document produced by the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, devotes an entire chapter to peace and notes early on that “Peace is not merely the absence of war... Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice”.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama Tensin Gyatso states that “Peace, in the sense of the absence of war, is of little value to someone who is dying of hunger or cold.”<sup>14</sup> Both these statements from major religious leaders make the point, to be discussed further below, that peace should be both broadly defined and go hand in hand with basic human needs and rights.

At a basic level a distinction can be made between the inner peace of an individual and broader peace between individuals, communities, nations, and so on, although these levels are intimately interconnected.<sup>15</sup> Building

on the previous quote, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama Tensin Gyatso argues that:

True peace with ourselves and with the world around us can only be achieved through the development of mental [inner] peace. ...[It] starts within each one of us. When we have inner peace, we can be at peace with those around us. When our community is in a state of peace, it can share peace with neighbouring communities, and so on.<sup>16</sup>

Similar sentiments have been expressed by a succession of popes,<sup>17</sup> including John Paul II who emphasised that “personal peace and peace for others - must ... be sought in prayer and meditation.”<sup>18</sup> This is because

Prayer is the bond which most effectively unites us. Through prayer, believers meet one another at a level where inequalities, misunderstandings, bitterness and hostility are overcome... As the authentic expression of a right relationship with God and with others, prayer is already a positive contribution to peace.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, “...prayer for peace must be followed by appropriate action for peace.”<sup>20</sup> Hence, we must build on and manifest the *dialogue of religious experience* in our *dialogue of action* as well as in the activities of our everyday *dialogue of life* and, for specialists, in the *dialogue of theological exchange*.

In discussing the nature of peace between people, *Gaudium et Spes* notes that it is something that must be continuously constructed as its concrete requirements are constantly changing in the context of the realities of human existence.<sup>21</sup> It is a dynamic process in which, to use Panikkar's terms, the “religious” and the “political” “intermingle”: “Human peace is political and religious at the same time - and this, precisely because it is human and Man is a totality.”<sup>22</sup> The phrase “peace building” is one way of conveying the idea of peace as a ceaselessly constructed process.

As an indication of the complexity of peace building, Neubert's analysis of peace building in situations of war presents the process as a cycle of three interconnected phases: conflict prevention and de-escalation, crisis management and cessation of hostilities, and consolidation leading to a stable peaceful order.<sup>23</sup> He also identifies a number of phenomena connected with these phases. For example, the third phase of post-conflict

stabilisation and the establishment of a peaceful order occurs in conjunction with reconciliation, healing, forgiveness (which has as its complement the acknowledgement of guilt)<sup>24</sup>, the rule of law and legal justice, human rights and social justice, and political participation.<sup>25</sup>

*Gaudium et Spes*, in a more general discussion of peace, also recognises the complexity and multidimensionality of the concept. Justice is essential: "Peace results from that order structured into human society by its divine Founder, and actualized by men as they thirst after ever greater justice."<sup>26</sup> However, a number of other factors are required for, or significantly contribute to, peace. These are, in no particular order, the safeguarding of personal well-being (also referred to as security), free and trusting sharing of resources, co-operation and collaboration, respect for others and human dignity, solidarity, economic and human development, disarmament, mutual trust, truth, freedom, love, and unity.<sup>27</sup> Both this list and Neubert's,<sup>28</sup> include, on the one hand, phenomena which are in their essence affective, attitudinal, or in some other way internal to individuals even when they are shared, such as trust, love, and forgiveness, as well as, on the other hand, factors which involve practical action in the world, such as political participation, the rule of law and legal justice, security, disarmament and development. Thus, the interconnection noted above between the inner peace of an individual and broader peace between individuals, communities, and so on, is reflected in the specific phenomena associated with and contributing to peace building.<sup>29</sup>

Having now outlined the basis of the question being addressed in this paper by exploring the key concepts of 'dialogue', especially 'ecumenical and interfaith dialogue', and 'peace building', consideration will now be given to two case studies of peace building in contexts of conflict, including the contribution of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue to the peace building process in each case.

The first example comes from the island of Bougainville off the coast of Papua New Guinea (PNG).<sup>30</sup> Along with PNG, Bougainville was colonised and under German control from 1899-1914, and under the control of the

Australian Government from 1914-1975 when PNG gained independence. From 1989-1998 Bougainville was the scene of a civil war (or struggle for independence) between the PNG Security Forces with their local militia allies and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). During this period 18,000-20,000 lives were lost. In 1990 the PNG Government withdrew all services and imposed a blockade on the island which caused acute shortages, in particular of medical supplies, with numerous resulting deaths.<sup>31</sup> In a subsequent period of military occupation people were relocated to “care centres” (refugee camps). There and elsewhere during that period there were frequent human rights abuses, harassment, rapes, intimidation and murders, as well as the denial of access to all basic services, health and education.<sup>32</sup> During the blockade and political vacuum of 1990-1994 people turned to the churches for support and services, especially medical services. A survivor comments, “Services delivered with love and Christian fellowship became the most important aspect of people’s social life.”<sup>33</sup> The churches involved were Catholic (including mainstream and charismatic), United Church, Seventh Day Adventist, Methodist and Pentecostal. In April 1998 a ceasefire was signed by all the warring factions and on 30 August 2001 the Bougainville Peace Agreement was signed.<sup>34</sup>

Each of the churches mentioned above has a women’s fellowship group, with the first, the Methodist group, established in the 1920s, the Pentecostals in the 1970s, and the Catholic Women’s Association and Seventh Day Adventist Dorcas groups arising in the 1980s. All of these groups grew in strength during the 1990s conflict as part of the general turn towards the churches and Christianity, and 1995 saw the formation of the Bougainville Inter-Church Women’s Forum, which united women from disparate groups across the island.<sup>35</sup> Saovana-Spriggs and Tohiana both argue strongly that women, especially united in and across church groups, initiated and sustained the peace process at local and national levels from the earliest stages of the conflict.<sup>36</sup> Women had a central role as peacemakers, for example, in mediating and negotiating between hostile armed groups. One of the women involved recounts:

The most important thing for me and my women was to establish and nurture trust and honesty in the BRA, so that trust and honesty

would flow between us. One little move outside the rules of the game could mean the end of our efforts, a futile and devastating outcome ... But gradually, as my Catholic Women's Group and the northern BRA members felt more secure and confident, there was a little opening in the path of negotiation and mediation. Sometimes, a small matter would take over two months to resolve, but we did it wholeheartedly.<sup>37</sup>

Their peace building work also included organising and hosting prayer meetings, peace marches, disarmament vigils, anti-violence protests, and the like; attending and influencing public meetings, workshops and reconciliation ceremonies; formulating peace action plans and petitions; helping people directly in meeting their basic needs by distributing supplies and services and running health clinics and schools; helping people indirectly by supporting NGOs involved in humanitarian aid, counselling and mediation training; and, as will be discussed below, promoting reconciliation between families and communities split by the conflict.<sup>38</sup> Women often appealed directly for peace:

Our mothering instinct, to nurture and protect human life, saw us calling for no more deaths. While we were one with our leaders in the struggle for our destiny, we also cajoled them not to lead Bougainville in the way of destruction. We said, "We do not carry guns like you men in the jungle, but we are the ones who cry over our dead. The pain we feel for our land is like the pain we feel when we give birth. But we have no more tears left! Please find another way to restore our dignity and to save our society!"<sup>39</sup>

One example of women's actions occurred at the Arawa Peace Conference held in 1997, the first Bougainville-wide peace talks between the PNG Government and Security Forces, the BRA and the people of Bougainville.<sup>40</sup> Almost 25,000 people attended, including hundreds of women. Despite the fact that the BRA only sent junior members and some journalists consequently described the meeting as a failure, Saovana-Spriggs contends that a move towards unity initiated by the women was "a turning point for all Bougainville people" and "the most significant turning point" in the conflict.<sup>41</sup> The women achieved this move first by uniting themselves across political factions and religious denominations to establish open communication and mutual understanding. They organised activities to create unity, most especially a combined churches daily act of

worship, which “became the central path to the hearts and minds of the participants, paving the way to unity.”<sup>42</sup> They were also politically active in participating in the formal daily meetings, constantly reminding all parties of the hardships suffered by the ordinary, noncombatant population, and in appealing daily over the radio to BRA members who had stayed away to participate in the talks. In addition, they played a crucial mediating role in the negotiations because the BRA and their allies felt safer talking to the women than the men because they believed that the former better understood their position. Further, as one participant stated,

And the army and the BRA, they understand the women; so what role the women were playing was maybe mediator in between. So when the boys came out of the bush they had to go and talk to the women, and the women would go and talk to the authorities.<sup>43</sup>

Through these measures “the women expressed their utmost desire for a return to peace and to unite again as one Bougainville people.”<sup>44</sup> Moreover, their efforts opened up future opportunities for the development of the peace process.

The preceding discussion has dealt with actions promoting peace during what Neubert has identified as the first and second phases of peace building.<sup>45</sup> Saovana-Spriggs also addresses fundamental questions most relevant to the third phase: how to heal and rebuild societies split by conflict; how to reconcile former combatants, typically young men, who have taken up arms and killed civilians, possibly including their own relatives, with those who have suffered personal injury, the destruction of property, and witnessed the brutal treatment of loved ones; and how to change the mindset of war ruled by anger, hopelessness, bitterness and hatred, and in which former friends and relatives are viewed as traitors and enemies.<sup>46</sup> Part of the answer for Bougainvilleans lies in the traditional reconciliation process, which has endured since before European arrival.<sup>47</sup> This protracted process involves negotiations and ceremonies with time for reflection and the working through of painful feelings by all parties to a dispute, from families to clans and wider communities. The process weaves together opposing parties, heals and mends, restores balance and peace, and returns relationships to their rightful state. Its necessity is highlighted by



Havini,

If post-conflict reconstruction is carried out without looking for the root causes of conflict recovery will be only superficial. Reconciliation is important to heal spiritual and psychological wounds, prevent hatred, distrust and warmongering, and to encourage forgiveness and unity.<sup>48</sup>

Being a long-established part of Bougainvillean culture, reconciliation is also part of the political process which fosters collaboration, co-operation and political participation.<sup>49</sup>

For Saovana-Spriggs and Sirivi, forgiveness and the humility to accept the truth are essential to the reconciliation process. On the one hand,

Forgiveness fosters acceptance of the perpetrator, despite his acts of aggression during the civil war. Such acceptance then brings about [in the perpetrator] a degree of willingness [to reconcile], and perhaps a certain measure of security, which opens opportunities for dialogue with the so-called 'enemy' or the 'other'.<sup>50</sup>

Thus, forgiveness of perpetrators by survivors leads ultimately to the possibility of dialogue between them on the journey towards peaceful, cohesive communities.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand, forgiveness requires an accompanying acceptance of truth by all parties so as to find a common meeting point. That point forms the basis for dialogue and resolution, for example, through the negotiation of just compensation.<sup>52</sup> Saovana-Spriggs describes a reconciliation ceremony which combined Christian and traditional elements.<sup>53</sup> The BRA perpetrators sought forgiveness from the survivor they had severely injured, her family and wider kin, and all joined in prayers for reconciliation. Gifts were given to the survivor and her family in compensation, followed by a feast and much handshaking.

The actions of Bougainvillean women described above show the power of ecumenical dialogue in various forms, especially *action* and *religious experience*, in building peace by promoting trust, forgiveness, truth and honesty, acceptance, justice (via compensation), healing, reconciliation, political participation, co-operation and collaboration, unity, as well as its contribution to the meeting of basic human needs.

The second case study is of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (hereafter TRC or the Commission), which occurred in Neubert's final phase of peace building.<sup>54</sup> The political background to this example is that of apartheid rooted in colonialism under Dutch and British powers. The official policy of segregation known as apartheid, was introduced in 1948, although it started in practice much earlier and became increasingly significant through legislation and government-sponsored action from 1910 onwards. Under apartheid, discrimination on the basis of race as "Coloured, Indian, African and white"<sup>55</sup> underpinned gross violations of human rights, the transgression of humanitarian principles, forcible dispossession and relocation, violent suppression of all (including peaceful) opposition, detention without trial, torture, executions, and press censorship, among other injustices. From the late 1970s there was escalating violence and open conflict, including violence not only against the government and security forces but also against civilians and within racial groups. In the early 1990s the government was forced to negotiate with banned political organisations. As the 1993 interim Constitution of the Republic of South Africa states:

This Constitution provides a historic bridge between the past of a deeply divided society characterised by strife, conflict, untold suffering and injustice, and a future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence and development opportunities for all South Africans... The pursuit of national unity, the well-being of all South African citizens and peace require reconciliation between the people of South Africa and the reconstruction of society.<sup>56</sup>

This quote illustrates the basis of the TRC and foreshadows the contribution it was to make, including to "peaceful co-existence", although it was not until 1995 that it was established. In April 1994 the first free, fair, fully-inclusive elections were held, and the transition to stable, peaceful democracy was firmly established.<sup>57</sup>

The TRC was a crucial component of the transition period. It was set up in December 1995 and ran for almost three years, receiving submissions, investigating and publicly hearing witnesses of events from 1960-1994,

including survivors and perpetrators, with the aims of: uncovering the truth about the past, recording it and making it publicly known; restoring human and civil rights to victims; creating a culture of respect for human rights and the rule of law; preventing any repetition of past atrocities; promoting national unity and reconciliation; and reinstating the moral order of the society.<sup>58</sup> Its work was accomplished by three committees: the Human Rights Violations Committee (HRVC) which investigated human rights abuses; the Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee (RRC) which was responsible for advising the Government on compensation, restitution, and the rehabilitation of survivors; and the Amnesty Committee (AC) which considered applications for amnesty from prosecution by perpetrators.<sup>59</sup>

The Commission as a whole was chaired by the Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who also sat on the HRVC. There were 17 commissioners broadly representative of South African society, from diverse social, political, economic and religious backgrounds. It was, in effect, an act of interfaith dialogue in that the initial Commission included a Muslim, a Hindu, Christians from a variety of denominations, lapsed believers and “possibly an agnostic or two”.<sup>60</sup> The appointment of additional members to particular committees included a Jew and a leader of the Dutch Reformed Church. It also had an overtly “spiritual” emphasis which meant that religious and theological perspectives informed much of its work and sustained many of the commissioners, as Archbishop Desmond Tutu attests.<sup>61</sup> Reflecting this, there were spiritual retreats for the commissioners at the beginning and end of the Commission’s process, frequent prayers at the beginning and end of meetings and at midday, and hearings of the HRVC also included hymns and the lighting of candles in memory of those who had died in the conflict. Archbishop Desmond Tutu always prayed in English, Xhosa, Sotho and Afrikaans to emphasize that the Commission belonged to all in unity.

The TRC worked to achieve the aims outlined above in diverse ways through its three Committees. For example, by hearing accounts of human rights violations, which was the major task of the HRVC. By giving victims, who under apartheid had been silenced and marginalized, an opportunity to publicly remember and tell their stories in their own words in a position of

equality under the law where their truth was accepted and affirmed, this Committee acknowledged and attempted to restore individual's dignity and humanity. Many expressed that they had benefited from being able to tell their stories. For example, Lucas Sikwepere, who had been shot in the face and blinded by a policeman, stated,

I feel what ... has brought my sight back, my eyesight back, is to come here and tell the story. I feel what has been making me sick all the time is the fact that I couldn't tell my story. But now ... it feels like I've got my sight back by coming here and telling you the story.<sup>62</sup>

The HRVC was also mandated to establish the identity of perpetrators and determine accountability for gross human rights violations. In these and other respects, its work was complemented by that of the AC. Amnesty from civil and criminal prosecution was granted for individuals who applied for it in relation to politically-motivated crimes of which the individual involved made full public disclosure.<sup>63</sup> Thus, amnesty was used as a tool for uncovering the truth and so providing healing for victims and their families, especially for example, through learning what had happened to loved ones who had "disappeared", and the circumstances of death and location of the bodies of the deceased.<sup>64</sup> On the part of perpetrators, amnesty encouraged accountability and the acknowledgement of responsibility, including legal and political accountability and moral responsibility.<sup>65</sup> For both victims and perpetrators, amnesty also provided an opportunity for reconciliation as perpetrators acknowledged their guilt and victims forgave the guilty. Although this did not always happen, Archbishop Desmond Tutu states that in the majority of cases it did, and that the future of South African society rests on such healing and reconciliation.<sup>66</sup> The South African Chief Justice, Judge Ismail Mahomed, described the detrimental effects on perpetrators and society as a whole when the truth of crimes is not known. This allows

the culprits of such deeds to remain perhaps physically free but inhibited in their capacity to become active, full and creative members of the new order by a menacing combination of confused fear, guilt, uncertainty and sometimes even trepidation.<sup>67</sup>

Thus the ability of such persons to collaborate and co-operate with others in

developing a peaceful future is hindered. Archbishop Desmond Tutu gives an example of a former policeman, Brian Mitchell, who asked for and was granted forgiveness by a community which he had helped to largely destroy, and who then became actively involved in working with the survivors to reconstruct their community.<sup>68</sup>

Brian Mitchell's actions in helping reconstruct a community are an example of reparations based on an individual's initiative. The Commission considered that "Without adequate reparation and rehabilitation measures, there can be no healing and reconciliation, either at an individual or a community level."<sup>69</sup> Hence the Commission, particularly the RRC, addressed and recommended a broad spectrum of reparations, financial and otherwise, covering individuals, communities, and institutions.<sup>70</sup> The philosophy underlying the work of the RRC, and that of the TRC as a whole, was restorative justice. This form of justice, rather than focusing on punishment or retribution for example, seeks the healing of breaches, the restoration of broken human relationships, the rehabilitation of both the victim and the perpetrator, and the reintegration of the latter into the community he or she has injured by his/her offence as its main outcomes.<sup>71</sup> Reparations included: community rehabilitation services and activities, including resettlement programmes for displaced persons, mental health and trauma counselling, and reintegration and rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators; communal commemorative measures such as tombstones, memorials and monuments, and renaming public facilities and streets; administrative and legal actions such as the issuing of death certificates or declarations of death for people who had disappeared; financial grants to individuals and families; and institutional reforms relating to the security forces, correctional services, judiciary, educational services, business and the media. These measures were "aimed at the creation and maintenance of a stable society – a society that would never again allow the kind of violations experienced during the Commission's mandate period",<sup>72</sup> and sought "a commitment [from the then South African Government] to establishing a just and humane society in which human rights are respected."<sup>73</sup>

The prayer at the start of the first hearing of the HRVC included the words:

Oh God of justice, mercy and peace, we long to put behind us all the pain and division of apartheid together with all the violence which ravaged our communities in its name. ...We pray that all those people who have been injured in either body or spirit may receive healing through the work of this Commission.... We pray too for those who may be found to have committed these crimes against their fellow human beings, that they may come to repentance and confess their guilt to almighty God and that they too might become the recipients of your divine mercy and forgiveness. We ask that the Holy Spirit may pour out its gifts of justice, mercy and compassion ... that the truth may be recognised and brought to light during the hearings; and that the end may bring about that reconciliation and love for our neighbour which our Lord himself commanded.<sup>74</sup>

This prayer highlights outcomes hoped for and subsequently, in many cases, achieved by the Commission's work, from confession and repentance, through mercy and forgiveness, to truth, healing and reconciliation. As discussed above, other factors resulting from the TRC and contributing to peace building in South Africa were justice, the restoration of human dignity and respect for the rule of law, and unity. These were achieved through the interfaith *dialogues of life, action and religious experience* as the commissioners lived, worked and prayed together and with all those involved during the period of the TRC. It is also possible that at some level the *dialogue of theological exchange* occurred, although the literature examined for this paper does not provide explicit details of this.

In addressing the question of the contribution of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue to peace building this paper has examined in depth the key concepts involved and two case studies, one from Bougainville, PNG and the other from South Africa.<sup>75</sup> These examples covered the full range of Neubert's phases of peace building and provided clear evidence of various forms of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue in practice, namely the *dialogues of action, religious experience and life*. These forms of dialogue have been shown, in the cases discussed, to promote justice, the restoration of human dignity, respect for the rule of law, political participation, co-operation and collaboration, healing, trust, truth (honesty),

acceptance, the acknowledgement of guilt (confession), forgiveness, reconciliation, and unity, among others. All of these phenomena have been identified by scholars and thinkers as important components of peace building. Thus, it can be argued that ecumenical and interfaith dialogue contribute significantly and in diverse ways to the complex process of peace building.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Patricia M. Mische, "Religion and World Order," in Joel Beversluis (ed.), *Sourcebook of the World's Religions* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2000), 267; and Michael L. Fitzgerald and John Borelli, *Interfaith Dialogue: A Catholic View* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 149.

<sup>2</sup> M. Braybroke, "The Interfaith Movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century," in Joel Beversluis (ed.), *Sourcebook of the World's Religions* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2000), 131; and Peter C. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously: Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 198.

<sup>3</sup> John Paul II, "Collaboration among the Diverse Religions," in Joel Beversluis (ed.), *Sourcebook of the World's Religions* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2000), 160-161.

<sup>4</sup> Joint document of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples, *Dialogue and Proclamation* (1991) (hereafter DP), par.9, in *Interreligious Dialogue: The Official Teaching of the Catholic Church 1963-1995*, ed. Francesco Gioia (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1997), 611.

<sup>5</sup> Wayne Teasdale, *Catholicism in Dialogue: Conversations Across Traditions* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), 5-6.

<sup>6</sup> Joel Beversluis, "Introduction [to Chapter 21]," in Joel Beversluis (ed.), *Sourcebook of the World's Religions* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2000), 146.

<sup>7</sup> DP 42. See also further discussion in subsequent paragraphs therein, especially DP 43. The following description of the various forms of dialogue also draws on Teasdale, *Catholicism in Dialogue*, 28-34.

<sup>8</sup> Teasdale describes these dialogues as being of *life, hands, head, and heart* respectively in Teasdale, *Catholicism in Dialogue*, 28-34.

<sup>9</sup> DP 43.

<sup>10</sup> DP 38.

<sup>11</sup> Teasdale, *Catholicism in Dialogue*, 31 and 33-34.

<sup>12</sup> See the many examples in Gioia (ed.), *Interreligious Dialogue*, such as "Message for the World Day of Peace, Rome, December 8, 1987", 383-386;

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“Message for the World Day of Peace, Rome, December 8, 1991”, 468-472; and “To Edward Cardinal Cassidy for the Eighth International Prayer Meeting for Peace, Rome, September 7, 1994”, 525-527.

<sup>13</sup> Vatican II Council, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) (hereafter GS), *The Church in the Modern World*, par.78, (document-on-line) (Vatican City: Vatican Press, accessed 12 March 2007); available from [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_cons\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html); Internet.

<sup>14</sup> Tensin Gyatso, “A Zone of Peace,” in Susan Mumm (ed.), *Religion Today: A Reader* (Milton Keynes and Aldershot, UK: The Open University and Ashgate Publishing, 2002), 91.

<sup>15</sup> It would seem to be the latter level that Panikkar is referring to with his *pax civilis* and *pax civitatis*, “political peace”, in Raimon Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament: The Way to Peace* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 45-46 ff. In this work Panikkar argues that all the great problems of today, including peace, are both “religious” and “political”, and require that this division be healed. It follows from this that the building of peace in the world is not solely a religious matter; nevertheless, religion has a significant role to play, as Panikkar reveals. See also UNESCO’s “Declaration on the Role of Religion in the Promotion of a Culture of Peace,” par.2, in Joel Beversluis (ed.), *Sourcebook of the World’s Religions* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2000), 263.

<sup>16</sup> Tensin Gyatso, “Zone of Peace,” 91.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Paul VI’s “Homily on the Day of Prayer for Peace, 4 October 1966,” in Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and The Pontifical Commission ‘Iustitia et Pax’, *Peace and Disarmament: Documents of the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church* (Geneva and Vatican City: Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and The Pontifical Commission ‘Iustitia et Pax’, 1982), 165; and many works in Gioia (ed.), *Interreligious Dialogue*.

<sup>18</sup> John Paul II, “Message for the World Day of Peace, Rome, December 8, 1986,” in Gioia (ed.), *Interreligious Dialogue*, 358.

<sup>19</sup> John Paul II, “Message for the World Day of Peace, Rome, December 8, 1991,” in Gioia (ed.), *Interreligious Dialogue*, 468.

<sup>20</sup> John Paul II, “To Representatives of the Christian Communities, Assisi, October 27, 1986,” in Gioia (ed.), *Interreligious Dialogue*, 347.

<sup>21</sup> GS 78.

<sup>22</sup> Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament*, 58-59 ff.

<sup>23</sup> Dieter Neubert, “The ‘Peacemakers’ Dilema’: The Role of NGOs in Processes of Peace-Building in Decentralised Conflicts,” in M.-C. Foblets and Trutz von Trotha (eds), *Healing the Wounds: Essays on the Reconstruction of Societies after War* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2004), 54.

<sup>24</sup> T. Michel, *Ten Steps to Peace* (document-on-line) (Presented at the International Interfaith Peace Forum, Bangkok, Thailand, 13 December 2003,



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accessed 7 March 2007); available from <http://www.sjweb.info/dialogo/index.htm>; Internet.

<sup>25</sup> Neubert, "The 'Peacemakers' Dilema'," 47-48, 55-56.

<sup>26</sup> GS 78.

<sup>27</sup> GS Chapter 5.

<sup>28</sup> These lists are not exhaustive, although they contain items which are common to many similar lists which I have not been able to discuss due to space limitations. See, for example, M. Meleisea, "Culture of Peace: UNESCO's Program in Asia and the Pacific," in B. Hindess and M. Jolly (eds), *Thinking Peace, Making Peace* (Canberra: Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, 2001), 78 ff.; T. Michel, *Ten Steps*; and Wayne Teasdale, "Toward a Universal Civilization with a 'Heart'," in Joel Beversluis (ed.), *Sourcebook of the World's Religions* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2000), 275-276.

<sup>29</sup> The role of prayer in both inner peace and peace between individuals, nations, etc., mentioned above, is also relevant here.

<sup>30</sup> I am grateful to Ruth Saovana-Spriggs for her encouragement, advice and supplementary information in relation to this case study.

<sup>31</sup> R. Miringka, "Community Developments and BOCBIHP," in J. T. Sirivi and M. T. Havini (eds), *As Mothers of the Land: The birth of Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), 99-102.

<sup>32</sup> For more on the historical context, see J. T. Sirivi and M. T. Havini, "Introduction," in J. T. Sirivi and M. T. Havini (eds), *As Mothers of the Land: The birth of Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), xv-xx ff.; and B. Tohiana, "Weaving Bougainville Together: Rebuilding broken communities: Restoring a shattered society," in A. Griffen (ed.), *Lalanga Pasifika Weaving the Pacific: Stories of empowerment from the South Pacific* (Suva, Fiji: IPS Publications, University of the South Pacific and The Commonwealth Foundation, 2006), 164-188.

<sup>33</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Christianity and Women in Bougainville," *Development Bulletin* 51 (2000), 65.

<sup>34</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Women's Role in Peace-Making in the Bougainville Peace Process," in B. Hindess and M. Jolly (eds), *Thinking Peace, Making Peace* (Canberra: Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, 2001), 64; and Tohiana, "Weaving Bougainville," 189.

<sup>35</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, p.c., 23 March 2007; and Tohiana, "Weaving Bougainville," 195.

<sup>36</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Christianity and Women", and "Women's Role"; and Tohiana, "Weaving Bougainville," 192-193.

<sup>37</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Christianity and Women", 67.

<sup>38</sup> Tohiana, "Weaving Bougainville," 196 ff.

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<sup>39</sup> J. T. Sirivi, "Reconciliation and Renewing the Vision," in J. T. Sirivi and M. T. Havini (eds), *As Mothers of the Land: The birth of Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), 175.

<sup>40</sup> Tohiana, "Weaving Bougainville," 194. Given the limits of this paper, in both case studies it is only possible to give selective examples, in particular, those with ecumenical and interfaith dimensions will be presented. It will also be noted that, due to the nature of the question being addressed, the focus is on the ecumenical and interfaith aspects of the case studies.

<sup>41</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Women's Role", 69.

<sup>42</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Women's Role", 70.

<sup>43</sup> Tohiana, "Weaving Bougainville," 194.

<sup>44</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Women's Role", 70.

<sup>45</sup> Dieter Neubert, "The 'Peacemakers' Dilema'," 54.

<sup>46</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Women's Role", 66.

<sup>47</sup> Sirivi, "Reconciliation," 176; and P. F. Howley, *Breaking Spears and Mending Hearts: Peacemakers and restorative justice in Bougainville* (Annandale, NSW: Federation Press, 2002).

<sup>48</sup> M. T. Havini, "The Women's Voices at Burnham: Burnham II negotiations, 5-13 July 1997," in J. T. Sirivi and M. T. Havini (eds), *As Mothers of the Land: The birth of Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), 137.

<sup>49</sup> Sirivi, "Reconciliation," 176.

<sup>50</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Women's Role", 64.

<sup>51</sup> The "dialogue" Saovana-Spriggs seems to be referring to here is verbal interaction, e.g., conversation. However, it is possible to see the relevance of the broader meaning of 'dialogue' outlined above in this context, at least in reference to the *dialogues of action, life, and religious experience*, if not so clearly *theological exchange*.

<sup>52</sup> Sirivi, "Reconciliation," 177.

<sup>53</sup> R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Christianity and Women", 66. See also, R. Saovana-Spriggs, "Women's Role", 69.

<sup>54</sup> Dieter Neubert, "The 'Peacemakers' Dilema'," 54.

<sup>55</sup> Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (London: Rider, 1999), 65.

<sup>56</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 45. See also, Willemien Du Plessis, "The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission: 'The Truth will Set You Free'," in M.-C. Foblets and Trutz von Trotha (eds), *Healing the Wounds: Essays on the Reconstruction of Societies after War* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2004), 172.

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<sup>57</sup> For more historical details see, Du Plessis, "Truth and Reconciliation Commission," 175-178 ff; International Defence and Aid Fund for South Africa, *Apartheid The Facts* (London: International Defence and Aid Fund for South Africa, 1983); and Tutu, *No Future*, 1-9.

<sup>58</sup> A. Krog, *Country of My Skull* (London: Random House, 1999), ix; and Tutu, *No Future*, 126 ff.

<sup>59</sup> Du Plessis, "Truth and Reconciliation Commission," 172-173, 185; Tutu, *No Future*.

<sup>60</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 65-67.

<sup>61</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 72-77 ff.

<sup>62</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 128-129.

<sup>63</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 47. Blanket amnesties were not granted.

<sup>64</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 149-152 ff. In many African cultures it is very important for families to bury their dead properly and know their last resting place. The Commission recognized that "Respect for the dead and for local funeral rites support peace and social order" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report*, vol.6 (document-on-line) (2003, accessed 3 May 2007); available from <http://www.info.gov.za/otherdocs/2003/trc>; Internet, 540).

<sup>65</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Report*, vol.6, 592 ff.

<sup>66</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 219 ff.

<sup>67</sup> Cited in Tutu, *No Future*, 30.

<sup>68</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 136-138.

<sup>69</sup> TRC Report quoted in Tutu, *No Future*, 55.

<sup>70</sup> The TRC focused on "reparations" rather than "compensation" because it was felt that there was no way to adequately compensate, for example, for the brutal murder of a beloved husband, father and breadwinner. Also, there was the problem of how to decide on equitable compensation for all in the great variety of different circumstances which had existed. Thus, it was recommended to provide reasonably significant monetary payments, but as a symbolic gesture rather than full compensation. "The nation said, in effect, to victims: 'We acknowledge that you suffered a gross violation of your rights. Nothing can ever replace your loved one. But as a nation we are saying, we are sorry, we have opened the wounds of your suffering and sought to cleanse them; this reparation is as balm, an ointment, being poured over the wounds to assist in their healing.'" (Tutu, *No Future*, 57).

<sup>71</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Report*, vol.6, 109. For more on restorative and other forms of justice in relation to the South African situation, see H. R. Botman, "Truth and Reconciliation: The South Africa case," in H. Coward and G. S. Smith (eds), *Religion and Peacebuilding* (Albany, USA: State University of New York Press, 2004), 248-251; and Du Plessis, "Truth and Reconciliation Commission," 192-196.

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<sup>72</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Report*, vol.6, 95. For details of reparations, see also pages 94-96 ff.

<sup>73</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Report*, vol.6, 162.

<sup>74</sup> Tutu, *No Future*, 85-86.

<sup>75</sup> Countless other cases could have been discussed if space had permitted, some involving contributions to peace building not included in the examples given. See, for instance, the many examples in Gioia (ed.), *Sourcebook*; Fitzgerald and Borelli, *Interfaith Dialogue*; and Phan, *Being Religious*.

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