



WISCOMP

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Foundation for Universal Responsibility of HH The Dalai Lama

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Greetings from WISCOMP !

As the curtains draw on 2005, we prepare to go to print with this edition of the WISCOMP newsletter. As always, the end of the year marks a period to reflect on our vision, mission, projects, and programs – a time when we look back to map past trajectories and look ahead to envision new ones. This issue of *Update* provides a context to introspect on what has emerged as one of our flagship projects over the last 5 years – the Conflict Transformation project – that conducted its 4th annual workshop from October 1 – 9 this year. Over the years, these annual workshops have helped create an environment for young people in India and Pakistan to consistently engage with each other's worldviews and jointly generate options and approaches for dialogue and peace-building.

These workshops are informed by a 'generational approach' to peace-building where the focus is on empowering the leaders of tomorrow to become agents of constructive social change in their communities and nations. A first step in this direction is the creation of a space where young people can rise above the baggage of the preceding

generations to build a future based on trust, mutual respect and co-existence. Our Conflict Transformation workshops foreground diversity – in professional backgrounds, political perspectives, and geography.

This initiative began in 2001, when such programs – combining training and sustained dialogue – were virtually non-existent. The first annual workshop, titled *Rehumanizing the Other*, brought together 35 university students from Pakistan and India; sought to transform stereotypes and prejudices among young Indians and Pakistanis about *the other*; and explored the potential that lies in structured dialogues to humanize perceived others by facilitating a shift in perspectives.

The second annual workshop, titled *Transcending Conflict* expanded its profile to include practitioners, researchers and graduate students from Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Tibet, in addition to Pakistan and India. It focused on Sri Lanka and the efforts towards reconciliation, justice and social change in the war-ravaged island nation. As in the first workshop, it provided a forum for discussion with senior policymakers and diplomats.

The third annual workshop, *Dialogic Engagement*, promoted wider civil society ownership of the peace process and created a network of young people committed to building peace between Pakistan and India. It focused on the role of the media in Conflict Generation and Conflict Transformation. It included several participants from Kashmir, and broke new ground on approaches for the transformation of the Kashmir conflict.

The fourth annual workshop, *Envisioning Futures*, held in October 2005, focused on the role of leadership in transforming conflict. Seeking to build leadership among multiple stakeholders, the workshop explored new

leadership models that the framework of Conflict Transformation offers. Attended by over 60 university students, young researchers, journalists, NGO workers, grassroots practitioners, and senior academicians from India and Pakistan, the workshop addressed the growing need for alternative paradigms, creative models and new skills that could facilitate the resolution and transformation of deep-rooted, protracted conflicts. Over the years, the WISCOMP Conflict Transformation model has been emulated by an increasing number of civil society groups.

These annual workshops have emerged as a springboard for cross-border partnerships between alumni; joint papers and research projects; in-country Conflict Transformation Workshops (facilitated by Pakistani & Indian alumni); publications on Conflict Transformation in South Asia; and the CT Workshop Collaborative Research Award.

The award supports joint research by an Indian and a Pakistani participant, spread over a year. It seeks to provide a context for young people in the two countries to dialogue on a sustained basis.

This edition of the WISCOMP newsletter is a tribute to all our Pakistani friends who have been with us through the four annual Conflict Transformation workshops. We seek their continuous friendship and engagement and believe that our friend, writer and journalist based in Lahore, F.S. Aijazuddin's dream will come true: "The day we can cross the border at Wagah without a visa and not be shot in the back by either side, we will have achieved not the impossible but the inevitable – peace between our two great countries".

We wish you a peaceful 2006!

The WISCOMP Team

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WISCOMP (Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace) is an initiative of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness The Dalai Lama, New Delhi. The Foundation brings together people of different faiths, creeds, professions and nationalities in a manner that respects and encourages diversity of beliefs and practices and promotes and devises strategies to transform this commitment into an instrument of social change. It works to develop nonviolent methods, improve communication between religion and science, and secure human rights and democratic freedom.

The WISCOMP initiative in Jammu & Kashmir, called *Athwaas*, comprises a group of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh women who work to expand constituencies of peace through a range of activities including active listening, trauma counseling, conflict transformation workshops, articulation of the concerns of women to policymakers and government interlocutors, and initiation of programs that facilitate democratic participation and 'just peace'. It provides a crucial link between reconciliation processes, educational initiatives and development programs.

Reconciliation & Trauma-Healing

A two-day residential workshop titled Reconciliation and Trauma-Healing was organized by WISCOMP in July 2005 to look at the linkages between trauma-healing and the larger field of conflict transformation and peace-building.

Prof. Nancy Good Sider, a family and community based counselor who specializes in gender and diversity-based conflicts, conducted the workshop, which used an elicitive approach to map processes of trauma healing.

The workshop sought to understand the need to reconcile the micro levels – personal and interpersonal – with the macro levels of social change that arise out of political violence; to see how trauma manifests itself in varied fashions – psychologically, socially, physiologically, and spiritually; to offer education about secondary trauma and risk of compassion fatigue for the caregivers working in situations of traumatic violent conflict; and to discover strategies and build skills to help the practitioners in their work.



Prof. Nancy Good Sider conducting the workshop.

The workshop participants comprised a diverse set of individuals from the state of Jammu and Kashmir. They brought with them a rich spectrum of personal and professional insights gathered through their work as conflict transformation practitioners and as participant-observers of the political violence in their region over the last 15 years.

Spotlight on...

Dardpora Village, Kupwara Town

Dardpora is commonly known as the village of widows. Limited resources, difficult access to rehabilitation schemes, and an intimidating environment have led the widows to perceive each other as competitors and enemies. For them, basic needs like clean water and electricity are a distant dream. Firewood collected from the forests is the only source of light.

Members of the *Athwaas* initiative of WISCOMP first visited Dardpora in November 2001. Given the abject poverty of this village nestled in the mountains, close to the LoC, and the fact that almost all the men folk had been killed in fratricidal wars or by the Indian Security Forces in the early years of the 90s, it was acknowledged that without addressing some basic issues of livelihood and economic development, reconciliation would be hollow. The relationship between reconciliation and development and WISCOMP's role in being able to facilitate networking between development agencies and the community in Dardpora continues to remain a point of engagement.

After several visits to the area, and discussions amongst the *Athwaas* members, it was agreed that instead of providing direct economic relief, the team would aim to generate a sense of self-reliance among the widows through listening and counseling, while at the same time assisting the women to become financially independent by putting them in touch with the Women's Development Corporation (WDC) in the state. This two-pronged approach has governed the WISCOMP-*Athwaas* intervention in this area.

Following a joint visit to Dardpora by WDC Chairperson Prof. Yaseen and *Athwaas* member Mr. Hanjura, WDC sanctioned loans for 20 dairy units for the widows.

The Samanbal Center is a significant initiative undertaken by the Athwaas group. This involves setting up of 'learning and sharing centers' in different parts of Jammu & Kashmir. While certain activities – income generation, capacity building, literacy campaigns etc.– were identified for each center, the overarching goal has been the creation of a physical space that would be considered safe for reflection and reconciliation.

In response to the interest expressed by the Athwaas and Samanbal members, WISCOMP has organized and facilitated customized workshops at the Samanbal centers. The most recent workshops were organized for the Budgam and Jammu groups.

Budgam Psychosocial Counseling Center

A fourth training workshop was organized for health workers from Budgam and Pulwama on 18 and 19 October 2005. The health workers are associated with the Jammu & Kashmir chapter of the Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI). This initiative is oriented to train health workers as 'barefoot counselors' enabling them to identify signs of stress and trauma in the people they visit during their routine course of work.

The workshop conducted by therapist and counselor Arvinder Singh aimed to provide advanced training to the health workers who had attended the earlier workshops. Ms Singh discussed case studies with the participants and suggested ways of



WISCOMP team member Sumona DasGupta and therapist Arvinder Singh with health workers from Budgam and Pulwama.

responding to challenges in the field. She also emphasized the need for maintaining records in a counseling center. The workshop was held at the Budgam Samanbal center which is emerging as a space where the barefoot counselors meet to discuss their cases and learn from one another's experiences.

Sangati Samanbal, Purkhoo Camp, Jammu

Purkhoo Camp is one of the many migrant camps set up in Jammu. Unemployment, and lack of space and privacy, has generated stress and family conflicts in general, which have resulted in hypertension, diabetes, depression, decrease in self-esteem, increased dependency, low birth rates and early menopause.

Athwaas members Prof. Neerja Mattoo and Nirojini Bhat were instrumental in setting up a tailoring unit in the Camp in



Therapist Arvinder Singh with the women from Purkhoo Camp.

October 2004. WISCOMP organized a two-day trauma-healing workshop for members of the Sangati Samanbal at Purkhoo in July 2005.

Ms Bhat set the goals of the workshop in response to the felt needs of the group. These were:

- to enable the women to work together as a cohesive group;
- develop in them self-esteem so that they believe in the worth of their own potential;
- create a co-operative rather than a competitive spirit in the group;
- encourage them to use the Samanbal space for multiple activities that would promote their collective empowerment.

Since the participants were all migrants who relocated to Jammu during the mass exodus in Kashmir, therapist Arvinder Singh applied the community-based approach towards healing in the workshop.

She designed activities that promoted psycho-social healing and encouraged the participants to get in touch with their own feelings and emotions and also connect with the members of the group to facilitate a sense of shared space and community support.

Partition of India Revisited

A seminar-consultation titled 'Partition of India Revisited: Thinking Through and Beyond Violence, Memory and Trauma' was held in New Delhi from 24 to 26 August 2005. It was organized by the Center for Refugee Studies, Jadavpur University (Kolkata), in collaboration with WISCOMP (New Delhi), the International Institute for Mediation and Historical Conciliation (Boston), and the International Center for Peace Studies (New Delhi).

The consultation on Partition brought together leading academics, writers, scholars, politicians, bureaucrats, defence personnel, journalists and activists from India and abroad to revisit the history of an epoch making event as also to unravel lessons learnt from an event that touched millions of lives and which left behind legacies that continue to impact lives in the sub-continent even today.

The inaugural session of the seminar-consultation was held on 24 August 2005. The keynote address was delivered by Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee. It was chaired by the Vice-Chancellor of Jadavpur University, Prof. A. N. Basu, and the chief guest for the occasion was Justice B. P. Singh of the Supreme

Court of India. Shri Gopalkrishna Gandhi, Governor of West Bengal and Chancellor of Jadavpur University, was the guest of honour. WISCOMP was represented by its Hony. Director Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath, who spoke about reconciliation being the need of the hour, not just within India, but across South Asia.

Some of the themes explored in the course of the consultation were: 'Partition: History, Identity and Memories' and 'Perceptions and Attitudes: Looking Ahead from the Past'; there were also sessions on the portrayal of Partition in films and literature. A select bibliography prepared on the Partition of India was also released during the consultation.

As the vision document on the project emphasized, there is a mismatch between the political history and the social history of Partition. While the official political history of Partition focused on personalities, the social history – the lived experiences of the men and women who had undergone displacement, death, and destruction – remains largely surrounded by a shroud of silence. This project is an attempt to break these silences and consequently correct these imbalances.



WISCOMP Hony. Director Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath with Shri Gopalkrishna Gandhi, Governor of West Bengal, at the inaugural seminar of *Partition of India Revisited: Thinking Through and Beyond Violence, Memory and Trauma*.

Envisioning Futures

The 4th annual WISCOMP Conflict Transformation Workshop, held from 1 to 9 October 2005, was conceptualized as part of the efforts of WISCOMP to empower a new generation of women and men with the motivation, expertise and skills to engage in processes of peace-building between Pakistan and India.

In June 2001, WISCOMP was among the few South Asian initiatives to bring together third generation Pakistanis and Indians for a sustained dialogue and training in Conflict Transformation. Since this first workshop, the WISCOMP Conflict Transformation model has been widely appreciated and emulated by an increasing number of civil society groups in the two countries.

The Conflict Transformation workshop is informed by a 'generational approach' to peace-building where the focus is on empowering the *leaders of tomorrow* to become agents of constructive social change in their communities and nations. A first step in this direction is the creation of a *space* where young people can rise above the *baggage* of the preceding generations to build a future based on trust, mutual respect and coexistence.

Titled *Envisioning Futures: Dialogue and Conflict Transformation*, a key focus of this year's workshop was the role of *leadership* in



Mr. Bernd Papenkort presenting 'Insights from Bosnia' during the workshop.

transforming conflict. Seeking to build leadership among multiple stakeholders, the workshop explored new leadership models that the framework of Conflict Transformation offers.

The workshop was designed with the following goals:

- Empower the next generation of leaders in Pakistan and India with the motivation, skills and expertise to engage in processes of Conflict Transformation;
- Foreground the lens of gender in the analysis of conflict and in the conceptualization of peace initiatives;
- Provide a reflexive curriculum for peace that evolves in response to changing regional and international landscapes. This was done through knowledge sharing, theory-building, skill-enhancement and critical reflection on contemporary thinking and practices in conflict analysis, negotiation, multi-track diplomacy, reconciliation, justice and post-conflict peace-building;
- Facilitate a process of building bridges of trust, understanding and mutual respect between young Pakistanis and Indians;
- Build partnerships, mentoring relationships and a network of practitioners and researchers who can contribute to peace-building initiatives in South Asia and the world.



WISCOMP Hony. Director Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath with Prof. Kevin Clements during one of the sessions at the Conflict Transformation workshop.

THE CURRENT peace process between our two countries reminds me of those chess tournaments in which a Grand Master plays simultaneously against a number of opponents. Except that in our case, we have the same grand masters playing the same game at the same time, on multiple chessboards.

Overtly, the game is played by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and by our Foreign Affairs Ministry. They perform their diplomatic minuet with a practiced familiarity, not dissimilar to the well-choreographed ballet performed by the Wagah border guards at the flag-lowering ceremony every evening. They glare at each other with a pre-rehearsed hostility and then slam the gates against each other. It is pure theatre.

At another level, there has been a series of informal contacts between a number of self-nominated Indians and Pakistanis rushing in where nervous diplomats fear to tread. These meetings such as the Neemrana dialogue conduct a modern form of ping-pong diplomacy – once on your side of the net, the next time on ours.

These get-togethers have proved to be very useful, for they have enabled both sides to say things to each other that neither dared to reveal to its public on whose behalf they are talking. They could conceive the inconceivable, articulate bold ideas, suggest initiatives, explore alternatives, and after having exhausted each other's hospitality, convey to their respective sponsors a feeling of forward movement, even if it was occasionally only in circles.

Most of these dialogues have been conducted by persons who, during their public careers, advocated the cause of war, and now, in retirement, as private citizens extol the merits of peace. However, notwithstanding their change of heart and the furtiveness of their communions, they perform a role that is obviously of some use to both our governments, for otherwise why should they be allowed to continue?

In this context, I find it interesting that the Indian Prime Minister and the Pakistani President should have adopted such rigid postures during their addresses before the United Nations General Assembly, when

their nominees were cooing softly to each other behind sealed doors.

And for the few who still do not know, there is another level of contact. It is the worst kept secret in South Asian diplomacy – the ultra-secret dialogue between Pakistan's Tariq Aziz, Secretary to President Pervez Musharraf, and India's Shri S. K. Lambah.

There are some of you who are or have been or hope to be part of the informal dialogue between our two countries. I would ask you therefore not to interpret my remarks as an elliptical criticism. I am a peace-loving human being and therefore welcome any step in the direction of peace. It is just that I find it difficult, as a rational senior citizen of a country that has fought at least three wars against you, to accept these well-meaning but belated metamorphoses, these attempts by repentant wolves trying to fit into dove's clothing.



E. S. Aijazuddin

I was hoping to complete this presentation without having to quote Dr Henry Kissinger. Having read his papers, particularly the transcripts of his telephone calls when he was Nixon's National Security Advisor and later US Secretary of State, I felt loath to evoke his name, especially when he, more than any other foreigner, was responsible for causing lasting damage to relations between our two countries.

Like many of you, I do not admire the man but I do respect his intellect, and it was his intellect that wrote, in response to a question why Israel will always remain fearful of its neighbours: "In the immediate future, say over five years, it probably has less reason to be militarily fearful than at any time in its history. However, over an historic period, a nation of three million, in whatever borders can be conceived, surrounded by a hundred million people that will never be

In this edition, we feature two presentations Conflict Transformation Workshop titled *Transformation*. While the first is a political between India and Pakistan by writer and the second expresses S. P. Udayakumar's and Justice. He is managing partner,

fully reconciled (even though they have accepted) its existence, has reason to be uneasy. After all, India has recognized Pakistan as a state and yet one would not describe the relations between them as one of great confidence; Pakistan's sense of being threatened has, rightly or wrongly, never abated. It has remained a root fact of Pakistani politics and diplomacy and I suspect it will be a root fact of Israeli politics even after peace has been negotiated.¹¹

Reading that analogy of the defensive paranoia, common both to Israel and to Pakistan, I wanted to test Kissinger's hypothesis. And so, rather like the confused psychiatrist who began an analysis of himself by asking his psychiatrist colleague – "You are all right. How am I?" – I thought I would obtain an Indian insight into my own nation's attitudes.

Let me begin with an analysis by the former Indian Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit. In his book *India-Pakistan in War and Peace* (2002), he cites eight perceptions, which, in his opinion, inhibit Pakistan's ability to live amicably with India.

The first is artificially nurtured memories of Muslim superiority and a subconscious desire to rectify the unfair arrangements of Partition; the second is envy in Pakistan for India's democratic and tolerant traditions; the third is Pakistan's self-perceived role as a protector and overseer of Indian Muslims; the fourth is a desire to avenge the military defeat in 1971; the fifth is an irrational faith in the profound capacity for commitment to *jihad* amongst the *momin*; the sixth is confidence that Pakistan's nuclear weapons' program is an instrument to further geopolitical objectives in Kashmir; the seventh is the Pakistani belief that India is exhausted in Kashmir; and the final one is that if India broke up, Pakistan would emerge as the strongest and most powerful political entity in South Asia.

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made during the 4th annual WISCOMP *Envisioning Futures: Dialogue and Conflict* comment on the current peace process journalist F. S. Aijazuddin, based in Lahore, views on Reconciliation, Coexistence TRANSCEND South Asia, and lives in Tamil Nadu.

A CONFLICT is not an either/or or neither/nor choice but a both – and transcendence. The operational phase of a conflict is not necessarily a Boolean between the opportunity and the danger circles but a delicate interplay between time, space and human ingenuity. Conflicts are not resolved and made to disappear; neither should they be managed from top. They have to be transformed by the conflict parties through dialogue. The basic premise here is: “Tell me how reconciliation, justice and coexistence dialogue with each other, and I shall tell you what kind of a peace culture you have.”

Coexistence

The India-Pakistan twosome relationship has been characterized by some disturbing trends such as masked language, a diversion from domestic issues, nuclear competition etc. Firstly, bilateral relations in the subcontinent are often framed using fraternal language. Political leaders and social reformers deliberately use brotherly sentiment to invoke peace and friendship. Commenting on Indo-Pakistan tension in the 1960s, N. Sri Ram, a theologian, wrote, “It was not long ago that the two countries constituted one country, and there is still much more in common between their respective peoples... This is not a war between one country and another country really alien to it, which has always been separate and opposed, but ‘a war between brothers’ who must learn to live in amity and peace.”

Despite this filial language, the nature of the relationship has been rooted in negative circumstances and emotions, including desertion, separation, betrayal, domination, subjugation and non-acceptance. Bitterness and mistrust have been caused by the vivisection of the land amidst communal violence, the painting of bilateral issues with communal colors and sentiments, the dogging presence of a protracted conflict (i.e. Kashmir), and the fostering of terrorism and disturbance in each other’s territory.

The diversion of domestic matters is another characteristic that underlines this twosome

relationship. The political classes of both India and Pakistan divert their citizens’ attention from pressing local issues by increasingly whipping up mutual bigotry and the fear of a foreign hand. The leaders do not look to one another for support in finding solutions for common problems. Besides the largely technical and symbolic activities of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the two sets of leaders have not tried to collaborate on any of the crucial and hared issues that Indians, Pakistanis and others in the region face.

Instead, the framing of the bilateral relationship has focused on differences and intractable conflicts rather than cooperation and socio-economic development. Added to this, the political environment created by the international community and individual domestic concerns have made it more difficult for leaders to sort out the twosome relationship. Nonetheless, the onus of continued antagonism and the failure to



S. P. Udayakumar

channel national energies towards a life of peace and development lies squarely on the leaders’ shoulders.

The lack of effective leadership in the past brings us to yet another aspect of these countries’ strained relationship. Both governments’ leaderships have failed to provide a decent and dignified life for Indian and Pakistani citizens during the 58 years of independence. Instead, they have steered the subcontinent towards nuclear Armageddon. The bottom line for this twosome relationship was enunciated by Mahatma Gandhi in the last 100 days of his life: “What is happening in India and Pakistan is not humanity. It is barbarism. Fury and revenge are not humanity... If sanity does not return, we shall lose both Pakistan and India. There will be a war... I know if we have a change of heart here in India, there will be a change of heart in Pakistan, too. It will take some effort, no doubt, but there will be a change.”

Reconciliation

How do we make sanity return? How do we bring about change of heart? That’s what reconciliation is all about. Reconciliation is the journey to revival, recovery and restoration of the relationship of the conflict parties that makes coexistence possible. When the relationship is broken by the perpetrator of violence/ wrong, one tends to withdraw. Self-awareness is needed to move beyond withdrawal. The first level is being aware of and accepting one’s emotions. Admitting to oneself, “I am angry, I am hurt, I am confused” begins the process of moving beyond withdrawal. Being able to express one’s emotion to others, without self-deprecation, is better still. The people most likely to get stuck at this stage are those who insist, “I’m not angry, I’m just concerned.”

The second level of self-awareness is that deeper vulnerabilities inevitably get tapped in painful conflicts. Abe Schmidt in *The Art of Listening with Love* (Word Books, 1977) writes: “The Naskapi Indians knew all about self-awareness long before modern psychology taught us how.” They believed that each person has “an inner whom they called the Great Man. With this person he has to be totally honest, for the Great Man already knew everything about them. In consultation with this inner being, by dreams and inner voices, a person understood the meaning of his life and also received directions. Faithfulness to this inner voice was more important than to any outer voice.”

The third level of self-awareness is acknowledging one’s own power in the conflict. Most people in conflict feel that they are the victims and they have little power over the situation. Self-awareness calls for acknowledging the impact of one’s own responses to the other party. Then one tries to break the vicious circle, bring about closure and heal the psychological wounds.

Johan Galtung identifies 12 different approaches:

- Exculpatory Nature-Structure-Culture approach
- Reparation-Restitution approach
- Apology/Forgiveness approach
- Theological/Penitence approach
- Judicial/Punishment approach
- Codependent Origination/Karma approach

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The 4th annual WISCOMP Conflict Transformation Workshop, titled **Envisioning Futures**, was attended by women and men with the motivation, expertise and skills to engage in processes of peace-building. The workshop encouraged experiential learning through a range of interactive formats such as roundtable discussions, role plays, and theater.



(From left) Prof. Pervaiz Cheema, Prof. Satish Kumar, Amb. M.K. Rasgotra and Gen. Shankar Prasad during a panel discussion on Sustaining the Composite Dialogue.



(From left) Dr. S. P. Udayakumar, Ms. Dilrukshi Fonseka, Mr. F. S. Aijazuddin and Dr. Rama Mani at a roundtable discussion on Reconciliation, Justice and Coexistence.



WISCOMP team members Dr. Sumona DasGupta and Ms. Manjri Sewak facilitating the Introduction to Peacebuilding.



Participants at the 4th annual Conflict Transformation workshop.

Participants during a session titled Theater as a Methodology for Dialogue and Conflict Transformation.



was conceptualized as part of the efforts of WISCOMP to empower a new generation of women in conflict transformation between Pakistan and India. The various sessions during the course of the workshop included panel discussions, round tables, film screenings, case studies, role-plays and group discussions. Some glimpses...



WISCOMP Hony. Director Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath with Amb. Ragnar Angeby during the inaugural lecture on Dialogue, Leadership and Conflict Transformation.



(From left) Mr. Ishtiaq Mehkri, Dr. Isher Judge Ahluwalia, Gen. Shamsheer Mehta and Dr. Poonam Barua during a panel discussion on Role of Economic Cooperation and Business Diplomacy between India and Pakistan.



A puppet performance directed by Ms. Anurupa Roy titled Kashmir Project: Lalded's Conversation with the Women of Kashmir – A Journey through Space and Time.



Resource persons and participants of the 4th annual Conflict Transformation Workshop with the WISCOMP team.



(From left) Ms. Naveen Nayyar, Dr. Meenakshi Gopinath, Dr. Nosheen Jamshed and Prof. A.H. Nayyar.

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If I were to categorize Mr Dixit's observations, I would create three groups:

Pakistan Muslim-ness: This covers our adoption of the Kashmir cause as the core of our foreign policy, and the plight of the Indian Muslims whom we wish to rescue from a fate worse than conversion.

Pakistan's fear of India: This paranoia, fuelled by experience, underpins our nuclear policy and our continuous genuflection to the United States, from whom we have been buying arms just as you yourself are now doing. It seems we both do our shopping at the same Seven-Eleven. This fear also provides the Pakistan Army with a continuing justification for using a perceived external threat from you as a reason for periodically usurping and then retaining control within the country.

Pakistan's pretension to place itself at par with India: In this, we have so much to learn from India that we seem to take refuge in the bliss of our own ignorance. In his book *Pakistan Papers* (1994), Mani Shankar Aiyar, who incidentally has done his bit for Indo-Pak relations by having a Pakistani-born daughter, quoted from an article by K. Subrahmanyam, the then Director of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses. Although what Mr Subrahmanyam said was written in 1981, it still rings true 25 years later: "India must face up to the harsh reality that even though it poses no political hegemonistic threat to Pakistan, it does pose a 'value hegemonistic threat' to the ruling elite of that country; that is, our representative government, federal structure, linguistic autonomy and secularism constitute a threat to the values on which they are basing their society."²

That is why I find Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent address to the US Joint Houses of particular interest. Amongst other things, he said: "The most important common concern is the threat of terrorism. Democracy can only thrive in open and free societies. But open societies like ours are today threatened more than ever before by the rise of terrorism[.]

President Bush and I agreed yesterday on a global initiative to help build democratic capacities in all societies that seek such assistance."

I am intrigued. Which societies that needed democratic assistance did he and President George W. Bush have in mind? Iraq? Or Iran? Or perhaps someone else, closer in the neighbourhood? Reading that address, I was reminded of a response given by Mrs Indira Gandhi to a question on what she thought were the peaceful uses of an Indian nuclear device. "Oh," she replied, somewhat airily. "For various purposes. For instance... expanding ports." "Madam Prime Minister," the reporter responded. "Which port did you have in mind? Karachi port?"

I have been privileged to visit India over the past 27 years. If I were to single out one perceptible irreversible difference between India and Pakistan today, I would say that India is no longer Pakistan-centric, whereas Pakistan refuses to be anything but India-centric. You have outgrown us; we have yet to grow up – as a federation, as a state, as a democracy.

Will we in Pakistan ever be able to become a monotheistic democracy? I hope so, but I am not sure when. I do not see how we can avoid it. No country can pretend to be strong without and be weak within. "Foreign policy depends ultimately on internal conditions and developments," Pandit Nehru had once advised you. "Internal unity and progress for us therefore become essential if India is to play an effective part in world affairs."³ He might as well have been addressing us in 21st century Pakistan.

It is said that every country gets the government it deserves. We in Pakistan surely deserve better than some of the governments we have had and endured. During Ziaul Haq's time, we were known for our three As: Allah, the Army, and America. Now under Musharraf, our literacy rate has gone up. We have moved further along the alphabet. We are now notorious for three Ms: Mullahs, Madrassas, and the Military.⁴

For the moment, we have a President who is also our Chief of Army Staff. President General Pervez Musharraf combines not just these two

onerous responsibilities but personifies in his actions characteristics of his predecessors – the revolutionary zeal of Ayub Khan, the bluff simplicity and single-mindedness of Yahya Khan, and the reforming zeal of Ziaul Haq, each tempered by his own brand of Enlightened Moderation. He enjoys a level of adulation in the U.S. that the Americans reserve only for their intended victims. In their eyes, he can do no wrong – as long as he does what they want.

It is for this reason that I hope that his overtures to India are based on deeper convictions than his moist-eyed gestures to Israel. It would be a pity if he thought that making peace with India was something that he had to do, rather than something he wanted to. Even if he speaks only for himself, even if he speaks under duress, as long as he talks peace, he mouths the inner voice of the nation.

It is so profoundly saddening that we have made our subcontinent – the crucible of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, and a hospitable incubator for Christianity and Islam – a combustible pile. Instead of being a zone of peace, it has become a funerary pyre that we have allowed to smoulder ever since 1947. We have deliberately stoked its embers to ensure that its flames never died.

We can no longer afford the luxury of warming ourselves from its heat. It is time to extinguish that pyre now and to immerse its ashes in the flowing waters of history.

The day we can cross the border at Wagah without a visa and not be shot in the back by either side, we will have achieved not the impossible but the inevitable – peace between our two great countries.

¹ Henry Kissinger, *Observations: Selected Speeches and Essays 1982-84* (London, 1985), p. 100.

² Quoted in Mani Shankar Aiyar, *Pakistan Papers* (New Delhi, 1994), p.31.

³ J.N. Dixit, *India's Foreign Policy* (New Delhi, 2004), pp.515-6.

⁴ G. Parthasarathy, *Diplomatic Divide* (New Delhi, 2004), p. 105 & p.114.

(Contd. from page 7)

Historical/Truth Commission approach
Theatrical/Re-living approach
Joint Sorrow/Healing approach
Joint Reconstruction approach
Joint Conflict Resolution approach
Ho'oponopono approach

In a conflict situation, rejection of the reconciliatory efforts by a conflict party is a distinct possibility. It helps to cope if one knows that reconciliation is a process and that some people move through the stages much faster than others. An overture rejected today may be reciprocated in three months. The challenge then is to mobilize the inner resources, healing the wounds, capacity-building and empowering. The process of reconciliation offers that psycho-social support.

While passive reconciliation could mean reconciling with oneself without involving the other parties, active reconciliation means involving the other conflict parties. Reconciliation is neither capitulation nor a compromise but a social contract in which everyone in a post-conflict relationship accepts and agrees to live with democracy, respect and social justice. There is a strong interactive dimension to reconciliation, and people reconcile with who they must live with. Reconciliation can happen among genuinely committed parties with reflective listening and perceptive knowing; and it should incorporate moral stamina, transparency, a deliberate design, and the willingness not to demand radical and revolutionary changes.

The conflict parties undertake to rebuild an inclusive political community, speak a new peaceable language, think new compassionate thoughts, and create a social space for strategic forgetting, forgiveness, reconciliation and a new beginning. Reconciliation is more of a process than of an end state. It can be based only on restorative justice rather than retributive justice. Restorative justice, as Howard Zehr points out, addresses the victims' harms and needs; holds the perpetrators accountable to right those harms; involves victims, perpetrators and communities to collectively identify and address harms, needs and obligations; involves a facilitated dialogue process; and facilitates justice and healing. Thus reconciliation is more

comprehensive than simply punishing the perpetrator.

When justice is done in a way that the violence does not recur, it is time to focus on the reconstruction. Although reconstruction has a strong connotation of rebuilding of the physique of the recuperating patient or the physical infrastructure of the recovering society, it can mean much more. It also involves rehabilitation, healing of the traumas suffered by the body, mind and spirit, and restructuring of the recovering society with democracy, elections, and non-violent conflict transformation. Similarly, re-culturation seeks to challenge the accepted norms and values, and advocates new world ethos based on sustainable development, healthy environment, democracy and human rights.

Violent conflicts do leave an indelible mark on the futures of concerned societies in many ways. They get a substantial number of people killed, hurt or harmed and affect the futures of so many members of the society. These conflicts also appropriate a hefty part of the national coffers, natural resources, and the people's fecundity in the form of expensive weapon-systems and other such destructive things affecting the future-oriented development activities of the society. Violent conflicts take not only the material resources of the societies concerned but also the less tangible moral and spiritual energies.

It is very important to train conflict workers, social activists, policymakers, youth leaders and others in peacemaking and instilling futurism in their life and work. Hence, post-violence societies need greater involvement of them as these conflicts need a lot more discussions, debates and dialogues on all possible solutions and their impacts on the future. It becomes very important to diagnose the conflicts accurately, discern their prognosis precisely, and to administer appropriate therapy. In post-conflict situations, the private sector can be quite crucial to recovery. It could mean building a legal framework, enhancing investor confidence, and involving international companies in partnerships with local companies to create jobs for the former combatants. People's basic needs and interests should be satisfied and that will increase their stake in the post-conflict peace-building and peacekeeping processes, and will make the whole peace process more vibrant and long-lasting.

We should let different cultures deal with their conflicts the way they have dealt with them

from time immemorial. Such a healthy approach can energize the local people and empower them rather than a few Northern intellectuals and Northern-educated elites taking over the struggle for their profit. We should identify the local conflict handling heritage and techniques, and train people in those with additional training in modern conflict transformation theories and practices. There will always be conflicts and there will always be a need to deal with them. And let there be conflict pundits also. But as we do not leave the entire issue of health to health workers alone, we cannot and should not let the peace researchers/pundits/workers deal with our conflicts. Conflict handling, after all, should not be an apolitical careerist global business but a local participatory struggle. It should be a pluralist, diverse and democratic experience. Unity in peacemaking is different from uniformity in peace-building.

So our countries should look inwardly and create our own conflict workers based on our heritage, our cultures and our values. This is not to say we should never study abroad, never read foreign books, or never learn from our counterparts abroad. This is to say that conflict transformation must have strong moorings in the local set-ups since it has a stake in the local struggles. Conflict workers may help the local people assume ownership of our conflict, take leadership and lead the struggle themselves. Conflict/peace workers must be at the back and not in the front because this is a political struggle. When the conflict turns into a 'hot' one (meaning, all conflict parties and incompatibilities are identified), peace workers could help the conflict parties engage in a dialogue with each other. Peace workers do run the risk of looking like political workers but then peace is a political issue, and politics is all about peace and development. Besides the classic "Empathy, Nonviolence and Creativity" demands, conflict transformation in these cases calls for civic courage and responsibility (public spiritedness), willingness to commit to a long and protracted nonviolent struggle with what Martin Luther King Jr. calls "creative extremism".

Again, as Martin Luther King Jr. suggests, conflict is precipitated between the old and the new and between justice and injustice. This makes conflict a necessary part of life and one thing that can steer a conflict away from being a danger to being an opportunity is humanism. Human conflicts should be humane conflicts. Reconciliation, justice and coexistence are all about humanism.

DELHI t e d...

YOU don't expect to be sandwiched by stout Pakistan Opposition leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman on the one side and popular singer Humaira Arshad on the other, every other day, but it happened. Well, not to pinpoint accuracy, but almost. The heavy-weights and this mortal were on the same Islamabad-Lahore flight that, after transit, took yours truly to New Delhi in October. My fondness for Humaira's single *Vas ve dhola akhiaan de kol kol* (Live in my sights) ensured one could neither get over her dashing presence try as one might nor the *Vas ve* notes. As for the Maulana, all one can say is, he doesn't quite need a song to make his presence felt. My rendezvous with New Delhi, a return journey that took me 14 years, was on account of a Conflict Transformation Workshop, organized by Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), bringing security experts and research scholars from India and Pakistan. The first thing one noticed was the road show. The cars were bigger, better and brighter than one saw more than a decade ago – a sure sign that money was making the mare go, but it wasn't at the speed of light. Reason? There's enough traffic at any given time in Delhi to convert a wannabe pacer into thinking leg breaks and googlies. And then, there's the smog that successfully penetrated my otherwise pretty resistant lungs to the point where one was flustered at the prospect of losing a date long-yearned. But it was good to see the most popular mode of transport, buses and autos, turn to eco-friendly fueling. On the road to Agra during the solitary day-off in the 9-day program, we had plenty of time to disarm. I settled down to a long discussion with one of the more learned participants, an LSE student to boot. The subjects ranged from the state of democracy in Pakistan to the joy of reading Arundhati Roy (I jumped at the opportunity to remind him that the 'god of small things' used to live very close to my one-time Chanakyapuri residence in New Delhi's Diplomatic Enclave).



Kamran Rehmat

A General called M

MY friend said he had a confession to make.

"Most of us, Indians, thought Pakistan had it coming, when 9/11 happened and a certain Mr Bush decided the world now had to decide whether it was "with us or against us (please feel free to read us for US)". He said there was discernible disappointment all over India when General M neatly steered the ship out of what "we thought was doomsday for Pakistan".

But my friend was not the only one gushing about the general's crisis-man *métier*. I heard at least a dozen voices on the tour – including that of radical General Shankar Prasad at the conference – who either eulogized the Pakistani strongman to varying degrees or conversely, demonized him (thanks in no small measure to Kargil and rightly so), but everyone seemed to have this larger-than-life picture of Musharraf that seemed to draw on a 'love-him-or-loathe-him-but-you-just-can't-ignore-him' analogy.

At the immigration counter on my way back, the officer on duty asked if I could verify an observation he wanted to make. He recalled watching a Pakistan Television talk show (he couldn't recall the channel but it must have been the state-run enterprise) a few years ago and from what he gauged "Pakistanis appeared to have closed minds – like the room in which they were talking."

I asked him how long had it been since he watched *that* program. He said maybe a couple of years or so ago. "Where had you been all this time?" – I asked him.

For the *n*th time, one had to assure a host that Pakistan had come a long way, that it boasted of one of the freest media going around, and that just because we had a General lording over the country, it did not mean the people and civil society were duds.

To his understandable shock, I told him how Musharraf-bashing on the electronic media had become so overstretched that it had lost its value. As for the print media, it didn't give two hoots to what the General thought about it.

Breaking news, literally!

TO give an idea of the power and reach of the media at home, I told him how two of my journalist friends and yours truly were instrumental in launching a media drive in Pakistan recently that led to the release of hundreds of prisoners languishing in jails for close to two decades on both sides of the border for petty offences but had been virtually forgotten, thanks to bureaucratic inertia.

Also the fact that the Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Shivshankar Menon, acknowledged that this was the first time in the history of the two countries that media had influenced official policy.

But, yes, at the end of the day, Pakistan does have this image problem, a recurring theme in my speech and presentation at the conference and general conversation everywhere on the tour.

Two Indian journalists, one of whom was on the same flight on my way back home to cover the earthquake for a German Radio, lamented what they called a profound corporatization of the media in their country before confessing that Pakistani media was streets ahead in terms of independence.

What's in a name?

WHAT'S in a name? Lots and then, perhaps nothing if Juliet's word for Romeo is taken for granted in Shakespeare's romantic opus – she said: (sic) *a rose by any other name would smell just as sweet*.

My one-year-old, Suhani, taught us a new language in Delhi (even though she wasn't even around)! The fact that I had her named after Rani Mukherjee's character in the flick *Saathiya* – a conscious effort on my part to pay tribute to all those Indians and Pakistanis, who have over the years burned midnight oil to work for peace and bring our two great countries closer, won hearts and minds quicker than Uncle Sam will ever conceive with all his daisy cutters.

Initially, the workshop hit turbulence when a host participant suggested tongue-in-cheek that if Pakistan could sell off its Afghan policy for \$3b – an oblique reference to Islamabad's detachment with Taleban to curry favor with the US – it would forget Kashmir altogether if it were dished out \$30b.

This led to an uproar with some of my compatriots asking if a pullout was in order. But the Suhani song helped me to calm their frayed nerves – and with a stitch in time from that apostle of peace, Dr Meenakshi Gopinath, WISCOMP's honorary director – the proverbial nine were saved.

A note of thanks is in order for Priya Parker, Program Director of the Sustained Dialogue Campus Network at the International Institute for Sustained Dialogue in Washington DC, who joked how she was classified as an ABCD (American Born Confused Desi, for the uninitiated) in search of an identity – because of her mixed parentage.

She let the steam out of some “hardened” participants keen on taking nationalist positions, by asking each to share a couple of experiences that, she alluded, they felt had changed their worldview. The results were so overwhelming emotionally for most that they surrendered to the universally endearing human spirit of oneness.

Personally, I was touched when almost every participant and some resource persons came up to me, asking for my daughter's photograph. Navjot BirSingh, easily the most distinguished amongst us, even offered special prayers for her at a *gurdwara*!

Back to the future

THERE was a consensus on how history had been distorted on both sides of the border but just when an exciting idea was floated about compiling an agreed version of history, it was shot down with persuasive arguments against why such an exercise entailed opening up a Pandora's box with the potential to perhaps, further demonize historical figures.

The theme that held my interest among the many discussed threadbare at the conference was the role of economic cooperation and business diplomacy. At the risk of being branded a cynic, I feel more than any other approach, it is the wagon wheel of economy that essentially determines a state's foreign policy.

It is not to suggest that civil society drops its guard, or that popular sentiment doesn't have an effective role, but ultimately, it is terms of fruitful engagement with clear monetary/ material benefit that compels states to work for sustainable peace.

I felt honoured when my proposal for setting up a Jinnah chair at Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi and a Gandhi/Nehru chair at Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad as a first institutionalized step of according respect to each other's founding fathers was not only accepted but hailed as path breaking.

No praise could be enough for the WISCOMP team of Dr. Gopinath, stalwarts Sumona DasGupta and Manjrika Sewak, the very caring Stuti Bhatnagar and her co-hosts Rajeshwari, Manisha Sobhrajani, Shweta Kapoor, Snigdha Sah and Ahalya Nambiar, who made sure we felt at home long before we became an extended family, trying to build a *bridge over troubled waters* – an apt theme from the 1970 Simon and Garfunkel smash hit and album by the same name.

The organization of the workshop was excellent. Dr. Gopinath mentioned at some point about how there was a certain complex in India when it came to matching Pakistani hospitality.

If that holds, the WISCOMP team returned the favor with a vengeance!



Kamran with other participants.

Kamran Rehmat is Assistant Editor, *The News*, Pakistan, and was one of the participants at the 4th annual WISCOMP Conflict Transformation Workshop, 2005. He lives in Islamabad.

'WE' at WISCOMP...

Soumita Basu

For many students of International Relations, like me, it is a struggle to locate the praxis of the subject, especially in the early stages of our career. I am fortunate to have spent some definitive years at WISCOMP. Here, I attempt to sift through some significant aspects of my experience.

WISCOMP was barely two years old when I joined the dynamic team that organized the First Annual Conflict Transformation Workshop for graduate students from India and Pakistan. This six-week internship in the summer of 2001 left an indelible mark about the power of creative engagement. Though a bit overwhelmed by an event of such stature, I was able to build some cherished relationships. These bonds, and my learnings at the workshop, gave me strength to question the zero-sum paradigms that I came across during my studies.

It was with faith and a great sense of anticipation, therefore, that I joined WISCOMP on the completion of my postgraduate degree. My first assignment in February 2003 was to rapporteur for the Second *Athwaas*¹ Consultative workshop. Slightly jaded by classroom discussions that usually stayed trapped within its

confines, I felt privileged to participate in this dialogue of women attempting to transform the violent nature of the conflict in Kashmir. This was a precursor to many such inspiring experiences I had as a member of the WISCOMP team.

I worked primarily on the *Scholar of Peace* Fellowship Program and the newsletter, *WISCOMP Update*. (As I write this piece, I am reminded of starting the 'Reflections' column in an earlier edition of *Update*!) Later, I also engaged intensively with the *Athwaas* initiative in Jammu & Kashmir. And I am not sure if I can objectively evaluate any of my future work disregarding the vivid images I have of the time spent with young women and men at the *Samanbal*² centers.

There was also a deep sense of reverence in being part of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness The Dalai Lama. The opportunity to have an audience with His Holiness is an honour that I will always cherish. It was perhaps no wonder that the fusion of our creative energies at work was always much more than a linear sum total of individual efforts!

WISCOMP for me represents the spirit of innovative thinking and mutual respect, and I carry these ethics into the future. In learning to privilege the 'we' at WISCOMP, I may have found an 'I' significantly more valuable for my life.

Soumita Basu worked as Program Officer at WISCOMP. She is currently pursuing a PhD in International Politics at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth.

¹ For more on *Athwaas*, see page 2.

² For more on *Samanbal*, see page 3.



Soumita Basu (left) and Manjri Sewak

We warmly welcome our new colleagues

Stuti Bhatnagar – Program Associate

Stuti has been associated with WISCOMP on a part-time basis for over 2 years; she now joins us full-time. She holds a Master's degree in International Relations from Jawaharlal Nehru University and has recently completed her M.Phil thesis 'The Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran Towards Israel'. She has also been assisting her supervisor Dr. P.R. Kumaraswamy in compiling a historical dictionary on the Arab-Israel conflict.

Deepti Mahajan – Project Associate

Deepti was associated with WISCOMP in 2004; she now joins us full-time. She has briefly worked with the Doordarshan News, New Delhi, and provided research assistance on a paper 'Women's Autonomy in India'. Deepti was awarded the Department for International Development Scholarship for her Masters in International Relations at the University of Nottingham, UK.

Priya Parker – Consultant – Sustained Dialogue Project

Priya is former Program Director, Sustained Dialogue Campus Network, International Institute for Sustained Dialogue, USA. Priya works closely with Dr. Harold Saunders, creator of Sustained Dialogue, and serves on the Steering Committee for the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation. She received her B.A. from the University of Virginia, and has completed graduate work in 'Dialogue, Deliberation and Public Engagement' from Fielding Graduate University.

WISCOMP bids farewell to Soumita Basu (**Program Officer**), Sumani Dash (**Intern**), and Yamini Lohia (**Intern**) as they go abroad in pursuit of higher education.

Shanti Malika: Nepal Workshop

Shanti Malika is a network of nine organizations working for women's empowerment in Nepal, committed to working towards peace with justice through dialogic processes and non-violent strategies. Shanti Malika was born out of a realization that the experiences and knowledge of women activists in peace-building has not yet been able to influence the peace agenda in Nepal and that it was necessary to identify paths to strengthen the leadership of women for peace, bringing in women's experiences in the peace-building process, building trust among the activists and consensus on these issues.

Responding to a request from Shanti Malika, WISCOMP facilitated a two-day interactive meeting and workshop of Shanti Malika representatives in New Delhi, on 10 & 11 December 2005. The workshop was designed with the following objectives:

- Enhance and strengthen the communication bond between women of Nepal who want to bring about non-violent change;
- Help foster a sense of team spirit and solidarity among the diverse women in the group so that they feel comfortable exploring methodologies and strategies of working together and identifying common goals;
- Explore the praxis of non-violent engagement with the help of resource persons active in peace movements across India;

- Examine methodologies of sustained dialogue and how it can operate in situations of active conflict;
- Understand how women in Nepal have negotiated violence and counter-violence and the measures taken by women survivors; and
- Evolve a common vocabulary of peace and search for common ground and democratic spaces in the midst of violence in Nepal.



Rita Thapa at the Shanti Malika workshop.

Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace
FOUNDATION FOR UNIVERSAL RESPONSIBILITY OF HH THE DALAI LAMA

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WISCOMP UPDATE is the newsletter of Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace. WISCOMP is an initiative of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness The Dalai Lama, New Delhi. We see our role as creating the space to 'engender' an inclusive, conceptual vocabulary on issues of peace and security. WISCOMP works to facilitate the participation and leadership of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and to leverage support for this at the national, regional and international levels.

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 Deepti Mahajan (Project Associate)
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GUJARAT PROJECT

WISCOMP will support Mr Harsh Mander, Managing Trustee, Aman Biradari Trust, in a project to study processes of justice and reconciliation in Gujarat. Titled 'Communal Socio-political Movements in Independent India: Spaces for Reconciliation and Justice', the project will have two components:

- Action Research, which will document the activities of community-based teams in Gujarat which engage in processes of reconciliation that include but also look beyond processes of legal justice. The action research will be systematically documented through a monthly newsletter.
- Academic Research, which will look at how practice and theory can be synergized in the new and emerging field of Reconciliation.

The project will conclude in July 2006 with the publication of the monograph *Communal Socio-political Movements in Independent India: Spaces for Reconciliation and Justice*.

WISCOMP

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