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PEACE & JUSTICE

OCT - NOV - DEC 2018 **NEWS**



The United Nations
and the Responsibility to Protect

Restorative Justice:
an alternative approach to crime

Book review: "The Doomsday Machine:
Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner"

Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre

Working in Scotland since 1980 to promote:
Nonviolence ♦ Conflict Resolution ♦ Human Rights ♦ Ecological Sustainability
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Opposing War Memorial Edinburgh Campaign –
 Peacebuilding for Schools Programme - Advocacy on Refugee Issues – Advocating Disarmament -
 Origami Cranes Project – Don't Bank on the Bomb –
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**Peace Walk
 Holyrood Park
 September 2018**

Photo by Brian Larkin

Editor's Introduction

In Centre News we invite supporters to attend the Transport Committee which will consider the proposal for an Opposing War Memorial and give an update on our Peacebuilding for Schools project and plans for a Restorative Practice module. We have a number of upcoming events including “UN: Peacemaker or Toothless Tiger?” and a performance of the “This Evil Thing” by Michael Mears, a one man play about First World War COs.

In “The UN and Responsibility to Protect” Anelise Vaz examines the value and challenges of the doctrine and urges the international community take effective actions to protect human rights around the world.

A different and more flexible way to deal with crime is explained by Daniela Oppitz in “Restorative Justice: an alternative approach to crime”.

Niamh McGurk reviews Daniel Ellsberg’s “The Doomsday Machine” and reveals the real story behind the new movie “The Post”.

These are just a few of the many interesting pieces of this issue. We hope you enjoy!

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Editorial: The Khalistan Movement

Upon meeting an Asian gentleman recently, I was surprised to hear him stating his origin as being from “Punjab.” I had always taken Punjab to be a part of India, which in some ways it is, but after speaking to this man and his friends, I realised there is a very strong movement for Punjabi independence happening in India, with a long political history. This movement is called the Khalistan Movement, and it has been around in India for decades.

The Punjabi province of India has a separate culture and language. They speak Punjabi, they dress differently, and the main religions are Sikhism and Islam, with a small Hindu minority (contrasting from the Hindu majority of India). There has always been tension between the religions in Hinduism, which can also be seen as a factor in the Khalistan Movement, which is driven by a Sikh desire for a home for the Sikhs in the Punjab province of India and Pakistan.

In the 1950's, the Punjabi Suba was formed right after Indian Independence. This movement urged the government to create a Punjabi majority state in India, where people speak Punjabi and there was a Sikh majority. This movement was granted some of their requests, but still wished for more. In the 1970's the first explicit call for a Khalistan movement were made. Over the 1970s and 80s a movement grew around this; however, unfortunately, the movement was characterised by violence in many ways. Many pro-Khalistan supporters used terrorism in order to try and achieve their aims, and the Indian military response was to use extreme terror. It has been reported that there were tremendous violations of human rights over this period, with torture, staged shootouts, disposing of bodies without identification and arbitrary arrests.

In 1984, Pogroms against Sikh people were carried out as after the 3rd Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi launched Operation Blue Star, which attempted to remove Sikh presence from The Golden Temple Complex in Punjab, one of the most holy sites in Sikhism. The Operation caused an uproar, and her assassination. This event spurred the movement even further. However, after a while, the people of Punjab drew away from this movement. It was bringing terror and violence to their lives that they did not wish for.

There has been peace and stability in Punjab over the last few years, but in recent months there has been a resurgence of emotions over the Khalistan

Movement. This has been driven mainly by the Punjabi diaspora in countries such as the US, France, Pakistan, Malaysia, and quite prominently, the UK. The diaspora feels a strong attachment to their homeland and demand justice for the Sikh victims of the past Khalistan movement. The movement itself is at this point in time considered highly political and has strong links to violence.

It is an interesting question raised as to whether the diaspora have a right to continue the fight for Khalistan, when they will not be personally affected by it. Perhaps if this is to come, it should be driven by those in Punjab itself? Having said that, the gentleman that I met from Punjab seemed adamant that it already was its own entity. It seems like a matter that only time will tell what happens, but hopefully if there is a resurgence of a movement, this one can be less driven by violence, and more towards finding a peaceful solution that can benefit all.



Olivia Kashti

Centre News

Peacebuilding for Schools



Peace & Justice received grants from Pumphouse Trust and Anglican Peace Fellowship, that will enable us to continue the Cooperative Games Programme in three schools per term in Edinburgh and Glasgow. **Emma Quayle** is our **new Development Worker and Programme Coordinator**. We completed a full Evaluation of the programme. The Evaluation shows that we are achieving targeted outcomes, identifies areas where we need to improve and confirms the potential for

this programme to grow. The full Evaluation Report is available on our website.

We plan to learn from peer programmes, improve outcomes and measure them better and improve Facilitator training. Emma will work with other staff to revise the curriculum and facilitator training programme, improve Facilitator Training, and develop the programme towards offering a whole school approach in Restorative Practices.

Peacebuilding for Schools Facilitator Trainings. 20 & 27 Oct. 10am - 2pm.

Two part half-day initial training sessions for our schools programme. Those who complete the initial training are eligible to continue as volunteer Facilitator Trainees accompanying our Lead Facilitators delivering 8 week programme of two hour sessions at schools. Free to prospective Facilitators. Open also for personal or professional development. For more information email Emma at: coopgames@peaceandjustice.org.uk to sign up go to tinyurl.com/peacebuilders-training-2018



Intro to Restorative Practice for Schools - Saturday 19 January. With Anna Gregory from Peacemakers, Birmingham.

Venue tbc on registration. Training for Peacebuilders Facilitators, Teachers and in Edinburgh schools. Places are limited. For more information or to register visit: tinyurl.com/ra-edinburgh-schools

The Scottish Connection: P&J have prepared a report on Arms Transfers from Scotland to Yemen **which will be published jointly with Campaign Against the Arms Trade in October.** The report gives details of companies making arms in Scotland that are sold or transferred to Saudi Arabia and potentially used in bombing Yemen causing the world's worst humanitarian catastrophe. It includes information on public funding for some of these highly profitable companies and recommendations for action for individuals and for local, Scottish and UK government.

Invite friends to Support Peace & Justice

Can you help us increase our membership? The best way is personal contact. Please consider inviting friends to support us.



Opposing War Memorial.

The design submission for the Memorial will be considered by the City of Edinburgh Transport & Environment Committee at 10am, 4 October at City Chambers, Edinburgh. Supporters are invited to attend. It will then likely be considered by the Planning Committee. **If your Councillor is on the T&E Committee please consider emailing them TODAY to ask for their support for the Memorial.** A list of Councillors on the Committee is available

at: <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/>. Please let us know if you do and any response from them. We can provide a template email. Email coordinator@peaceandjustice.org.uk with Opposing War Memorial Advocacy in subject line.

The **Crowdfunder** will launch on 15 October to run for forty days and aims to raise £40,000 toward the goal of £130,000 needed to cast the sculpture in bronze and install it in Princes St Gardens. **We need everyone to help us meet this ambitious goal.** Be involved! **Please consider making a donation small or large and share the appeal by email and social media with your contacts.** You can send a cheque made out to Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre or donate by bank transfer. Be sure to let us know the donation is for the Opposing War Memorial.

Profiles of Conscientious Objectors

The first four of a series of profiles of Edinburgh and Lothian area conscientious objectors have been posted on the Opposing War Memorial website <http://opposingwar.scot>. More profiles will be published each week from now through November.

Stop Funding the End of the World: Campaigning to eliminate nuclear weapons through divestment. The Don't Bank on the Bomb Scotland Network, which includes Peace & Justice, Scottish CND and Medact launched a new Guide for Scotland. Find it at: <https://nukedivestmentscotland.org/> The publication was reported in a Cover story and Op Ed by author Linda Pearson in The National.

New Board member. Jan Benvie joined the Management Committee in September. Jan was a primary teacher and has experience with conflict

resolution in schools. She's a Fellowship of Reconciliation board member and active in Anglican Peace Fellowship. Jan will represent the P&J on the Peace Network. Jan spent four years with Christian Peacemaker Teams in Palestine.

Stall at Scottish Parliament.

We had a stall in the members' area of Scottish Parliament in September and spoke to lots of MSPs about all our programmes.



Peace Walk 15 September.

Intern Olivia Kashti organised the walk. Suzanne Dance led mindful walking in the hidden valley and storyteller Svend-Erick Engh shared stories under Arthur's Seat.

International Peace Day Friday 21st September. At our **Open House we watched** *Good Thinking, Those Who've Tried To Halt Nuclear Weapons* and had a discussion with Filmmaker Anthony Donovan. Find out more or watch the film at: www.goodthinkingthedocumentary.net/.



Upcoming Events:

UN: Peacemaker - or Toothless Tiger
4 October. 7 – 9pm.
Appleton Tower,
Lecture Theatre 5,
University of Edinburgh.
EH8 9LE.

Vijay Mehta, Chair of Uniting for Peace, and Dr Claire

Duncanson, Senior Lecturer in International Relations and Rev Brian Cooper explore how the UN can become a relevant organisation fit to tackle the challenges of 21st Century. **Free. All welcome.** For More information and to Book visit <https://un4oct.eventbrite.co.uk>. The event is proving very popular. People who have registered will be admitted first. Booking is strongly recommended. Ring us on 0131 629 1058 and leave message with phone number or email to Register. We will confirm registration.

Photo: Peace Walk, September 2018 by Zozan Yasar

Read Anelise Vaz's series of blog posts on the UN Peacemaking and Responsibility to Protect (R2P) framing issues that will be discussed at the forum.



This Evil Thing
Fundraiser for the Opposing War Memorial
Tuesday 20 November. 7 - 9pm.
St Thomas Aquinas RC High School.
Tickets £10. Additional donation welcome.
Michael Mears performs his one man show telling the story of First World War Conscientious Objectors.
 Plus: Q&A with Michael Mears, Elizabeth Allen, whose grandfather was a First World War CO, Tickets from the P&J or via EventBrite:
<https://this-evil-thing-opposing-war.eventbrite.com>

140,000 Origami Peace Cranes Workshops - Second Saturday of the month. 2 – 4pm, Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre. 5 Upper Bow, EH1 2JN. Come to a workshop or organise one in your community to help us make 140,000 peace cranes to remember Hiroshima and raise awareness of the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty. We now have over 96,500 cranes.



White Poppies for Peace: Remembering all victims of war.

Once again this year white poppies are available from the P&J or direct from Peace Pledge Union. Contact us if you want a small box delivered to your church, community centre, café or anywhere poppies can be displayed as an alternative or complement to the red poppies.

Merton Study Day. With Author and Catholic Worker Jim Forrest. Saturday 8th December. Walpole Hall, St Mary's Cathedral. Edinburgh.

Thomas Merton was a cloistered Cistercian monk and writer who was widely influential in the American peace movement until his accidental death in the 1960s. P&J Coordinator Brian Larkin will join a panel on Peacemaking and Contemplation in a World of Action.

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and now Instagram

Volunteers Niamh McGurk and Coady Johnston have set up a new P&J Instagram account. Check it out and invite your friends to follow us:

Instagram: @peaceandjusticecentredinburgh Twitter: @EdinPandJ

Facebook: facebook.com/edinpeaceandjusticecentre/

Support our Work!

This month the United States starts it's new budget year with a military budget of \$892 billion for the 12 months from 1 October. Despite his laughable claim before the UN that he has accomplished more in two years than any previous President it's one of the few things Donald Trump can honestly say he has accomplished. Plenty for fighter jets while 44 million Americans have no health insurance. We imagine a world without weapons and with health care, shelter, and education for all, a world where noone would go hungry. Will you help us continue to work for that vision? Please become a supporter today.

Volunteers Needed: Volunteer, do a student Work Placement or Internship with us: White Poppy Distribution - Poster Distribution - Cleaning and Decorating - Cranes Project Outreach and Workshop Leaders - Management Committee Working Groups: Peacebuilding for Schools, Communications, Fundraising, Peacebuilding for Schools Facilitators

Email: coordinator@peaceandjustice.org.uk



Desk Space, Hot desks and Room Bookings are all available in the heart of Edinburgh at the P&J Centre, 5 Upper Bow.



Flexible low rates to meet the needs of community based groups.

For more information email admin@peaceandjustice.org.uk or phone 0131 629 1058 Wed or Fri 1 - 4pm. At other times please leave a message.

The United Nations and the Responsibility to Protect

By Anelise Vaz

After the end of the Cold War, the status of the United Nations grew considerably, and the organization started focusing on achieving its greater objectives: maintaining international peace and security, securing justice and human rights, and promoting social progress. This led to a renewed interest in humanitarian issues and in helping populations in need. However, the problem of how to respond appropriately to gross and systematic violations of human right that happen within the territory of a sovereign country has been subject to much international debate. On one side, there is the appeal to our shared humanity and the urgency to help those who are suffering no matter where in the world. On the other side, there is the international principle of non-interference in domestic affairs of sovereign countries. Arguing that human rights are a greater principle than sovereignty, the United Nations has promoted many humanitarian interventions that use force as a means to achieve its goals, understanding that consent is not necessarily needed, especially when the government of a country is the one attacking its own population and causing the humanitarian crisis.

In 1992, in Somalia, UN forces suffered heavy human losses and found enormous resistance in the provision of humanitarian aid. Fearing a recurrence of this, the international community took three months to act in Rwanda, in 1994.

In the meantime, one million Tutsis were brutally exterminated. The failure in one African country sealed the fate of another, resulting in the first case of genocide since the Holocaust. It became evident that a new consensus on responses to massive human rights violations was needed to help the international community to respond more efficiently and avoid new genocides. As a response, the “Responsibility to Protect” doctrine was established in 2000, setting out clear criteria for the practice of humanitarian interventions. It argued that, to have their right of sovereignty respected, states must be able to provide security to their people. When they fail to do so, the international community is not only legally authorised to intervene in their internal affairs, but it also has the responsibility to do so in



order to prevent and protect people from violence. This new concept delegitimised the discourse of leaders who appeal to the principle of sovereignty to protect themselves from any external interference while committing crimes against their own population.

The R2P doctrine proposes a three-pillar approach of responsibilities: Every state has the Responsibility to Protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing; The wider international



community has the responsibility to encourage and assist individual states in meeting that responsibility; If a state is manifestly failing to protect its populations, the international community must take appropriate collective action, in a timely and decisive manner and in accordance with the UN Charter.

However, the R2P doctrine is as acclaimed as it is criticised. One of the main criticisms is that states can invoke R2P to justify any military intervention, or that when there is indeed a situation requiring humanitarian intervention, states might be unwilling to put the lives of their soldiers at risk on purely humanitarian grounds, unless there is scope for material or political gain. In 2011, the R2P-based intervention in Libya was accused of being a pretext to carry out regime-change. This has yielded global concerns that the R2P principles were used as a political excuse to intervene in the country's affairs. As a result, Russia and China have later vetoed several attempts of humanitarian intervention in Syria. It is also very hard to assess the efficiency of an intervention because there will not be any evidence to show how things would have unfolded without the intervention. And while the benefits of the intervention might not be visible, the costs always are.

Still, the legitimacy of the R2P doctrine is important because, while there is no supreme global authority with the power to prosecute and punish violators of the international legal order, states tend to respect the norms and try to plausibly justify their actions to other countries. This alone makes a valid case in favor of the criteria that were established by the R2P and adopted by the UN.

Restorative Justice: an Alternative Approach to Crime

By Daniela Oppitz

In many countries, dissatisfaction with the formal criminal justice system has led to calls for alternative responses to crime and social disorder. As Dr Howard Zehr, the pioneer in the field of restorative justice, said “many feel that the process of justice deepens societal wounds and conflicts rather than contributing to healing or peace” (ZEHR; GOHAR, 2003). In this context, the term “restorative justice” refers to a growing set of practices that aim to redirect society’s retributive response to crime. Instead of emphasizing the rules that have been broken and the punishment that should be imposed, restorative approaches tend to focus primarily on the persons who have been harmed. It consists, in this sense, of a healing process that gives the actual victims and the community, as well as the offenders, the opportunity to take an active part in the justice process instead of a traditionally passive role.

Since the 1970s, a variety of restorative justice programmes have emerged in many countries around the globe. These approaches that can be used in conjunction with traditional criminal justice processes and sanctions, and are usually offered as choices within or alongside the existing legal system. Furthermore, a restorative intervention can be used at any stage of the criminal justice process. These practices are sometimes also used in non-criminal justice settings, such as schools or neighbourhoods.



The main categories of programmes are (a) victim-offender mediation; (b) community and family group conferencing, and (c) circle sentencing or peacemaking circles. The latter approaches can also involve the family, the friends and the community around both the victim and the offender. All approaches put victims and offenders in direct dialogue, most frequently face-to-face, about a specific offence or infraction, with the help of at least one more person who serves as the facilitator. The encounter essentially involves naming what happened, identifying its impact on the persons involved, and reaching some form of an understanding, often including an agreement as to how any resultant harm will be repaired.

Therefore, by establishing a dialogue between the offender and those affected by his actions, the main goals of restorative justice programmes are to:

(a) Empower victims by providing them with an opportunity to be directly involved in addressing the consequences of the offence. A restorative process allows victims to ask the offender questions about the offence, express themselves about its impact on their lives, receive restitution or reparation, and hopefully reach closure.

(b) Encourage responsibility taking by all concerned parties, particularly by offenders. Rather than merely assessing and imposing legal guilt, a restorative process helps offenders in actively acknowledging personal responsibility for the offence and its consequences, understanding the effects of their actions on the victim, expressing emotions about the offence, offering reparation and/or apology.

(c) Restore, to the extent possible, the emotional and material losses of victims, by providing them with a range of opportunities for dialogue, negotiation and reparation.

(d) Reduce recidivism by encouraging change in individual offenders and facilitating their reintegration into the community. At its best, the process may lead the offender to experience a cognitive and emotional change that will transform and improve their relationship with the community.

(e) Identifying factors that lead to crime and informing authorities responsible for crime reduction strategy.



In most jurisdictions, restorative justice processes are more frequently applied to cases involving youth in conflict with the law. Because of their educational value, restorative programmes are particularly useful for providing alternatives to measures that would deprive a young person of their liberty. In conclusion, restorative justice works as a flexible approach that can be adapted to different cultures, legal systems and stages of a criminal justice process, serving as a much-needed tool for crime prevention, social pacification and reintegration of offenders into society.

SOURCES: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime – UNODC. Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes. New York, 2006. And ZEHR, Howard. GOHAR, Ali. The Little Book of Restorative Justice. New York, 2003.

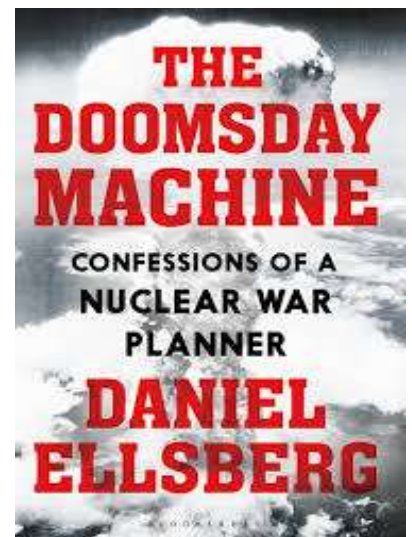
Book Review: The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner

by Daniel Ellsberg. Bloomsbury, 2017.

Reviewed by Niamh McGurk

Daniel Ellsberg is one of the most famous whistleblowers in American history, in 1971 he passed the top-secret government study on decision making in Vietnam – later known as the Pentagon Papers- to a number of newspapers. The Pentagon Papers revealed a swathe of government secrets and exposed systematic lies by the administration. After criminal charges against him were dismissed in May 1973 on the grounds of government criminal misconduct, a first in the history of the American justice system, Ellsberg dedicated his time to the growing anti-nuclear movement in the US.

Unknown to the public it was Ellsberg's knowledge of nuclear planning that inspired him to join the anti-nuclear movement. While Ellsberg secretly copied the Pentagon Papers he was also doing the same with a selection of US nuclear weapons documents – he planned to release these after the furore surrounding the Vietnam documents had passed. However this was not to be, it was not the machinations of the Nixon administration that derailed Ellsberg's plans but rather mother nature – a tropical storm destroyed the documents in their hiding place. The secrets contained within these documents would not see the light of day for over forty years. With his precious documents destroyed Ellsberg began the painstaking process of piecing together the information and materials he needed to finally release his expose on the American nuclear machine.



Released in 2017 “The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear Planner” is the culmination of decades of hard work. Despite his fame, Ellsberg faced an uphill battle to get the book published and it was rejected by seventeen different publishers before being picked up by Bloomsbury. The author believes that this was because the word ‘nuclear’ is still taboo in the United States even forty years on. In an interview with the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Ellsberg stated that it was his belief that the American

public and press had long ago accepted the idea of the USA's basic nuclear arsenal as a reasonable response to a nuclear threat. The overarching purpose of his book is to change that.

The Domsday Machine is a terrifying read even for those of us who consider ourselves well acquainted with nuclear issues. It chronicles Ellsberg's journey as a RAND Corporation nuclear planner as he sought to discover if it was possible for American nuclear weapons to be launched without proper authorisation. His findings shocked even him. The official line was that only the president could authorise a nuclear strike – Ellsberg discovered that even one or two very minor officials would be able to bypass the supposedly extensive authorisation system and launch a nuclear attack if the desire struck them. Many of the 'failsafes' put in place to prevent this were almost laughably simplistic.

The ease with which the world could be accidentally brought into nuclear war will chill you. Ellsberg speculates that while huge advances have been made in nuclear technology since his day the underlying systems controlling these weapons are not much changed. It is his belief that the risk of an unauthorised nuclear war is no less than it was fifty years ago. As if this was not terrifying enough the book also details the US plans of attack should a nuclear war erupt. Ellsberg discovered that any perceived attack on the US, whether real or the result of a malfunctioning system or natural disaster, would be met with the same response – the indiscriminate and systematic destruction of both the Soviet Union and China. This plan, which would result in up to a billion deaths, was inflexible and ready to be implemented.

The revelations in Ellsberg's book while outdated are nevertheless shocking. It offers an unparalleled window into the US nuclear machine and continues to be relevant today. This book, difficult to comprehend in certain passages, is a must read for anyone who considers themselves a concerned citizen of the world.

Additional references:

ELLSBERG, D. *"Biography"*. 2006.

SCHWARZ, S. *"What are the Pentagon Papers? The True Story Behind the New Movie 'The Post'"*. 2017.

MECKLIN, J. *"Daniel Ellsberg on dismantling the Domsday Machine"*. 2018.

Unsung Heroes: Nadine Labaki

By Olivia Kashti

There are many ways to enact social change in our world. Some do it through politics, some through activism and some through art. Nadine Labaki is a Lebanese actor and director who has made her social change through her films. Being the first female Arab filmmaker to win a major prize at the Cannes Film Festival (as she did in May 2018) and the second ever female Arab filmmaker to be nominated for such an award, she serves as an inspiration for women everywhere.

Labaki grew up in Lebanon during the civil war, which lasted from years 1975-1990. During her childhood, she remembers “we had to stay inside because it was so dangerous to leave your house.” This led to her passion for television, as during these years she used it as an escape. She turned to creating her own films and movies in the Arab world, before eventually releasing her first feature film ‘Caramel’. This film looks at the life of women in Beirut, the complications and the realities of their life. Labaki views cinema as a “very powerful, non-violent way of making a change.” Her She states that she is “aware of this mission and I want to be clever enough to embrace it and take it as an opportunity.” In her film “Where Do We Go Now?”, Labaki creates a pacifist message through humour and poignancy, as she explores the women in a war-torn village in Lebanon coming together to stop the men from fighting. She states that she was inspired to create this after seeing civil war re-emerging in Lebanon in 2008, after 20 years of peace, and realising how fragile peace can be. She wondered what lengths she would go to in order to stop her son from picking up a gun, and this is where the inspiration for the movie came from.



The movie is both a feminist and pacifist message that can connect with anyone, particularly those associated with the Arab world. It reminds one of the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace movement in 2003, which saw Liberian women coming together to stop conflict. Labaki is aware of the struggle of women, and states that her cinema can be seen as a “cry for help for women” to change the status quo. “I believe in an alternative thinking and alternative society.” Her films encourage this freedom of thought.

Labaki is an inspirational figure as she provides a role model for any young female Arab aspiring filmmakers or artists. Furthermore, her brand of transnational feminism provides inspiration for all women anywhere, and fosters an attitude of understanding between Western and Arab women; proving the similarities between us, and the difficulties of contextual circumstances some are born into. When asked which wish she would choose, if she was granted one wish, she answered; “I would switch politicians to artists. And I think the world would be so much better.” If the artists were all like Nadine Labaki, there is no way that the world wouldn’t be.

Kofi Annan: the Hopeful Peacemaker

The first United Nations Secretary-General from sub-Saharan Africa and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Kofi Annan, who passed away this month at the age of 80, will be mainly remembered for his successful career as an international diplomat, a humanist, and a peace-builder.



The painful failures in Rwanda, in 1994, and in Bosnia, in 1995, when the UN system failed at responding adequately to avoid and stop both genocides, have influenced much of Annan’s thinking and many of his later actions during his role as UN’s Secretary General, from 1997 to 2006. He

joined the many voices that questioned the role of the international community in protecting civilian populations and advocated for the right to intervene when necessary. Along with the Millennium Development Goals - which for the first time set global targets on issues such as poverty and child mortality, the introduction of the Responsibility to Protect doctrine in the international human rights framework was one of the Secretary-General’s greatest achievements.

In spite of the difficulties of peacemaking, Kofi Annan remained hopeful and never let reality drain away his idealism. In April this year, he told a BBC interviewer “I am a stubborn optimist, I was born an optimist and will remain an

optimist.” During his difficult and challenging career, he managed to deeply internalize the moral rhetoric of the United Nations. As Michael Ignatieff, a Canadian author who wrote a review of Annan’s autobiography, said: *“When he accepted the Nobel Prize awarded jointly to him and the UN in 2001, he seemed to many the most complete incarnation of its ideals of any secretary-general who ever lived.”*¹

May Kofi Annan rest in peace. And may we keep the humanitarian values that guided his efforts as a peacemaker alive.

1. IGNATIEFF, Michael. *The Confessions of Kofi Annan*. The New York Review of Books, Dec 2012.

News from Around the Movements



September 21st2018: International Day Of Peace:

On September 21st, the International Day of Peace will be celebrated all around the world. The day was established by resolution 36/37 which was voted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly in 1981, with the objective of “commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples.” The theme of this year’s International Day of Peace is “The Right to Peace - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70”. All around the world events will be held to celebrate this day, reflect on peace and discuss Human Rights in the global scene, 70 years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In particular, the aim of this year, is to reflect on the idea of a “Right To Peace”, its possible meaning and implications. *Source:* <https://internationaldayofpeace.org/about/>

South Sudan President and Rebel Leader Sign Peace Deal:

On September 12th, South Sudan President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, a rebel leader, met in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Abeba, to sign a peace deal. The agreement officially ended a five years long conflict which killed an estimated ten thousand people and displaced four millions. The civil war in the country had started in 2013, only two years after South Sudan gained independence from Sudan, when Kiir accused Machar of plotting a coup.

Different regional and international actors were present at the summit and the accomplishment was praised by UN representatives as well as other African leaders. Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/>

Russia and Japan Seek A Peace Deal After WWII:

Not many people are aware of the fact that War World Two has not officially ended yet. In fact, Japan and Russia, have never signed a Peace Treaty after the end of the conflict. However, this might now change. On September 12th Russian president Vladimir Putin addressed the issue at Easter Economic Forum in Vladivostok, stating that he wishes to conclude a Peace Treaty by the end of 2018. The Japanese government did not respond to the proposal, but different political actors stressed the importance of concluding a long-lasting territorial dispute before agreeing on a peace deal. In the last days of the war, Russia seized the islands of Shikotan, Etorofu, Kunashiri and the Habo-mai islet group off Hokkaido, which remain nowadays under Russian control. An agreement on these territories thus seems to be a necessary precondition for any official peace talks for Japan.

Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/>



Eritrea and Ethiopia Sign Peace Agreement:

On September 16th, Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed were received by Saudi King Salman in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to sign a peace deal ending two decades of conflict and confrontation. The agreement followed

a “Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship” which had been signed in July. This achievement is incredibly significant for two countries which had always been culturally very close, but whose people have been forcefully separated by the conflict. Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/ethiopia-eritrea-accord-saudi-arabia-1.4826101>

Rights Movements Opposing Amnesty for Armed Groups in Central Africa:

On August 24th, a joint group of Human Rights organizations including African Human Rights League (LCDH), Amnesty International, Human Rights

Watch and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), signed a joint-statement in which they declared their firm opposition to granting amnesty to fighters who have been involved in atrocities as a trade-off for peace. The statement highlights that some of these individuals are accused of acts such as “murder, rape, sexual slavery, torture, looting, persecution, and destruction of religious buildings”, and that a long lasting peace cannot be achieved if justice is not served.

Source: <https://www.news24.com/Africa/>

Reflection: Women human rights defenders in Palestine

By Júlia Fernandez

Tamimi's family women, from Nabi Saleh in the West Bank, have been at the forefront of the international news headlines since last december when Israeli soldiers arrested young Ahed. The news about their detentions and trials remind us of the punitive, security-based, and repressive frameworks which articulate the Israeli rationality while criminalizing human rights activism. The Tamimi women are human rights defenders, and are among the thousands of Palestinian activists who have been detained during the last years in the occupied territories. That configures an unquestionable scene of criminalisation of the legitimate right to protest and of hampering the mobilization, organization and participation of women into the political struggle spaces, which are fundamental for the defense of the rights and freedoms of the Palestinian people.

Palestinian women have always struggled against the systems of oppression throughout history. Nowadays, their political engagement falls within a movement for the defense of human rights as a cross-cutting and essential commitment to nonviolent resistance strategies against the occupation and the Israeli apartheid regime, as well as with the improvement in the recognition of women's rights within the patriarchal oppression system. Their actions pose a threat to the continuity of the occupation status quo and to all forms of oppression of the Palestinian people and themselves as women. They develop and implement strategies of social action and civil mobilisation that are vital in order to reinforce the women's rights protection mechanisms and to support and protect their presence and active participation in the social and political key

spaces of the nonviolent resistance. Through their efforts, women human rights defenders incorporate the gender perspective as a category of analysis within the framework of the occupation, so their actions and strategies are based in a sensitive approach to the discrimination and inequalities suffered by women in the concerned context.



In fact, the commitment of women with human rights defence contributes to subvert the hegemonic representations of gender roles within the frame of the Israeli occupation and the Palestinian resistance, moving from the traditional role of women as victims of violence towards their recognition as active political subjects. In that sense, the transgressions raised by these women point out the

importance of their work and the need to protect them, because they contest both systems of oppression - which articulate power and gender relations in the framework of the occupation - by exercising human rights from a feminist perspective. Women human rights defenders in Palestine are exposed to the brutal impact of repression and systematic vulneration of human rights perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces, which have a multidimensional and gender-differential impact on their lives and capacities for self-organization and political mobilization.

It is imperative to question the hegemony of the androcentric narratives of resistance and to point out the importance of the participation of women human rights defenders into the political and social transformation processes in the occupied territories. When adopting a gender-based perspective we became able to rethink the typical approaches to the nonviolent resistance and human rights defense movements through the incorporation of the analysis of the women's agency and linking it up with the imperating power structures. By doing that, we will be able to analyse the spaces of counter-power and resistance generated by women, as well as to point out the importance of the feminist approach and practice in order to articulate collective and nonviolent responses to confront repression and the intersectional roots of both systems of oppression (patriarchy and Israeli occupation), generating structural changes in Palestine

and claiming the appropriation of active and participative roles at all levels of social transformation and political activism.

Media reports on the Tamimi's womens detentions outraged the world in face of the obvious injustice committed and the denigrating treatment of the detainee women. But also, and above all, those news have been traduced into an extraordinary media outreach of the active role of women in the political struggle in Palestine, reaffirming them as political subjects strongly committed with the defense of human rights and the nonviolent resistance.

It is vital to contribute to the development and enhancement of the knowledge about the efforts conducted by women human rights defenders all over the world towards the recognition of their rights and those of the people who suffer from violence and oppression. Only by doing this, we will be able to advocate for the progress of the international frames of recognition, legitimation and protection of these women and their essential task.



Peace Walk, 15 September 2018, under Arthur's Seat

Photo by Zozan Yasar

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