

International Conference “Building a Future on Peace and Justice” Nuremberg, 25-27 June 2007

The 7 most important questions

1. Why are we holding this conference?
2. What is the goal of the conference?
3. Why Nuremberg?
4. What will be happening at the conference?
5. Who is participating?
6. Who is supporting the conference?
7. Who are the conference partners?

1. Why are we holding this conference?

Peace and justice are key goals of the United Nations' work. Institutions and mechanisms for establishing justice are becoming increasingly important throughout the world – the International Criminal Court is an example of this.

At the same time, there are more and more situations where peace and justice seem to be competing against each other: the leaders of conflicting parties often only accept peace treaties if they are promised an amnesty (examples: Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda; Colombia). In many cases, the possibilities for exercising justice are obstructed by a fragile security situation (examples: Afghanistan, Iraq), by precarious power-sharing agreements between former opponents when a conflict has ended (examples: transitions from dictatorship to democracy in South Africa and Latin America), or by weak institutions (example: Democratic Republic of the Congo). The victims of conflicts, on the other hand, feel a sense of injustice if no one is brought to account for the suffering they have been caused (examples: transitions in Latin America).

Furthermore, the quest for peace is often made more difficult because important reconstruction activities, such as reform of the security sector, promotion of the rule of law and other development tasks, have to compete for scarce resources (examples: Liberia, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste).

In situations where peace and justice seem to be competing with each other, peace mediators, and justice and human rights experts are often faced with difficult decisions both from a practical and moral perspective. An understanding of the various facets of a conflict and the interests of the conflicting parties is required, as are political tact and creativity.

This conference is the first in the world to facilitate an interdisciplinary exchange of views and experience on the subject. The organizers have invited more than 80 people with hands-on experience from the relevant regions to get involved in this exchange.

2. What is the goal of the conference?

The conference aims to make a contribution to a better understanding of the tensions which can arise between peace and justice during peace negotiations and in post-conflict peacebuilding. The goal is to draw up proposals on how to deal with such tensions. The

proposals will draw on practical experience from policy-makers and civil society and on scientific expertise.

When the conference is over, the results will be edited (probably over a period of several months) and summarized into a document giving recommendations for political action ("Nuremberg Declaration on Peace and Justice"). The Declaration will build on an holistic understanding of sustainable peace (i.e. one which takes peace, justice, development and institutional reform into account) and thus provide help for coping better and more creatively with potential tensions between peace and justice. The Declaration will be aimed at peace mediators, decision-makers, national Governments and international organizations including, above all, the United Nations and International Criminal Court.

3. Why Nuremberg?

Nuremberg is a city intrinsically linked to the realization that peacebuilding and reconciliation in post-conflict situations would be unthinkable unless accompanied by strenuous efforts to come to terms with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

On 20 November 1945, the trial of 21 former leading figures of the Nazi dictatorship opened in Courtroom 600 of the Nuremberg Palace of Justice. The "Peace and Justice" conference will be officially opened by Federal Foreign Minister Steinmeier and three other speakers at a ceremony in this historic room in what is now the Higher Regional Court building (→ "What will be happening at the conference?", Day 1; → Programme).

The purpose of this historic trial of the major war criminals of World War II before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg was to document as evidence the wrong committed by the main perpetrators and to mete out just punishment to them. For the first time in history, statesmen, as persons, were brought to justice and sentenced for wars of aggression and organized mass annihilation.

The Nuremberg Trial was to have a great influence on international law. Despite criticism of some aspects of the Nuremberg trials, there is no doubt that they started a trend which led to the establishment of two United Nations tribunals (for the former Yugoslavia in 1993 and for Rwanda in 1994), the conclusion of agreements on the establishment of war crimes tribunals between the United Nations and Sierra Leone (2001) and Cambodia (2004), and which eventually culminated in the establishment of the International Criminal Court, the Statute of which entered into force in 2002 and has since been ratified by more than half of all States (104).

4. What will be happening at the conference?

Day 1: In the morning, the "Peace and Justice" conference will be officially opened by Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Jordanian Justice Minister Sharif Al Zubi, Costa Rican human rights expert Sonia Picado (who is the personal representative of the Costa Rican President and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Oscar Arias), and Luis Moreno-Ocampo, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. The opening ceremony will be hosted by the Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office, Günter Gloser in the historic courtroom 600 of the Higher Regional Court.

In the afternoon, there will be panel discussions with high-level international participants who are or have been involved in various ways in conflict resolution and in the reconstruction of regions ravaged by conflict. The organizers have made sure that this panel has representatives from the three main areas of expertise relevant to the conference: justice and human rights, conflict resolution, and development. The panel discussion topics scheduled for the afternoon of Day 1 reflect this: "Negotiating Peace and Conflict Resolution", "Justice and Human Rights", and "Social, Economic and Political Development". A fourth panel (entitled "Sustainable Peace-Building" and facilitated by BBC journalist Lyse Doucet) will have a talk show format and will attempt to give a comprehensive overview.

Speakers include:

- Martti Ahtisaari, the UN Special Envoy for Kosovo;
- Rangin Dadfar Spanta, the Afghan Foreign Minister;
- Frances Johnson-Morris, the Liberian Justice Minister;
- Sadako Ogata, former UNHCR;
- Jan Egeland, the UN Special Adviser on conflict prevention;
- Lakhdar Brahimi, the highly experienced UN conflict manager;
- Elisabeth Rehn, the former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Bosnia and an expert in gender justice issues;
- the (current/former) UN Special Representatives to Palestine (Alvaro de Soto), Georgia (Jean Arnault) and Nepal (Ian Martin);
- Lord Iain Bonomy, judge at the UN Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia;
- Juan Méndez, former UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and President of the International Center for Transitional Justice, a partner organization of the conference;
- Yasmin Sooka, the South African human rights expert.

Day 2: Ten workshops, to be held in parallel (five in the morning, five in the afternoon). This is the day when the 350 participants really get down to work. (For details about individual workshops, go to www.peace-justice-conference.info/workshops.asp and click a workshop title.)

Day 3: The results of the workshops will be presented to the plenary by the Jordanian Ambassador to the USA, Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Husseini. Prince Zeid is an expert in matters relating to transitional justice; from 2002-2005, he was the first president of the Assembly of States Parties, the governing body of the International Criminal Court.

Wrapping up the conference, Erkki Tuomioja – currently a Finnish MP and, until recently, the Finnish Foreign Minister – will give a political summary on behalf of the co-organizers. The closing speech will be held by Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office, Günter Gloser.

5. Who is participating?

In addition to the high-profile international participants who will lead discussions on the first day of the conference (→ "What will be happening at the conference?", Day 1), around 350 participants from all over the world are expected to attend. They represent a broad spectrum of people, geographically and professionally: politicians, scientists, people with hands-on experience and civil society.

- (a) States: all Governments were invited.
- (b) International organizations: these include in particular the UN Secretariat, the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, UNDP, UNHCR, ICC, other international tribunals (Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone), and relevant regional organizations.
- (c) People with hands-on experience: relevant players from (former) conflict zones with practical experience in dealing with a potential conflict of interests between peace and justice
 - UN (or regional) Special Representatives, etc., with relevant experience;
 - Representatives from other international justice institutions;
 - Representatives from truth and reconciliation mechanisms;
 - NGOs with relevant experience;
- (d) The scientific community;
- (e) Civil society: NGOs, churches, media, political foundations, policy-makers/parliament, interested members of the public.

The aim of the conference is to allow as many people as possible from relevant conflict situations to speak so that genuine experiences can be processed. To that end, the conference organizers have borne the travel and accommodation costs for around 50 participants from civil society in developing countries. This represents a significant portion of the overall conference costs.

NGO members from the following countries have been invited:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Peru, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Zambia.

6. Who is supporting the conference?

A major international conference with high-profile participants from all over the world needs to be organized professionally and the individual bodies involved need to be coordinated smoothly. The Agency for market-oriented concepts of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ-AgenZ, Frankfurt) is acting as the secretariat for the conference.

The conference has a total budget of around 800,000 euro. The main expenditures include travel and accommodation costs (of which around 220,000 euro have been allocated for participants from civil society in developing countries, especially in conflict zones) and scientific preparations (around 150,000 euro for drawing up and presenting 21 preparatory studies which are to be collected and published in a single volume after the conference). Costs for conference logistics also have to be taken into account.

More than two-thirds of the conference budget has been made available by two private foundations:

- the Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stuttgart;
- the Dräger Foundation, Lübeck.

The Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) have also made financial contributions.

7. Who are the conference partners?

The conference stems from a joint German, Finnish and Jordanian initiative. These three countries, represented by their respective Foreign Ministries, are co-organizers of the conference along with the NGOs Crisis Management Initiative (CMI, Helsinki; Chairman: Martti Ahtisaari) and International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ, New York; President: Juan Méndez). During the conference's preparatory phase, the partners mentioned above were joined by others.

Cooperation between State and non-State actors was exemplary and will be of great value to the conference, both practically and from the point of view of expertise.

Cooperation between the three partner countries (Germany, Finland and Jordan) was the result of successful collaboration within a UN framework. There, they worked together to develop an initiative to set up a working unit in the UN Secretariat General to coordinate activities promoting justice and the rule of law. This initiative, which other States later joined, was approved at the UN World Summit in September 2005, and implemented at the beginning of 2007 as the "Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group".