

CENTAR ZA NENASILNU AKCIJU  
CENTRE FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION



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# 3-MONTH REPORT

September - November 2001

*Centar za nenasilnu akciju (Centre for Nonviolent Action) is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation whose basic goals are peace building, the development of civil society, cross-border cooperation and promotion of nonviolence.*

*Our main activity is to organise and implement trainings (seminars) in nonviolent conflict transformation and to support groups and individuals who wish to do this kind of work. Through training in nonviolent conflict transformation we are aiming to develop political awareness of the training participants, and to pass on skills in nonviolent dealing with conflict. At our trainings CNA gathers people from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Yugoslavia and Macedonia, hence giving special focus on networking, and communication between people from different areas, whose communication has been interrupted through war and supporting the process of prejudice reduction and trust building.*

*CNA started with its work in 1997 with Sarajevo office. Office in Belgrade started in 2001. CNA is an external branch of KURVE Wustrow.*



**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Dear friends,

We are sending you the 3month report of CNA's Belgrade office. Offices in Belgrade and in Sarajevo will have separate three-month reports in the future, as the coordination and completion of the reports demands a lot of time for communication, which is often lacking. Nevertheless, regular annual reports, which are published each year in September, will be joint reports for both offices.

The Belgrade office has done a great deal of work in the past three months, particularly in view of the fact that it currently has only 3 volunteers. A Basic Training lasting ten days was implemented in Ulcinj, which has empowered us and left us with a feeling of contentment, especially having in mind the great potential that the group of participants in Ulcinj, has. Our training manual was published in Macedonian language and a large part of the research trip in Yugoslavia was completed. Detailed reports about the trip will be available soon at our web page and additionally in the following three-month report. Besides all that, some of us participated in some seminars, gave support to the Sarajevo office during the Training for Trainers programme, dealt with a beaurocratic swamp concerning the registration in Yugoslavia and other issues needed for normal functioning...

Our fears of communication gaps arising between two physically separated offices turned out so far, to be unfounded. We manage to exchange much information, to keep a picture of what is going on in the other office and support each other. The practice of having people from the other office actively included in programmes that one office organises, proves to be an efficient means of keeping the communication flowing and maintaining the feeling of joint effort and mutual support.

Since our last report, 11<sup>th</sup> September happened, terrorist attacks that killed and wounded thousands of people. There can be no justification for such murderous acts, and the violent response that USA government started seems to be no less murderous in its effect. It is clear that violence provokes violence and that the spiral of violence started, including more and more acteurs. Such escalation usually suits terrorists very much, as they use it for justification of their crime. The logic behind the warring parties appears to be the same; no space is left but the one of two sides. As US President Bush said "You are either with us or against us!". We do not support either terrorists or US government in their war. We are against the logic of war and military.

Watching the news one could hear lots of arguments why Afganistan should be bombed, what kind of monsters Talibans are, what kind of military strength US has, etc. The thing we missed in those news where self-critical analyses of reasons WHY terrorists made such a bloodshed. How come that there are people ready to commit such awful acts, to kill thousands of innocent people? Who and why is so desperate? Current situation is presented as very black-and-white. Goddies and baddies. It is a war campaign.

Terrorists do not appear just like that, just because they are born evil. People resort to violence because they feel oppressed and the violence is the only response they see. And they do not know or do not believe in some other way of giving their

message to the world except of violent ways. We fully condemn terrorism, but we also expect people and governments to think about the reasons for terrorism, what is the fertile ground for radicalism. If the chain of terrorist organisation is cut, and main organisers caught, it does not mean that the roots of violent conflict are resolved. We could just ask ourselves when another terrorist group will appear and how many human lives will be endangered.

Bombing Afganistan is not the way to stop terrorism in the world. Afganistan is just one poor country in the world, that has had war for past 20 years. Maybe tomorrow a chain of desperate people ready to kill and be killed, will appear in some other country. Should that country also be bombed?

It is time to try, to learn, to find other ways of dealing with conflicts and violence, the ways that are not violent ways.

We think that there are many other and more succesful ways to deal with terrorism in the world. One of the ways is making efforts to establish communication without tools such as weapons, black mail, or oppression. We expect from all people, but especially from governments of the so called "developed" world to:

- Stop the famine in the world
- Stop exploitation of poor
- Take care about very basic human rights
- Take care about the governments foreign politics not to be oppressive
- Stop using double standards for human rights

We understand that it would be a long process of dealing with issues (starting a war is much easier), and lots of will, patience, courage, and effort would be needed. The responsibility lays with all of us, but it is greater the greater the power is. It is on citizens to influence their governments to stop the military logic, because it is in their and our interest, it is the way to reach the real feeling of safety, be it in USA, Germany, Afghanistan or Yugoslavia. The need for safety is what we all share.

But someone should start that process, as the first step to prevent any other future wars. We do not expect those who are hungry to start this process, but those who enjoy the benefits of being born in the "developed" world.

We deeply sympathise with victims of violence and their closest ones, whoever they may be.

## 2. MAIN ACTIVITIES

### 2.1. Basic Training in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation

*Ulcinj, Montenegro, November 9-19, 2001*

The Basic training in nonviolent conflict transformation was held in Ulcinj, Montenegro from November 9<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 2001. CNA Belgrade organized it.

19 participants attended training from the following countries/regions: Macedonia, Croatia, Yugoslavia (Montenegro, Serbia proper, Vojvodina, Kosovo), Bosnia and Herzegovina (The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic Srpska).

The Participants came from the following organizations:

- Loja, Tetovo, Macedonia
- The First Children's Embassy in the World, Megjasi, Skopje, Macedonia
- Primary school »May 25«, Skopje, Macedonia
- Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation, Skopje, Macedonia
- Media Centre for Crisis Management of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia
- Civic Parliament of Serbia, Čačak, Serbia
- Social Democratic Youth / Social Democratic Union, Serbia
- Timočki klub, Knjaževac, Serbia
- People's Parliament, Leskovac, Serbia
- Peace Movement of Vojvodina - Bečej branch, Serbia
- Volunteer Centre »Susret«, Sombor, Serbia
- Women voters' League from Montenegro, Nikšić
- Medica Mondiale Kosova, Gjakova
- Future Without Fear - Centre for Work With People Endangered with Conflict, Štrpce, Kosovo
- OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Regional Centre Gnjilane
- Multinational Youth Organization »Proni«, Vitez, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Social democratic Party, Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Youth Club »Lipa«, Lipnica, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Women's Club, Pakrac, Croatia

There were 10 female and 9 male participants.

We had received more than 160 applications for this training, so it was difficult to select people for a group of 20. One person canceled on the last day before the departure. That somewhat disturbed the planned balance of participant's age. Participants were aged 23 to 55.

This training was supported financially by Auswaertiges Amt, German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For the first time, the training was held in Ulcinj, Montenegro, which proved to be a good decision: Ulcinj is multicultural town, populated mainly by ethnic Albanians. For some participants it was their first encounter with something different, such as a mosque for example; the place where we stayed and worked, and the old town of Ulcinj added a special touch to the whole atmosphere. There were absolutely no problems in communication with the hotel staff and management, which was a great relief to the CNA team, having in mind previous bad experiences with the

organization of training events. We use this opportunity to thank the staff of the hotel complex «Dvori Balšića» where we stayed, for their kindness and hospitality.

The Training team was made of CNA members (Helena, Ivana, Nedžad and Nenad) who also conducted The Basic Training in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation in Žabljak, Montenegro. Based on the work and the evaluation they had done there, they decided to introduce a new concept of work on this training, which was an experimental novelty. This concept was based on the distinctive flexibility of the programme, with the themes constantly being adjusted to the group. The training team conducted a needs assessment of the participant group, and assessed the work they had done. As a result of the teamwork and creativity of the training team, new exercises were introduced and some exercises specific to CNA training events were not used.

No authenticity was lost this way, but a new quality of work was achieved. This proved that the preparation of the training, the actual work and the evaluation were a continuous process that required re-questioning and looking for new approaches to different issues.

In the beginning, there was a concern that this concept would take much more time for the evening preparation of workshops during the training. However, it turned out that this concern was unfounded. The extenuating circumstance in implementation of this concept was experience the training team had gathered previously while working together. The fact that the members of the training team knew each other and had joint work experience enabled them to spend less time in the evening working on evaluation of the day and preparation of the workshops for the next working day. That means the training team had more «free time» to spend with participants. That contributed to dynamics and trust building within the group, and also between the group and the training team.

The following issues were covered on this training: nonviolent communication, team work/ decision making, perception, understanding of conflicts, violence, differences, identity, national identity, gender role in society, creative transformation of conflicts, power. Within the understanding of conflict we have introduced a new exercise, «the other view», which aims to look at the conflict from the position of the other. The basis of this exercise was the political situation in Macedonia and an ongoing violent conflict in that country. Albanians were speaking from the point of view of Macedonians and vice versa. It was valuable to hear about the differences and important points “one” side saw about the “other”. This exercise gave us the impression there was more willingness to build trust, and to find about “the other one”.

The training team thought that the group was exceptionally motivated: the group worked hard after official working hours, they were interested in working, were ready to confront, to hear “the other” side, and to work on existing conflicts. The group was following the exercises with strong emotions, ever since the first day, re-examination, and discussions, in both official and unofficial time. As proof of that, the CNA team consider many of the participants to be potential participants of the Training for Trainers Programme.

At the end of the training, a verbal and written evaluation was done. Participants’ answers to the question «What is the most important experience you got from this training?» were as follows:

- *Personal liberation - I've said things I had never thought I'd be strong enough to share with other people. My glass shield had protected me from wars in this region. It has finally snapped and I've realised that every human being, is first of all - a human being.*
- *Cognition of myself. I've got to know myself again, because of all the problems, I had forgotten about myself. This is some kind of a turning point in my life. I've met other people. At the beginning I saw them as "the others" - but, finally, I've seen that all of us were the same. So different, so distant, but the same.*
- *Revelation that regardless of differences people can and will cooperate and talk.*
- *Things we miss so much: feelings of caring, universal love, unity and beauty of differences, respect for individuality, possibility for everyone to express their needs openly as a human (and social) being; encouraging feeling that it is possible; that the power of change is in every individual; that together we can do more; that we are not alone; that we are one; that we can understand each other if we really want to; if we're open and honest, and if some people are not like that - the power is in ourselves - it seems to me I've understood you quite well!*
- *First of all spending time together, because this is my first seminar outside of Kosovo.*
- *Exchange of experience with people from different nationalities, religion, culture. Also, it's a great experience to learn to listen and think conflicts can be resolved in many ways. How important it is to express feelings and communicate openly.*
- *I've learned that discussions and agreements are not competitions. One cannot win in a conflict, the only victory is an agreement. In any other way the conflict continues.*
- *The most important experience I've gained from this training is that I've managed to overcome my prejudice about Albanians. My perception of them originated primarily from the community I came from. Although I knew that all people weren't the same, i.e. all the Albanians weren't the same, I had this enormous fear of Albanians, because of everything I've been through for the last 3 years. Now, I know a lot about them, but I've also got to know a lot about myself.*

One question from the evaluation questionnaire was: "What do you think you've learned in these workshops? Which of the things that you have learned, do you think you can apply in your work and life?" These are some of the participants' statements;

- *To listen; to give feedback, without hurting anyone; to exchange.*
- *I've learned to look into myself, without that I can't look (and see) the others.*
- *I've learned: I can be different, to prevent conflicts and resolve them in the most harmless way, in case they occur. I will implement "I-speech" instead of "we". And no more "our Army" in my vocabulary. (I. is going to be surprised).*
- *Many things. The experiences of others helped me to get ideas for new projects. That is of great value for me.*
- *From my family, I carry this: everything I say is either true or false, an answer to the question that was or wasn't asked. I did that to other people too unintentionally, although it bothered me at home. Trainers showed me a way not to judge, in these workshops.*
- *A good principle of teamwork, especially important for the work of an NGO. I've deepened my knowledge of all the issues we had worked on. Some new issues had opened up for me, and I still need to work on them (and learn about them). I think I'll be more careful in communication, using I-speech and "if I understand you well". For a start, I'll organize a few workshops for volunteers in my organisation, together with skilled trainers.*
- *Many things I didn't (know) before. What I've learned I will first apply to myself, and then take it to the organization and propagate it somehow in my life.*
- *I've learned to listen, understand, not to smother my own feelings. Not to run away from conflict and problems, but to resolve them in a constructive way, through discussion. All of the things we've talked about during workshops I can apply in my work and my life. Especially, an open view and a wish for finding the best solution, solution which will be suitable for everyone, in one word: TEAM.*
- *I think I've learned through workshops, that one shouldn't make generalizations but always express their own opinion (I've learned that very well).*
- *I don't want to make a list, because I've learned many things. Perhaps, the most important was to realize how much I did not know in that area. I think that I can (and will)*

*implement everything I've learned in practice, transferring the knowledge I've gained here, not only to the activists of my own organization, but to all the people I know.*

- *I-speech. I get the difference and the importance of "I-speech" and I will implement it and impose it in my work and my life. Showing feelings and emotions.*
- *Plenty of interesting things ... Setting up workshop in this way, on the theme of media.*
- *I can implement everything. And I've learned there's a light at the end of the tunnel.*

Evaluation of the training team referred, primarily, to the concept of the training, but also to the group, work within the training team, difficulties, learning points, and organisation. Satisfaction was expressed with the work method, the work within the training team, and the training in general. Some team members say that it was the first time they not tired after the very intense ten-day training (12-14 working hours) but were full of energy and motivation to continue what they were doing.

The possibility of implementing this work method and a more flexible concept to some future basic training events was discussed. Possible difficulties as a result of the training team who's working together for the first time were also taken into consideration.

We are still working on the documentation from will also be available on CNA web site [www.nenasilje.org](http://www.nenasilje.org).

## **2.2. Translation of The Training Manual "NONVIOLENCE?" into Macedonian**

*»NONVIOLENCE? The Manual for Trainings in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation for Work with Adults «*, which was published about a year ago, was translated into Macedonian language. Our friend and colleague, Jasmina Todorovska, participant of last year's Training for Trainers Programme, did it.

The Manual is basically for people who conduct workshops and training events in nonviolence and conflicts, but also to others interested in the subject. Five hundred copies were printed. We have already started to distribute, mostly through our friends from Macedonia and participants of our programmes. If you are interested in receiving a copy of The Manual in Macedonian, please contact either the Belgrade or Sarajevo CNA' office. A Macedonian version will soon be available on our web page [www.nenasilje.org](http://www.nenasilje.org).

We use this opportunity to thank, once again to all those people who supported our work on this Manual and its translation. Special thanks go to the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Auswärtiges Amt), for financial support; to the Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Dealing with Conflicts (Berghof Forschungszentrum für konstruktive Konfliktbearbeitung) for their advice and support; to Miloš Marković for his great and dedicated work on the visual aspect of the Manual, and to Jasmina Todorovska and Nikola Čolakovski.

## **2.3. Exploratory trip in Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)**

In October we started our exploratory trip to Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), as had already been announced. The goal of this research was to establish more



contacts, and to develop a clearer picture of local circumstances and the needs of groups that are active in Yugoslavia. Additionally, we expect to get a better picture of the organizations and individuals who need our training the most, and where motivation for participation is strongest. This will enable better selection of participants.

As stated in section 2.1. - 'Basic Training in Nonviolent Conflict Transformation', we received 160 applications for that training, and 90-100 of them were from Serbia. We believe that the research in Yugoslavia, and contacts we have established there, contributed to such a high response from people interested in training events, which ultimately provided a selection of highly motivated and high quality participants.

Due to unexpected difficulties with the 'Nonviolence' manual, research work that was not completed in October was postponed until December.

Ivana Franović and Milan Colić did the first part of the research from CNA's Belgrade office, who have visited organizations from the following towns:

in Serbia proper: Belgrade, Niš, Medveđa, Leskovac, Vlasotince, Vranje, Bujanovac, Preševo, Čačak, Užice, Novi Pazar, Kraljevo, Kragujevac, Dimitrovgrad, Pirot, Knjaževac, Zaječar, Negotin, Bor;

in Montenegro: Kolašin, Podgorica, Nikšić, Cetinje, Kotor, Herceg Novi, Tivat, Ulcinj, Bijelo Polje.

Nedžad Horozović from the Sarajevo office and Ivana Franović from the Belgrade office, who will visit organizations in Vojvodina and Belgrade, will implement the second section of research in December.

A detailed report is expected in the middle of January. It will be available on our web page, and also included in our next three-month report.

### 3. OTHER ACTIVITIES

#### 3.1. Seminar »The Status and the Prospects of Acknowledgement of the Right to Conscientious Objection in Yugoslav law«

*Belgrade, September 14-15, 2001.*

The seminar on 'The Status and the Prospects of Acknowledgement of the Right to Conscientious Objection in Yugoslav Law' was organized in Belgrade, on 14<sup>th</sup>. and 15<sup>th</sup> of September 2001 by YUCOM-a (Yugoslav Committee of Lawyers) and »Women in Black«. CNA team member, Milan Colić, was invited by the organizers to attend the seminar.

NGOs and individuals who deal with the issue of conscientious objection from the countries of ex-Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, FRY) and representatives of EBCO (the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection) took part at the seminar.

In the first part of the meeting a round table discussion took place on 'Non-government organizations and conscientious objection'. This included a presentation on the programme and goals of EBCO and the current status of conscientious objection in FRY, in respect to the new Bill on the Yugoslav Army. Campaigns, and

the current status of contentious objection in former Yugoslav countries were also presented.

The second day was planned for a meeting with MPs and parliamentary party representatives. However, as no political party members actually showed up, the real purpose for the meeting on the second day was not reached. The meeting ended after a short discussion, when representatives of EBCO offered some practical advice.

### **3.2. Seminar "Culture, religion and conflict"**

*Novi Sad, October 11-12, 2001.*

Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization from Novi Sad, organized a 2-day seminar/workshop on October 11-12, 2001 with the title »Culture, religion and conflict«; in which CNA team member Helena Rill took part. The facilitator and author of the seminar was Tamara Mihalić from Ecumenical Peace Initiative from Zagreb, who was a participant of last year's Training for Trainers by CNA.

The following themes were covered: reflection on culture and religion, their interaction (not from the theoretical point of view, but from an individual's point of view, and individual's position and their value system); introduction of communication models, discussion about them; reflection on perception; observation of value systems (what creates our value systems, confronting these differences and how to treat them); revolving about one's own attitudes attained as a part of a certain culture (value systems of participants as individuals, but also as a part of the environment they live in)...

The group of people who attended the seminar was very specific as most of the individuals belonged to a certain religious community.

The first part of the seminar was related to trust building within the group, involving awakening and an exchange of one's own attitudes on the themes of the seminar. The initial process was happened mostly within small groups. Later, a need for plenary-work was expressed, in which a lot of different opinions came out, although the group often stuck to the attitude »we are the same«.

Regarding the fact that the facilitator of the seminar implemented and introduced some new communication models and some new insights and approaches to the theme "communication", the CNA team member was asked to give her feedback on the 2-day seminar, which she did. The seminar was very beneficial to her on both a personal level (attitude towards prejudice, religion, etc) and a professional level (different approach to workshops, new theoretical knowledge, the exchange of views on given subjects, etc).

### **3.3. Training for Trainers**

CNA team member, Ivana Franović, has joined the training team for *Training for trainers Programme* organized by our Sarajevo office, as a guest trainer and support during advisory follow-up meetings. More information about the *Training for Trainers*

*Programme* is available in our three-month report written by CNA office from Sarajevo.

## 4. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

### December 2001

During the first 10 days of December, we will continue our research in Yugoslavia. A Detailed report about our impressions will be finished by mid-January 2002.

From 7<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> December, CNA Sarajevo organised The Basic Training in nonviolent conflict transformation, in cooperation with GTZ (German Advisory Office). Two of CNA's Belgrade team members joined the training team for this training.

From December 13-15, we will do a short training on the following theme: »An Introduction to Nonviolent Conflict Transformation«, in Štrpce, Kosovo, for those people who are active in recently founded non-government organizations, mostly from Štrpce. This is in response to an invitation from OSCE office from Štrpce.

More information on our long-term strategy and future activities, is available in our previous annual report.

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CNA will very much welcome feedback, suggestions, questions and  
criticism concerning this report and our general work.  
Your thinking along helps us!  
Thank you.

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For Centre for Nonviolent Action

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