

Becoming a Peacemaker

By Christopher W. Moore



At the age of 3, when I first met my new neighbor of the same age, I socked him in the jaw. This behavior, however, was not my norm. Whether because of my size (3½ pounds at birth and small for my age as I got older), athletic prowess and ability to fight physically (low to nonexistent), aversion to harming anything (insects, lizards, mice, dogs, people ... even inanimate objects), or superior communication skills (listening, engaging in conversation, and solving

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problems), I seemed almost destined to become a peacemaker.

Family Roots and Early Years

My story begins with my grandparents and parents. My father's father, at different times during his life, served as a Presbyterian minister and ran a chicken farm. Grandmother raised three children. Both, for a time, were White faculty members at a historically Black college. Their values regarding racial equality strongly influenced my father and ultimately me—and my future activities advocating for civil rights.

My mother's parents lived in Pennsylvania, where my grandfather and his three brothers owned the largest Ford dealership in the area. My maternal grandparents were adventurers, taking trips to Nova Scotia in a Model T and owning a biplane piloted by a barnstormer. I learned from them the value of an effective business partnership, entrepreneurship, and love of travel, which would help me build effective work teams, encourage me to learn how to sell my skills, and take me to many faraway places.

I owe much to my parents as well. My mother was a loving and gifted elementary schoolteacher who gave me an appreciation for art, song, and drama—and taught me, a child with dyslexia, to read. I'm forever indebted to her for how she changed my life.

My father was a big brain. He went to high school at 15, graduated at 17, and earned a PhD in nuclear physics at 23. During World War II, he worked on the Manhattan Project to develop the atom bomb and afterward as associate director of the Nuclear Weapons Division of Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in New Mexico. We strongly loved and respected each other's shared values concerning the importance of peace, but our approaches to achieve it were dramatically different. His was nuclear deterrence; mine

would be nonviolent action and negotiated dispute resolution.

My parents were sticklers for equal treatment, whether in their own relationship, with my sister and me, or others from different backgrounds. They also made sure my sister and I knew something about the world, organizing family trips to Europe and most states in the United States.

In high school, I fell in love with the social sciences, especially political science and sociology. I also joined the debate team and learned how to analyze issues, speak in a clear and organized manner, and effectively advocate points of view on diverse topics of the day.

College Years

The 1960s changed us as a country and changed me personally. Leaving the closed world of Los Alamos, a company town that was a cross between a high-powered university and a military base, and going “East” to Juniata College in rural Pennsylvania, where my mother had been a student, was a shock. Freshman year was difficult. I was a Westerner, occasionally wearing cowboy boots, and very liberal in comparison to most of my fellow students. I was a misfit.

With a small group of classmates, I became involved in the civil rights movement at its zenith, advocating for the recruitment of more Black faculty and students of color, tutoring African American children in a nearby conservative Appalachian community that had been a Klan capital in the 1920s, and sharpening my consciousness about attitudinal, behavioral, and structural racism.

At the same time, the Vietnam War was escalating. Many of my friends began shifting their focus from civil rights to opposing the war. After seeing the horrors of the conflict on the nightly news, reading Gandhi and King, and engaging in many long nights of heated discussions, in my

senior year I decided I was opposed to the war and applied for conscientious objector (CO) status.

During the mid-'60s, being opposed to the war at my college was not a popular position. I had many arguments with fellow students. Classmates spat on me, threatened to beat me up, burned antiwar posters I'd placed around campus, and deposited the ashes on my desk. But I stood my ground. Ironically, some of these same students came to me for draft counseling when they became seniors and eligible for the draft.

In 1968, I became actively involved in politics. I campaigned for Eugene McCarthy, an antiwar candidate running against President Lyndon Johnson, and later Hubert Humphrey. My friends and I cut our long hair, got "Clean for Gene," and canvassed door-to-door in communities hostile to our antiwar views.

That summer, several of us bought a Volkswagen bus—which we named Rocinante, after Don Quixote's horse—and drove to Chicago, the site of the Democratic Convention and massive antiwar demonstrations. By this time, I had decided that simply writing letters and campaigning for a presidential candidate were not going to stop the war. I needed to engage in nonviolent protest and join the demonstrations. They seemed necessary and, in my mind, the only way to bring about peace.

Chicago and the demonstrations there were eye-openers for me, not only because of the number of people advocating for peace but because of the level of violence perpetrated by the police. After days of participating in peaceful demonstrations, being teargassed, and witnessing beatings of protestors by the police, I realized how hard changing public policy about the war was going to be. My faith in the existing political process was seriously shaken. I was ready to become a full-time activist and work for change.

Becoming an Activist

Upon my graduation from college in 1969, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) hired me to be a counselor for a work camp whose participants were studying institutional racism in the ghetto of Wilmington, Delaware.¹ During this period I became a member of the Religious Society of Friends, known as Quakers, and, after multiple appeals and the involvement of my junior high school math teacher, a German immigrant who came to the United States in the 1930s and fought for this country during World War II, the draft board granted my request to be a CO.

Ironically, my lottery number for the draft was high, and I was never drafted. Nevertheless, I performed two years of equivalent voluntary service at a government approved agency, the Friends Peace Committee (FPC) in Philadelphia, where I worked on ending the Vietnam War. I helped organize large peace demonstrations in Washington, trained others to be nonviolent peacekeepers, served as one myself, provided draft counseling, and conducted workshops in high schools and universities on nonviolent social change.

Paradoxically, it was as an activist that I landed in the “middle” of multiple significant conflicts. I monitored nonviolent peacekeepers during demonstrations in New Haven protesting the murder trial of Bobby Seale, who was a leader of the Black Panthers, a radical African American political group. I was also a member of a Quaker crisis intervention team that worked among the city of Philadelphia, its police department, and the Black Panthers prior to the latter’s Revolutionary People’s Constitutional Convention (RPCC) to reach agreements for how peace could be maintained in the city. The team provided a cadre of more than 200 nonviolent peacekeepers that enabled thousands of convention participants and members of the Black com-

munity to exercise their constitutional rights of free speech and assembly and helped prevent outbreaks of violence between demonstrators and police.

During my last year at FPC, I met Norm Wilson, the director of the Antioch-Putney Graduate School of Education and a fellow Quaker. Norm, who had served in the US Army of occupation of Japan and as a former representative in the country for the AFSC, urged me to pursue a master's degree in teaching social change, as he believed that an advanced degree would increase my credibility as an advocate. Norm became an important mentor and role model for how to live one's life guided by strong values and working for peace.

After graduate school, I joined some friends who were building a new nonviolent social change movement: the Movement for a New Society (MNS), a graduate school for organizers, and an intentional living community, the Philadelphia Life Center. Several friends (Susanne Terry, Steve Parker, Berit Lakey, Peter Woodrow, Chuck Esser, and Stephanie Judson) and I formed the Training Action Affinity Group (TAAG), a work group that provided training in nonviolent social change. My experiences with TAAG deepened my thinking about how to create effective horizontal organizations and strategies for making nonviolent change and shaped my contribution to *The Resource Manual for a Living Revolution* (Coover, Deacon, Esser, and Moore, 1977), a guide for community organizers. During this time, I enrolled in a PhD program at Rutgers University in political sociology and development because I wanted to learn more about social change theory.

It was at the Life Center that I first learned about formal mediation. The TAAG brought Bill Lincoln and Josh Stulberg from the American Arbitration Association to teach us new methods to resolve community disputes. I later applied these approaches when intervening to help

address a violent conflict between Black and White youth at a high school in New Jersey. The training was a critical incident that would launch me in a new life direction as a mediator. But not just yet.

Joining the Mediation Movement and Growing Up to Be a Mediator

In the late 1970s, I left the Life Center for several consultancies in Colorado with the AFSC. This time, my work was coordinating direct action and nonviolent peacekeepers for a nuclear disarmament campaign to close the Rocky Flats Plant, a facility that manufactured triggers for nuclear weapons. (Several years later, in part due to our local and national protest efforts, nuclear accords were reached between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the plant was decommissioned.)

After my last consultancy with AFSC, I was ready for a change.

I decided to stay in Colorado and try my hand at becoming a mediator, full time, to make the world a better place. Idealistic? Yes ... so what! But I had doubts. Would I be able to step back from being an activist on issues I deeply cared about? Would I be able to recognize that diverse parties had legitimate interests they were striving to achieve and avoid passing judgment? Could I trust the parties to be their own advocates rather than taking on that role myself? Would I be mindful enough to say “no” to cases that were too close to my heart for me to serve as an effective, impartial intermediary—or would my hubris get in the way? Above all, I feared that I would miss living in the mainstream of history, engaged in addressing the big issues of the day—civil rights, the draft, ending the Vietnam War, closing Rocky Flats.

Two lucky breaks propelled me toward my goal: meeting Susan Carpenter and John Kennedy, the principals

of Accord, one of the first environmental conflict management firms in the United States, and meeting Mary Margaret Golten, the assistant director of the Denver Conciliation Service (DCS), a neighborhood justice center. Because of my experience working to address highly controversial conflicts, Susan and John invited me to consult with them on a book they were writing on environmental and public dispute resolution (Carpenter and Kennedy, 2001). They later asked me to become Accord's director of training, a job in which I designed and presented seminars across the country on natural resource conflict management. After working for Accord for several years, I moved to DCS because it handled more diverse cases. I became its director of training and helped establish and build the capacities of a number of community mediation centers in Colorado and several other states. I also began to mediate community disputes.

Internally, I played a key role in reshaping DCS's management structure from a hierarchical organization to an association of equal partners—Mary Margaret Golten, Susan Wildau, Bernie Mayer, and me. We rotated the managing partner function and made decisions by consensus. These friends would be my business partners for more than 40 years. Susan and I also became life partners, enjoying a relationship that has been wonderful and tremendously enriching for both of us.

While at DCS I completed my PhD with a dissertation that became the basis for my book *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict* (Moore, 2003), which has now been translated into multiple languages. One of my major contributions to the field, it lines up well with my core belief that being a mediator and acquiring these skills shoulders us with a higher responsibility to share what we know to improve society.

From Barking Dogs and Divorces to Regulatory Negotiations, Policy Dialogues, and Interstate Disputes

Initially, most of my cases at DCS focused on community or “barking dog” disputes. But community disputes alone could not financially support DCS. Our organization, like other community dispute resolution centers across the country, struggled to find enough clients who could afford to pay adequate fees for services and attract the kinds of disputes that could generate significant income. Serendipity struck when the organization applied for and received a grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to conduct an experiment to see whether, with the foundation’s financial help, DCS could become a fully fee-for-service nonprofit. (At this time, most dispute resolution organizations relied exclusively on grants or funding from governments to support their operations.) We were fortunate to have Bob Barrett as our grant officer. He was passionate about dispute resolution and instrumental in building the field through support for theory centers and sustainable practitioner organizations. And he believed in us.

With Hewlett’s funding, we were able to make the transition to a predominantly fee-for-service nonprofit and establish a national practice. We changed our name to the Center for Dispute Resolution (CDR) to reflect our provision of services beyond the Denver area. Several years later, we changed it again to CDR Associates (which stood for Collaborative Decision Resources), highlighting the broader range of problem-solving services we provided beyond mediation.

To become financially sustainable, we needed to find and serve fee-paying markets. One was the provision of conflict management training. We developed a wide range of public training programs, including meeting facilitation,

negotiation, general mediation, and specialized applications of mediation. Our programs became nationally and internationally known and drew participants from around the world. They helped build our reputation and enhanced our becoming reflective practitioners who could integrate theory and practice and make tangible for others the concepts, skills, and theories we applied in our own dispute resolution practice.

Our public programs also served as the foundation and launching pad for customized conflict management seminars provided to all levels of government and the private sector. Concurrently, we expanded our mediation practice, focusing on the resolution of family disputes, multiparty conflicts in organizations, and public controversies. We selected the latter two foci because of their potential to help larger numbers of people.

One of my early multiparty cases was the Wolf Summit, a meeting convened by the governor of Alaska to develop a new policy to control wolves by culling them as a method to prevent the decline of caribou and moose (“ungulate”) herds due to predation. The issue was highly controversial: state officials and diverse hunters supported culling, and most environmentalists and animal rights activists opposed the idea. The proposed policy led to a boycott of the state, which hurt Alaska’s tourist industry.

The governor brought 120 stakeholders together in the Fairbanks ice arena to develop proposals for the new policy. Bernie and I were hired to design and facilitate the multi-day policy dialogue. Close to 1,400 people took part in the negotiations as formal parties, by providing research results or testimony or attending as observers. Many proponents of wolf control dressed in hunting outfits or wolf furs, both inside the arena and outside, where they demonstrated and displayed carcasses of wolves and partly eaten prey.

We reframed the issue beyond control of wolves to include “other predators,” principally recreational and trophy hunters. The reframed goal for the summit read, “How can the population of ungulates be protected from decline due to wolves *and* other predators?” Those three additional words made the difference between a deadlock over killing wolves and the development by summit participants of a number of broadly supported recommendations to the governor for diverse ways to safeguard ungulate herds from predation.

Cases such as the Wolf Summit gradually helped build my reputation as a facilitator and mediator of highly complex public disputes. I began to provide intermediary assistance in a number of local, state, regional, and national disputes related to environmental issues, growth management planning, government regulations, and water. These included both policy dialogues and regulatory negotiations. I was thrilled that I could now be involved in helping address important public issues.

Living in the western United States, where the scarcity of water creates many conflicts over its use, I began to focus on resolving water and (often-related) natural resource issues. A particularly interesting case involved the states of Colorado, Nebraska, and Kansas over allocation of the water of the Republican River. Although the states had an interstate compact, Kansas authorities felt continuously shorted by those in upstream states, and they took a lawsuit to the US Supreme Court. Under the supervision of the court, CDR staff member Mike Hardy and I mediated a settlement of the highly contested trans-boundary water issues that the court approved.

Since the Republican River case, I’ve had the opportunity to mediate many other water issues, such as flows for the Platte River Cooperative Agreement among the states of Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska to protect

endangered species and provide water for agricultural and power needs; flows on Colorado's Gunnison River to meet the interests of power generators, natural resource management agencies, and agriculturalists; and the operation of the Truman Dam in Missouri and the Green Mountain Dam in Colorado.

Although parties reached agreements in these cases, a small number of my interventions do not settle. When this happens, I often come down with a strong case of "mediator doubt." Like many of my colleagues, I wonder, "If I had just been a more skilled mediator, could an agreement have been achieved?"

One such case was the Missouri River spring rise negotiations to protect an endangered species, the pallid sturgeon. By replicating historic flows, the plan was to create new habitat for the fish and potentially encourage spawning. More than 50 parties participated in the talks: multiple federal agencies (including the Army Corps of Engineers), 27 Indian tribes, eight states, and representatives of agricultural, municipal, and conservation interests. I was the lead mediator and worked with a team of three colleagues. After six months of talks, negotiations broke down. Several factors contributed to this outcome. The first was structural: the negotiations involved a large number of parties with very diverse and competing interests. Second were conflicting values among the parties about the Endangered Species Act, which some strongly supported and others opposed. Value differences made it difficult to find compromises. A third factor was the parties' differing goals for the negotiation, which I refer to as the "whether versus how" question. Representatives of federal agencies, conservation groups, and upstream states believed the result should address "how" to conduct a rise. Other parties, primarily those representing agriculture, navigation, downstream states, and some tribes, believed the outcome

should determine “whether” a rise should be conducted at all. Finally, the operating protocol developed by the parties included a *proviso* that no agreements would be considered final until there was a consensus on all issues. Consequently, any party could object to a component of an agreement and block approval of a total package. A small number of parties could not agree on elements to be included in the total package. Negotiations stopped without a consensus on recommendations to the involved federal agencies.

The case demonstrates, however, that achieving settlement is not the only indicator of success or the mediators’ skill. At the conclusion of the negotiations, a lead negotiator for the Corps remarked that the agency had obtained 95 percent of what it needed from the talks. Extensive sharing of information, exploration of parties’ interests, and generation of potential options to satisfy them enabled the agency to craft a plan to conduct spring rises that was satisfactory for most of the parties. For this controversial public issue, mediation served an important purpose.

Going International

By the late 1980s, I decided to expand my practice to include international work. To do so, however, I needed to answer several questions: What arenas did I want to work in? What assistance would be useful to international parties? Would collaborative decision-making and dispute resolution approaches developed in the United States work in different cultures?

The first question was easy. I wanted to work in the areas of social justice, development, the environment, and peace within and between countries, and I wanted to help introduce and build sustainable institutions and procedures to achieve them. On the question of what help would be useful, my US experience indicated that training would be the most marketable service. Direct mediation assis-

tance would take more time to develop. Whether dispute resolution approaches developed in North America were applicable in other cultures was the most complex question. At the time, few publications offered detailed information on intercultural dispute resolution and mediation procedures, so my partners and I had to learn through experience, research, and experimentation. We had to learn how people from different cultures viewed and engaged in conflict and its resolution and how their knowledge, “knowledge from here,” would relate to our “knowledge from away” (Adler and Burkhoff, 2002). To accomplish this, we developed methods of our own and built on those of a relatively small group of other practitioners to figure out how to share information so that the knowledge and skills of the people we worked with and our own could be coordinated, integrated, and mutually enhanced (Moore and Woodrow, 2010).

Two projects illustrate some of my learning in the international area. In the late 1980s, I was asked by the Asia Foundation (TAF) and the Sri Lankan Ministry of Justice to help implement a new dispute resolution system for community disputes. The project involved designing and implementing Mediation Boards with multiple panels of local people from across the country. While legislation had created the boards, their actual structure, functioning, and resolution procedures had not been not firmly established.

With no opportunity to conduct a situation assessment prior to our consultancy, Susan and I undertook extensive research, corresponding with our TAF and ministry partners and interviewing Sri Lankans living in the United States about cultural norms and dispute resolution practices. Upon our arrival in Sri Lanka, we met with P.B. Herat, the secretary of the ministry, a visionary, and a major champion of the project. (Having a strong champion is one of the most important factors for the success of any dis-

pute system design initiative.) We worked with P.B. and his colleagues to design the new system. We then conducted a prototype 40-hour training program for a group of experienced family court counselors who had been tapped to serve as trainers for the system.

One dilemma of working interculturally is whether to be prescriptive, providing information and advice on mediation exclusively from the trainers' culture, or to elicit information from participants about their cultural values, norms and procedures (Lederach, 1996). Because we strongly believe that dispute resolution mechanisms and procedures cannot be effectively designed and implemented without considering the local cultural context in which they will be operating, we decided to explore ways that participants' "knowledge from here" and our "knowledge from away" could be integrated into the redesign of the training program.

Following the workshop, we asked participants to help us redesign the training program for new board mediators so that it would be more culturally appropriate and acceptable. Using small groups because cultural norms in Sri Lanka made it difficult for individuals to give direct feedback publicly to people in authority—in this case, the "foreign trainers"—we asked trainees to critically examine the content, procedures, simulations, and teaching methods in the introductory program. We posed four questions: 1) what was culturally acceptable that they could *adopt* "as is" as part of their dispute resolution process; 2) where would it be important to *adhere* to their current cultural practices; 3) what could be *adapted* to make the program more culturally congruent, acceptable and effective; and 4) what was totally new that could be *advanced* and incorporated into their process (Moore and Woodrow, 2010). We believed that the approaches integrated into the boards' process—the use of mediation panels as opposed to indi-

vidual intermediaries, the division of labor among panel members, opportunities for parties to choose their intermediaries, implementation of interest-based negotiation (IBN), increased emphasis on restoration of disputants' relationships, application of human rights standards, use of witnesses, et cetera—would be very effective and culturally appropriate for the Sri Lankan context.

Our work with the Mediation Boards, which has continued for the past 20 years, has been one of our most fruitful initiatives. We helped co-design and build capacity for one of the most successful mediation programs in Asia, and as of 2016, the ministry and its trainers have established more than 300 Mediation Boards, trained thousands of mediators, and settled more than 100,000 disputes (Gunawardana, 2011).

Working with the People's Mediation Committees in the People's Republic of China's Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region proved to be another fascinating experience full of lessons and insights. Unlike Sri Lanka, China had a well-established mediation system with standardized procedures and more than 100,000 locally elected volunteer mediators in the region who provide dispute resolution services for diverse ethnic communities. CDR was asked by TAF and the Regional People's Mediation Committees to present a training program on best mediation practices from other countries that could potentially be incorporated into the Chinese system.

As a first step, I assembled a male-female team of mediators from Sri Lanka and the Philippines to conduct an on-site situation assessment. Our interviews with members of multiple Mediation Committees revealed that:

- When committee mediators hear about a dispute, they initiate contact with the disputants.

- Committee mediators investigate, visiting the site of the dispute, questioning all parties and neighbors, and gathering evidence.
- Committee mediators give little attention to opening statements or building rapport.
- Committee mediators utilize and facilitate positional negotiation, commonly starting sessions by asking disputants, “What are your requirements?” (e.g., positions), not by exploring parties’ interests.
- Committee mediators give advice and offer settlement recommendations or nonbinding decisions.

Based on information from the assessment, we prepared a training program that demonstrated respect for the committees’ current approaches while introducing procedures and methods from other places that might be incorporated into their current practices. We utilized a culture-contrast approach. First, we talked generally about the mediation process and common tasks to be accomplished at each stage regardless of the culture in which they were practiced. We then asked an experienced Chinese mediator to conduct a mediation demonstration using a real case to show “common” committee practice. We followed this demonstration with one of our own, together with a presentation on how different cultures handled the stages of mediation and associated tasks.

We then asked participants to identify similarities and differences in cultural approaches and consider what might be adopted, adapted, or advanced in their procedures. This approach emphasized that there was no one right way to resolve disputes as long as parties accepted that the process and outcomes were reasonable and fair, that both complied with relevant and just laws, and that no party’s human rights were ignored or violated. Ultimately, participants identified and adopted a number of new approaches for committee mediators.

Direct Involvement in Resolving International Conflicts

Working on international disputes has required me to operate in an environment of significant complexity and uncertainty and rely on my wits and instincts as well as mediation theory, extensive research, and practical experience. My involvement has been in three areas: conducting “training-as-an-intervention” to prepare disputing parties (either separately or together) to effectively engage in negotiations; training parties in conflict resolution procedures followed by my facilitation or mediation; or serving directly as an intermediary.

A training-as-intervention for only one party began with a phone call at the time the Oslo Peace Accords were secretly being negotiated. The caller, from the United Nation’s Development Programme (UNDP), wanted negotiation training for participants in its Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People. Upon further exploration, I learned that the training would be at an undisclosed location for some members of the Palestinian Liberation Organization to prepare them to engage in water negotiations with the Israeli Government.²

Officials from the UNDP requested a customized training program with one caveat—the focus could not be on actual Palestinian-Israeli water issues. They were concerned that if trainees focused on real issues, they would become so engaged in discussing substance they would never learn effective negotiation procedures. To address this constraint, Susan and I developed a simulation that incorporated many of the issues Palestinians might encounter in their negotiations over water, but we located the conflict in two fictional Latin American countries with all place names in Spanish.

The simulation worked well. Participants learned effective negotiation procedures and reached agreements. One

of the most interesting comments during the debriefing of the exercise came from the leader of the Palestinian team. He said, "Isn't it remarkable that the people (the parties in the simulation) have issues that are so similar to ours, and they are able to reach agreements? What is blocking us (the Palestinians and Israelis) from doing the same?" During the follow-up discussion, they concluded that history, absence of trust, and lack of effective procedures to develop integrative agreements were the major barriers for their real negotiations to be successful.

Another "training as intervention" occurred in 1989 when several South African organizations invited CDR and partners to present a series of seminars on negotiation and mediation to prepare diverse parties to negotiate various issues to end apartheid. Among other things, we presented a month-long series of seminars for representatives from governmental and opposition political groups that were not banned and leaders of major Black trade unions and employers' councils.

The second kind of intervention, which includes both training and intermediary assistance, is illustrated by my work with the Okavango River Basin Commission (OKA-COM), an international body of senior government officials from Angola, Botswana, and Namibia, to help them better manage transboundary river disputes. The beginning of the intervention was a situation assessment conducted by Mary Margaret and me in each country. We used the information collected to co-design a series of workshops with the commissioners that they could attend with representatives from the private and non-governmental sectors. Topics covered included procedures for effective communications, conflict analysis, interest-based negotiation, and facilitation. During the workshops, participants had an opportunity to get to know each other as individuals, work together, build more effective working relationships, and

learn practical problem-solving skills. After the training programs, we facilitated talks between representatives of the three countries to design issue and dispute resolution procedures and a mechanism to resolve transboundary river concerns. These are now in place and being used to address a range of issues concerning conservation, tourism, and water use.

An example of direct intervention as an intermediary in an international negotiation that did not include training was my facilitation/mediation for the Middle East Desalination Research Center (MEDRC), an entity established in 1996 as part of the Middle East peace process. MEDRC provides a forum for principal parties in the Middle East conflict and others in the region to discuss issues where there is a potential for cooperation. My work involved designing and facilitating a series of meetings of MEDRC's Executive Board and several working committees composed of high level representatives of the governments of Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, and international donors to develop a strategic plan for cooperation, information exchange and development of projects for desalination of water—a project whose effects could be far-reaching, because increasing the supply of fresh water is expected to lower conflict in this water-scarce area. Since the consultancy, MEDRC, among other initiatives, has conducted numerous workshops and dialogues on climate change, water diplomacy, and public administration and provided training programs and consultations on desalination and water reuse.

Retirement?

Over the last eight years, much of my international practice has focused on internally displaced persons and refugees from wars and the global crisis related to their returns or resettlement.³ To address problems of displacement, I've

developed a significant practice in dispute systems design and capacity building for the resolution of housing, land, and property disputes for the Norwegian Refugee Council, UN Habitat, UNDP, and various ministries of justice. This work has taken me to Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Jordan, Lebanon (for work in Syria), Liberia, Myanmar, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste. Collaborative dispute resolution systems implemented in these countries have been found to be highly effective in facilitating many refugee returns or resettlement in other communities when returns are not possible. This focus has been especially satisfying for me because it merges two of my greatest passions—peace and social justice—and has enabled me to live out and practice some of my deepest values.

Retirement? Well, as my grandson used to say when he was quite young and not ready to change what he was doing, “No, not yet.” I’ve now reached my 73rd year and am still going strong. I believe I have a number of good years left to help people build peace, achieve social justice, and make the world a better place.

Notes

¹ At that time, after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and subsequent riots, Wilmington was under military marshal law.

² We later learned that the vagueness about the participants and the location of the seminar came from the fact that some prospective participants might not have Israeli government approval to travel and attend a program in Jerusalem and that phone lines to discuss this matter were not secure. (We also learned that the Israelis had engaged in similar negotiation programs as the one proposed for Palestinians.)

³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Worldwide Displacement Hits All-Time High as War and Persecution Increase,” June 18, 2015, <https://www.unhcr.org/558193896.html>.

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