

Internet Resources on Conflict Management, Prevention and Resolution

*Prepared by Anne O' Toole Salinas
Africa Bureau Information Center
September 1998*

*Research and Reference Services Project
1331 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 1425
Washington, DC 20004
Phone (202) 661-5825
Fax (202) 661-5890*

Summary

A review of Internet resources currently available in the areas of conflict prevention, resolution, and management reveals a range of resources serving a number of purposes.

Organization Web Sites: Perhaps the most common use of the Internet by organizations working in the field of conflict resolution is to publicize their work. Almost all of these organizations based in Western countries have web sites, and many of the organizations in developing countries also have some web presence. In addition to providing contact information, organization background, and activity descriptions, many organizations also announce events and disseminate their newsletters and other publications through their web sites.

News on Conflicts: Another use of the Internet in the conflict resolution field is in the dissemination of reliable and timely updates and news on ongoing conflicts. There are various places to go on the Internet for this information, but ConflictNet and ReliefWeb appear to be the most popular sources at this time. News on conflicts is also disseminated by e-mail distribution lists (or listservs). One popular example of this type of service is the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA). IRIN's Central and Eastern Africa Updates compile information from various sources in daily updates on political events in the region,

Collaboration and Information Exchange: The use of the Internet to foster the exchange of information and collaboration among practitioners appears to be the least developed, and perhaps the most needed, role of the Internet in the field of conflict resolution. While a number of listservs exist and could potentially become forums for a lively exchange among practitioners, most of them are fairly inactive. While a number of the experts I spoke to expressed an interest in fostering collaboration and information exchange in the field, I heard of no concrete plans to do this via the Internet. The one listserv that I was frequently referred to was the ICAR discussion list managed by the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. This list does not actively foster collaboration or information sharing, but instead helps practitioners to keep informed of job opportunities, conferences, and allows them to submit queries to the larger group.

Mediation: In my research, I came across two organizations that have used e-mail as a mediation tool. The Institute of World Affairs (IWA) has set up proprietary e-mail links to their server in Washington, DC in both Angola and Cyprus. These e-mail accounts are used by parties to conflicts in these countries to communicate with each other in a private and convenient forum. Seeds for Peace, a project of the USIP that brings together Arab and Israeli teenagers in a summer camp, has set up an Internet chat room for former participants to maintain friendships and to share with one other their struggles in applying the lessons they have learned about conflict prevention and

peaceful coexistence at home. While some laud the success of these efforts, others question whether e-mail is the best medium for the expression of such delicate communication and complex emotions.

Conclusion

In conclusion, current conflict resolution Internet resources provide additional sources for academic information; facilitate understanding and communication between warring parties; disseminate information so that the international community can respond more quickly and with fuller understanding to conflict and, to a much lesser extent, provide forums for practitioners to share and exchange information and experiences and collaborate with others in the field. I can only hypothesize why the latter use of the Internet has not been developed further. One factor may be that many of the experts and practitioners in the field rely more on Internet resources relevant to their regional or country expertise. Another factor may be that there are too many under used listservs, and one has simply not emerged as the preeminent list for the field. A listserv, however, is only what its subscribers make it, so this may reflect a lack of interest or lack of comfort with the technology on the part of the practitioners in the field. An additional reason may simply be that organizations and individuals in the field are still in the process of determining the benefits of the Internet to their work.

Just two years ago, most conflict resolution organizations did not have, or were just beginning to have, a presence on the World Wide Web. The focus, thus far, has been on how to publicize and advance the goals and activities of the organizations rather than how to share and work with others in the field. What needs to be assessed now is whether these web sites serve the purpose they are intended to serve and how else the Internet could be used to further the overall goals of conflict resolution, prevention, and management. A user-oriented assessment might find that more integration and coordination of Internet resources, perhaps under a common "umbrella" site like ReliefWeb, could lead to more efficient and effective facilitation of information dissemination and exchange.

From my discussions with U.S.-based experts and practitioners, I learned of plans within the conflict resolution community to meet in the upcoming months to discuss ways of being more collaborative. Some excellent opportunities for developing listservs arise out of conferences or workshops where participants agree on the need for such a resource. The listserv can begin with these participants as subscribers and then broaden to include others. A certain amount of proactive publicity and outreach might be necessary in the initial phase so as to broaden the subscriber base. In addition, a moderator is often useful in terms of managing a subscriber list and offering topics for discussion.

Web Sites: Conflict Resolution, Prevention, and Management

This is by no means a complete list of all web sites related to conflict resolution, prevention, and management. However, it includes sites recommended by experts in the field and reflects the range of web sites in this area.

Africa-Focused Web Sites

African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD)

(<http://www.accord.org.za/>)

A basic organizational web site with information on programmes, publications, and conferences.

Contemporary Conflicts in Africa (<http://www.synapse.net/~acdi20/welcome.htm>)

Extensive Internet resources on the prevention, management, and resolution of violent conflicts in Africa. Links to organizations, country specific resources, and analytical pieces on various conflict issues.

44,421 visits since Aug 1996

CSUS Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution

(<http://www.csus.edu/mcult/capcr.html>)

The Center, at California State University in Sacramento, has a very basic web site with a calendar events and a listed of major activities and accomplishments.

Environmental Change, Consensus Building and Resource Management in the Horn of Africa (ECOMAN) (<http://www.fsk.ethz.ch/research.cfm?ID=20>)

The web site of this project of the Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research in Zurich provides very basic project information and contacts.

Databases and other Online Research Resources

Conflict Prevention Web: Directory of Organizational Resources in Conflict Resolution

(<http://www.caii-dc.com/ghai/>)

The directory provides an interface where one can search by area of focus or type of activities for contact information on organizations in the field of conflict resolution.

Conflict Resolution Center International (<http://conflictres.org>)

Online access to CRCI 's extensive library on conflict and dispute resolution.

One

can also access CRCI 's directory of conflict resolution specialists by sending an e-mail; non-members must pay a fee for this service.

INCORE (<http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk>)

Access to INCORE 's reports and to the extensive resources on conflict resolution provided by its Conflict Data Service (CDS). The CDS serves as an entry point to an information network in the field of conflict resolution and ethnicity. There are guides to country specific resources, including nine African countries, databanks on training and academic program in the field, and bibliographic and researcher databases. As for the future of the CDS, the web site states that;

"[W]e aim to use the CDS as a vehicle to reach those with limited, and initial connectivity to the Internet. We plan to develop our training package to offer help and assistance to academics and practitioners in developing countries. We hope to streamline our service to make it more invaluable to certain sections of society. That is, to provide Country Reports for those with no background or prior knowledge of a particular conflict, to provide Internet Guides for those with a limited background knowledge, but who are looking to engage in further research of the area/region, and finally to provide Academic Guides for those well acquainted with the topic in question, to give them the access they need to other experts/specialists in the field."

Institute of World Affairs (<http://www.iwa.org>)

Access to the IWA 's *International Conflict Initiatives Clearinghouse* which contains brief descriptions and contact information on conflict resolution activities around the world.

War-Torn Societies Project: Global Forum on Post-Conflict Rebuilding
(<http://www.unrisd.org/wsp/index.htm>)

This site has a number of resources, including a bulletin board of new projects, initiatives, publications, and events in post-conflict rebuilding; links to information on WSP country projects in Eritrea, Guatemala, Mozambique and Somalia; and access to WSP 's newsletters and other publications. However, perhaps the most useful resource is the documents database that one can search by title. The database contains an annotated bibliographic listing of texts relevant to WSP 's work, ranging from policy documents and evaluation reports to research reports and articles from various multilateral and bilateral agencies, research institutes and academics. WSP also offers a files by e-mail service so that users can view the WSP database locally without an online connection.

News Sources and Journals

ConflictNet (<http://www.igc.apc.org/igc/conflictnet/>)

This site provides access to numerous alerts and news items on conflicts throughout the world. ConflictNet members can access a variety of other news and information resources through additional services provided by the Institute for Global Communications, including discussion lists and news groups. This site was cited by practitioners as one of the resources they rely heavily on.

Negotiation Journal (<http://www.law.harvard.edu/Programs/PON/negjnl.html>)

Negotiation Journal is a quarterly publication committed to the development of better techniques for resolving differences among individuals, organizations, and governments through the give-and-take of negotiation. It is designed to be read--and used--both by the negotiation scholar and practitioner. The web site provides access to the contents and abstracts of each journal issue.

One World Online (<http://www.oneworld.org/>)

This site is similar to ConflictNet as it provides access to news articles and think pieces on global justice issues. There are also other resources on this site including a discussion room called "Speakeasy" where one can submit queries and responses to be posted on a variety of topics. There is also an "Ethnicity and Conflict Think Tank" where articles and other documents on this topic are posted.

ReliefWeb (<http://www.reliefweb.int>)

ReliefWeb is a project of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The purpose of this effort is to strengthen the response capacity of the humanitarian relief community through the timely dissemination of reliable information on prevention, preparedness and disaster response. The web site provides up to date news releases and reports from a variety of sources, included humanitarian agencies. The current list of countries and regions covered includes, Eritrea-Ethiopia, Sudan, and the Great Lakes. This has become perhaps the most widely used Internet resource for those working on various aspects of the Great Lakes crisis.

Winston Foundation: Conflict Prevention Resource Site

(<http://www.wf.org/>)

This site provides access to the "Gateway to Global News and Information."

This

list of links to excellent sources for daily international news on conflict zones is organized by region, arms issues, and activism.

Online Mediation Efforts

Online Ombuds Office (<http://128.119.199.27/center/ombuds/default.htm>)

This project of the Center for Information Technology and Dispute Resolution provides a dispute resolution service for persons and institutions who would like an online mediator to assist them in settling a dispute.

Seeds of Peace (<http://www.seedsofpeace.org>)

The U.S. Institute of Peace *Seeds of Peace* program, which brings Israeli and Arab teenagers together for a summer camp in Maine, uses its web site to foster

the maintenance of friendships and continued dialogue among its former participants. The project hosts weekly online "chats" which revolve around different issues each week.

Technology for Peace (<http://tfp.iwa.org>)

As a part of its Technology for Peace project, the Institute of World Affairs (IWA) has installed very basic dial-up Internet access to a specialized, proprietary web site based at IWA that allows parties to conflict (in Angola and Cyprus currently) to communicate with ease and in private with each other. This service has been used heavily by individuals in both Cyprus and Angola as it is one of the only ways for different parties to communicate.

272 visits since 8/98

Organization Web Sites

Bonn International Center for Conversion (<http://bicc.uni-bonn.de/>)

The BICC web site provides information on BICC projects, access to publications, and links to other sites for each of their six focus areas: demobilization and reintegration, defense budgets, research and development, defense industry, base closures, and surplus weapons.

Conflict Management Group (<http://www.cmgonline.org>)

This organization web site provides information on, and access to, CMHG's publications and project profiles.

European Centre for Conflict Prevention (<http://euconflict.org>)

This site goes beyond providing basic information on its activities to providing access to its newsletters and other reports, including a report on the Dec. 1997 Conference on the Role of the International Community in Conflict Prevention in Africa. *Country surveys* are also provided on conflict prevention and management activities in 14 countries including Sudan. Finally, the site has thematic essays on a variety of topics.

Search for Common Ground (<http://sfcg.org>)

A basic web site with information on the organization, its programmes, and links to other related web sites. The "toolbox" web page at this site presents the various conflict resolution tools used in SFCG's programs.

Training and Education Web Sites

Conflict Prevention Web (<http://www.caii-dc/com/ghai/>)

This site provides access to the *Practitioner's Guide to Conflict Prevention and Mitigation* which was developed by Creative Associates International for USAID's Greater Horn of Africa Initiative (GHAI).

International Online Training Program on Intractable Conflict

(<http://www.colorado.EDU/conflict/peace/>)

This site of the Conflict Research Consortium at the University of Colorado is currently under construction, but is intended to serve as a guide to the theory and practice of Conflict Management and Constructive Confrontation. Its target audience is parties to conflicts, mediators, and those studying conflict resolution.

Program on Negotiation Clearinghouse (<http://www.pon.org/>)

Access to materials useful for the teaching of negotiation, mediation, and other forms of dispute resolution.

Web Sites with Extensive Links to Other Internet Resources

A Conflict Resolution Page: Dimo Yagcioglu (<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8945>)

This is a page compiled by an individual with (apparently) some expertise in the area of conflict resolution. He provides links to conflict resolution and ethnicity web sites, as well as a list of books and bibliographies on the topic. Descriptions of each site are provided and the sites are updated regularly.

13,527 visits since 10/96

Dispute Resolution Resources: Nova Southeastern University

(<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/DR/resources.html>)

An extensive list of links to dispute resolution web sites. The links, however, do not appear to be updated regularly. There is also information on journals, newsletters, membership organizations and regional organizations in the area of dispute resolution.

Eastern Mennonite University- Peace Resources

(<http://narnia.emu.edu/library/peace.htm>)

This site provides a set of links to peace and peace-related web sites. The list is organized by type of web site host and a brief description is given of each site.

ELDIS: Organizational-level Sources on Conflict

(http://nt1.ids.ac.uk/eldis/conc/cfl_lele.htm)

This site provides information on, and links to, organizations, WWW directories, and discussion lists on issues related to conflict.

Peace and Conflict (<http://csf.colorado.edu/peace/main.html>)

Access to information on Colorado University's Conflict Research consortium and to a guide with links to research centers, institutes, organizations and networks for peace and conflict.

War, Peace, and Security (<http://www.cfcsc.dnd.ca/links/>)

Internet links to conflict, peace, and security related websites. In addition, this site provides access to news articles, reports, and other resources for

“Contemporary Conflict” countries. Included in the list of countries are Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Sudan, Congo and Somalia.

Listservs

This is by no means a complete list of all listservs related to conflict management, prevention, and resolution. All the lists here, however, are still active - at least in theory. In reality, many of them have little activity while others are quite active. Unfortunately, it is difficult to get a sense of the sort of information exchanged, and the frequency of messages, unless one subscribes to a listserv.

Distribution Lists - one way communication via email list

PRESSINFO

The Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research provides a service, PRESSINFO, that supplies subscribers with statements alerting them to international conflict management issues, particularly concerning ex-Yugoslavia, Georgia and the UN, and info about publications and activities from TFF. To subscribe, send an email to: TFFpressinfo@transnational.org .

Discussions Lists

ADR Colorado

This listserv, managed by the Conflict Research Consortium at the University of Colorado, is meant to be an online discussion on the topic of ADR.
adr_colorado@lists.colorado.edu

Dispute-res

This list is designed to promote communication about dispute resolution, about the teaching of dispute resolution, and about issues experienced by persons involved in dispute resolution.

Subscribers are urged to take a look at the LII gopher and the World-Wide Web materials that are accessible at fatty.law.cornell.edu (telnet to fatty.law.cornell.edu and type gopher at login: or use gopher or WWW clients if they are available to you).

List archives are currently being maintained at the University of Massachusetts Legal Studies gopher which can be accessed, if you have a gopher client, by using the following command: gopher gopher.ucs.umass.edu and then selecting the Dispute-res archive from the Department of Legal Studies menu.

It is run by:

Janet Rifkin

Ethan Katsh

Professor of Legal Studies Professor of Legal Studies

and Ombudsperson
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003
E-mail: jrifkin@legal.umass.edu

Department of Legal Studies
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003
E-mail: katsh@legal.umass.edu

listserv@listserv.law.cornell.edu

This list does not appear to be very active.

Divers-I

Discussion list on ethnic diversity issues.
listserv@psuvm.psu.edu

ENVIRONMENT_CONFLICT_MEDIATION-L:

A public, open subscription list. Not sure how active it is.

ETH-NET:

Discussion list on ethnic conflict.
listserv@cms.cc.wayne.edu

Ethnic Conflict:

This is a public, open list. It is run out of Wayne University. I am not sure how active it is. OWNER= aa4730@wayne.edu (Otto Feinstein)

Ethnic-I

Mailing list covering ethnic issues (nationalism, race relations, ethnic identity, migration, refugees) for exchange of information on activities, publications, meetings, etc. Membership is restricted to liasion persons attached to ethnicity research groups. Fred Riggs is contact person: fredr@hawaii.edu.

ICAR

This list, managed by the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. Many of its subscribers are students or alumni of ICAR, but it is open to anyone. Several people in the field who I spoke with mentioned this as a listserv they subscribe to. It disseminates useful information including job opportunities, conference announcements and it allows people to submit queries to a large groups.

This list is quite active.

listproc@gmu.edu

PACS:

Welcome! This is an unmoderated e-mail distribution list for Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS) students at U.C. Berkeley. Postings are limited to items of interest to PACS students. This list is run by the Peace Studies Student Association (PSSA). To learn more, visit their website at <http://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~pssa/>

PEACE

PEACE is a discussion group or "list" on the Internet that is hosted by Communications for a Sustainable Future (CSF) at the University of Colorado at Boulder (CU). PEACE is part of a larger project that integrates the discussion group with a peace studies database - a "virtual" peace studies library - called PEACE. The PEACE database is an "ftp area" in CSF that contains the database as well as archives of all discussions on the list.

Together, the database and discussion group provide those interested in peace studies and its subject matter with the opportunity to access and contribute to the literature, read current work in the field, and discuss it with colleagues and friends. The database is the depository for the literatures and current work, and the discussion group exists to facilitate discussions, commentary and announcements among users.

Faculty, students and others interested in the interdisciplinary field of peace studies will be able to access, contribute to, and share bibliographies, article and book reviews, essays, current research, lectures, syllabi, working papers, peace studies literatures from diverse disciplines, and other work relevant to the field (including conflict resolution).

The PEACE database also includes major subdirectories for:

- PSA (The Peace Studies Association): Founded in 1987, PSA is a federation of college and university academic peace studies programs with 126 member programs in the United States, Canada, Europe and Latin America. PSA is located at the University of Colorado at Boulder (CU). The PSA subdirectory is called the PSA ELECTRONIC LIBRARY, which includes information on PSA and its member programs (and non-member academic peace studies programs), annual business meeting minutes, transcripts of addresses, presentations and papers at PSA's annual meetings, highlights of PSA events and programming, newsletters of academic peace studies programs and organizations, archives of PSA documents, and related information.

- SERVICE-LEARNING: which is devoted to promoting and developing service-learning in colleges and universities, in K-12 schools, and in private and non-profit sectors of communities worldwide.

To Access the PEACE Database via GOPHER:- Simply say "gopher csf.colorado.edu" (If this doesn't work, try: "gopher csf.colorado.edu 70")

To Access/Contribute to the PEACE Database via Email:

Send the Email message "get peace.HELP" to: csfserv@csf.colorado.edu

and you will receive a help file that explains how to access the database.
To contribute to the database, send Email to: crews@csf.colorado.edu

Users familiar with ftp can access all CSF files (including the PEACE database) via ftp as well as via Email. Use of ftp is explained in the "HELP" file as well. Robin J. Crews, crews@csf.colorado.edu or (303) 492-7718.

Not very active.

REVS:

Racial-Religious-Ethno-Nationalist Violence Studies (REVS) is concerned with general news and information, research, and theoretical and analytical comments about current and historical aspects of collective violence based on racial-religious-ethnic discrimination. Many people have been surprised by the rapidity of its spread to so many parts of the world and the ferocity of its development; it is especially important at this time to explore and analyze its causes and consequences.

Comments on either collective violence or racial/religious/ethnic discrimination are relevant to REVS, but we especially encourage discussions that deal with the interaction of these two issues. The goal is to develop an archive, bringing together widely scattered current and historical information from around the world and making it accessible to an international audience. Part of this depends on this network reaching people from many different countries. We seek participants from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and Latin America, as well as Canada and the U.S.

REVS archive is accessible by ftp and gopher on csf.colorado.edu
For more information or to offer suggestions and comments, please contact:
Alan Spector
Purdue University Calumet
Hammond, IN 46323 USA
SPECTOAJ@pucal.bitnet

To subscribe to REVS, send the message
sub REVS Yourfirstname Yourlastname
To: LISTSERV@csf.colorado.edu

Messages to the entire list should be sent to REVS@csf.colorado.edu
Only subscribers can post to the list.

I am not sure how active this list is.

WICZNET:

A listserv for moderated discussions on women in conflict zones. It is operated out of York University in Canada. Owner= gender@yorku.ca

Newsgroups

A newsgroup is similar to a listserv, or mailing list. The only difference is that messages sent to listservs accumulate in your email inbox while messages sent to newsgroups are stored on a remote server.

APC electronic conferences on: Conflict Resolution

(source: <http://www.zpok.hu/zpokinfo/apcroat/confreso.htm>)

africa.burundi - This conference has been established by International Alert (London), to assist the networking of relevant early warning, preventive diplomacy, conflict resolution and early action information on/for Burundi. Other materials are in africa.bur.res

cn.general - Announcements, news briefs and press releases for the conflict resolution movement.

cr.crnates - Newsletter article source and repository pertaining to a broad range of conflict resolution issues.

cr.dialogue - Current issues/events that impact the field of conflict resolution or that may be better understood through the lens of conflict resolution methodologies.

cr.events - Upcoming events in the field of conflict resolution.

cr.jobs - Jobs offered or sought in the field of conflict resolution or dispute mediation.

cr.journals - Enables users to have online access to prominent journals and newsletters in the field of conflict resolution.

cr.resources - Resources & materials for the conflict resolution field.

cr.solutions - To develop a practical knowledge base for mediators, facilitators and conflict managers. Suggestive rather than prescriptive solutions.

cr.training - Information about conflict resolution training programs and materials.

gpn.dialog - Exchange of information and ideas on Global Process Work. Open to all Global Process Network members; read only to the general public.

gpn.orgdev - Global Process Network organisation development conference. Private but open to all interested

gpn.support - To post questions on how to use the Global Process Network..

pax.peaceteams - Information and discussion on nonviolent peace teams: publicity about new initiatives, opportunities for service, trainings, conferences, strategy, experiences -- successes and failures -- and critiques and recommendations.

timeline - TIMELINE, from the Foundation for Global Community, tells you about systems thinking, building sustainable communities, conflict resolution, and emerging world views. For stimulating reports, interviews, and reviews try this bimonthly TIMELINE.