



Global Alliance for  
Ministries & Departments of Peace

## A Fresh Approach to International Conflict Resolution: Fresh Approach Principles

The Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace was launched at the First People's Summit for Departments of Peace, held in London, October 18-19, 2005, with the intention of supporting national-level campaigns to establish ministries and departments of peace in governments throughout the world. The Second Summit was held in June 2006 in Canada and the Third in September 2007 in Japan. See [www.mfp-dop.org](http://www.mfp-dop.org).

In March 2006, the group issued a statement calling for a fresh approach to resolving international conflict, specifically in regards to the growing conflict involving Iran, the United States, and other countries. The Fresh Approach initiative grew out of the desire to demonstrate what is possible when ministers and secretaries of peace will work together to dialogue and utilize peacebuilding technologies in the resolution of conflict.

The March statement says in part: “While recognising the efforts of all parties to resolve this dispute through negotiation, we are also aware that frustration at the lack of agreement can lead to increasing polarisation, harsh language and even the extreme violence of military action. As with past conflicts, this is likely to produce a similar result – war, chaos and suffering. It is therefore time for all of us – private citizens, civil society organisations, and governments – to call for a change in the manner in which conflict is dealt with so as to meet the fundamental needs of all humanity for security, mutual respect and justice.”

But, what kind of change would that be? The Fresh Approach can be defined by some basic principles of conflict transformation by peaceful means:

- ✓ **Bottom-Up.** Peacebuilding from below to develop a new architecture of peace based upon the aspirations of civil societies.
- ✓ **Partnership.** Civil society working in partnership with governments to reveal possibilities for dialogue and conflict transformation in a given situation – domestic as well as international.
- ✓ **Inclusion.** Engaging and empowering all stakeholders in a given conflict transformation.
- ✓ **Listening.** Respectfully and empathically listening to and recognising the legitimacy and needs of all parties.
- ✓ **Root Causes.** Responding to the most fundamental human needs of sustenance, identity, security, and recognition.
- ✓ **Creativity.** Opening space for the emergence of various possible outcomes to a given conflict and their potential for transformation.
- ✓ **Healing.** Recognizing mutual healing as a key to conflict transformation.
- ✓ **Modeling.** In our attitudes, behaviours, life, and work, modeling the peace we seek in the world and taking responsibility for peaceful outcomes.

*These principles draw heavily from the work of the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy and TRANSCEND, whom we thank for their inspiration.*