

Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping

- What is it about?

The civilian population is suffering the most from violence caused by armed conflicts. Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping (UCP) is the protection of people from violence during conflict situations by unarmed civilians ("civilian peacekeepers").

These civilians are on-site in the conflict zone using a variety of instruments in order to prevent violence or to save people from its effects. Civil Peacekeeping is based on the struggle for independence of India (Gandhi's idea of a "Peace Army").

Today, this approach is primarily practised by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), but occasionally it is also used by governmental organisations (e.g. OSCE). For example, since ten years the NGO Nonviolent Peaceforce is using civilian peacekeeping successfully in civil war areas like the Philippines or Southern Sudan.

In contrast to the Civil Peace Service, civilian peacekeeping is focused exclusively on the prevention of violence, while Civil Peace Service deals with the full range of conflict transformation. The main focus of UCP is to create space for those who try to transform conflicts sustainably..



Frequently asked questions

What are the methods of Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping (UCP)?

- Presence in and monitoring of areas and events which are potentially in a risk of violence
- Creation of local competences, e.g. by early warning systems
- Protective accompaniment of groups or people who are in risk of violence
- Initiate and monitor the dialogue between the conflict parties with the aim of settling the violence
- Build relationships with the armed actors (military, guerillas), and persuading them to respect and protect non-combatants
- Create safe spaces and weapon-free zones where people can live and work without fear and anxiety.
- Train people to protect themselves and their neighbours

Who are the Unarmed Civilian Peacekeepers and how are they trained?

With Nonviolent Peaceforce people both from the northern and southern hemisphere are working, including people from the concerned country itself. Other organisations work mostly with European or North American volunteers. The peacekeepers may work between a couple of weeks and several years for the same project. Normally they should already have some experience on the topic but they are also trained on their specific mission for up to a couple of weeks.

Is their work not too dangerous?

Peacekeepers do not own or use any weapons to protect themselves. Instead, they have learned de-escalating strategies and they have to rely on their impartial appearance and perception. Additionally they try to set up trust and relationships within the communities. Furthermore they are constantly watched by the world's public, due to this most actors shrink from attacking "internationals".

Most organisations have developed some security guidelines, which have to be obeyed by the peacekeepers.

Who finances it?

Smaller projects are financed by donors or financial contributions of foundations. In order to realise bigger projects with many peacekeepers, the (financial) help of governments or international organisations is essential.

Is UCP an alternative to international military missions?

Normally UCP is implemented by NGOs. They are more flexible than governments are, who first have to achieve an agreement on the political level (or are even in need of an agreement by the UN Security Council). Moreover conflict parties may be afraid that a military intervention would harm their national sovereignty. And since most times the civilians are already traumatized by military experiences it is more humanitarian to use civilian peacekeepers. In addition, the only aim of UCP is to protect the people, not pursuing any economic or political interests.

How much does UCP cost?

A peacekeeper with Nonviolent Peacekeeping costs less than 50,000€ per year. In comparison: an American soldier in Afghanistan costed 2,1 million \$ per year. For half of the budget of the German defence budget (around 32 billion Euros), 300,000 Civil Peacekeepers could work in conflict areas. Even if the total costs for one staff were raised to 150,000 €, it would still be about 100,000 staff to be deployed for the protection of civilians.

What should the politicians do?

Germany already took the first step towards the civilian conflict prevention. It realised a civil peace service and it listed a number of instruments within the Action Plan for Civil Conflict Revention. The concept of UCP should be specifically promoted and supported, e.g. by supporting measures by the Federal Foreign Office or by including it into the instruments available for civil conflict prevention. Furthermore the German Federal Government should integrate this concept more on EU, UN and OSCE level. Protecting people in conflict areas and supporting them to stand up for peace and human rights in an effective, reliable and cost-efficient way should be the aim of international politics.

What can I do?

- Talk to your family, friends, church community, colleges and give them this flyer
- Order this flyer or related materials
- Write reader's letter, if you see, read or hear about projects of peacekeeping without the mention of unarmed civilian peacekeeping
- Organise events on this topic, invite experts to this event (the BSV can help you finding speakers)

Materials (German/English)

- Infoblatt Ziviles Peacekeeping
- Factsheet Ziviles Peacekeeping
- Dokumentation des Fachgesprächs zum Zivilen Peacekeeping, das am 1.11.2014 in Berlin stattfand (BSV Hintergrund- und Diskussionspapier Nr. 39)
- Schirch, Lisa (2006) Civilian Peacekeeping. Preventing Violence and Making Space for Democracy. Uppsala: Life & Peace Institute
- Schweitzer, Christine (2010) (Hrsg.) *Civilian Peacekeeping – A Barely Tapped Ressource*. Arbeitspapier Nr. 23, Hrsg: IFKG

- Borrow the exhibition "WOW – Wirk-sam ohne Waffen" (being effective without weapons) or the one about Nonviolent Peaceforce
- Talk to your politicians about this topic and ask for a stronger promotion of UCP



Campaign for Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping



Protect People Without Weapons!