

## IFGK Activity Report 2016

The IFGK continued to have ten active and six dormant members during the reporting period. The active members are: Martin Arnold, Anne Dietrich, Reinhard Eismann, Albert Fuchs, Mirjam Mahler, Gudrun Knittel, Barbara Müller, Achim Schmitz, Christine Schweitzer and Roland Vogt.

### Activities of the IFGK staff

Dr. Martin Arnold: (no report available)

Anne Dietrich continues to work as a peace expert for GIZ; now in Rwanda since October 2016.

Reinhard Eismann: In February 2016, Reinhard Eismann took part in the sixth and last module of the Campaigner Training CampaPeace and thus successfully completed this training. Reinhard Eismann has been a certified campaigner since then.

As a result, his peace policy focus in 2016 was to support the Syria Mandate Campaign "Make Peace. Civil solutions for Syria" from April 2016 onwards. Since mid-June 2016, he has been working on the campaign council as an individual.

Furthermore, Reinhard Eismann took part in the bi-annual meetings of CampaNet (June and October 2016) and is thus involved in the development of corresponding structures in order to make the peace movement as a whole more capable of campaigning. The CampaNet meetings take place at the Werkstatt für Gewaltfreie Aktion in Heidelberg. CampaNet is part of these structures and can be understood as a kind of think tank.

In February 2016, he made an unfortunately unsuccessful attempt to win over peace organisations and groups in Stuttgart to participate in an organisational and mobilising capacity in the nationwide day of action "Lights for Syria" on 20 February 2016.

In addition, Reinhard Eismann took part in the one-day workshop "Small arms exports and their consequences - global and very close" organised by Ohne Rüstung Leben in Stuttgart in April 2016. This was followed in October 2016 by participation in the two-day peace logic action conference "Neue Geschichten braucht das Land" ("The country needs new stories") organised by Forum ZFD.

As a member of the pax christi Peace Policy Commission, Prof. Dr Albert Fuchs was in charge of drafting an argumentative appeal by Pax Christi to the soldiers of the Syria contingent against participation in the war for Syria. As part of his involvement in the Bonn Peace Alliance, he was intensively involved in organising and holding a panel discussion with local MPs on the same topic. In the context of his membership in the Forum Friedenspsychologie, he wrote a paper on militaristic and pacifistic constructions of the image of man - with a continuing appeal to this topic. In the course of an in-depth review of Walter Wink's "Transforming the Powers - A Theology of Nonviolence" (Pustet, Regensburg 2014), questions about the role of religion(s) that had somehow been "put on the backburner" have once again become virulent.

Gudrun Knittel, consulting, facilitation, process accompaniment for housing and building projects. Conducting trainings on consensus decision-making procedures, competences for constructive conflict management and dialogue principles.

Collaboration in the Cologne working group "Transforming Society". Dialogue formats are developed that promote trust in democratic processes. Central themes are the cohesion and conflict capacity of society.

Further training as an Internal Family Systems Coach in Heidelberg together with Barbara Müller.

Conducted a workshop on Therapie Sociale at the 9th Loccum Procedere Workshop Conference of the Protestant Academy Loccum and the Procedere Association for Procedural Practice in Politics, Economy and Society. The theme of the conference was: Leading and participating. Point cooperation

in the network.

Mirjam Mahler, Executive Director at Versöhnungsbund e.V.: Mirjam completed the "Campapeace" training at the beginning of 2016 and is now familiar with the basics of campaign work and campaign moderation. On "Bundeswehr Day", which also took place in Bückeberg in 2016, she and other peace activists from the Bückeberg regional group of the Fellowship of Reconciliation as well as from the DFG-VK and the Peace Office Hanover distributed flyers on peace policy demands to the crowds of visitors streaming in and in the afternoon moderated a discussion with Katja Keul, a member of the Bundestag, which was widely reported in the two major daily newspapers. In the following months, the regional group concentrated again on the work for a world free of nuclear weapons and in September collected about 100 signatures for an international ban on nuclear weapons with an information stand in the pedestrian zone. Information letters to several schools led to the group conducting a project week on nuclear weapons with 16 young people at the Primus School in Minden-Dankersen in March 2016. An appointment with the mayor of Minden, Michael Jäcke, who is a member of Mayors for Peace, was also on the agenda.

Dr Barbara Müller continued her training as an Internal Family Systems (ifs) Coach last year. Gradually, the transfer of ifs to conflict management is taking shape. Three questions in particular are crystallising: 1. if there is an inner instance in every situation in every person involved in the conflict (the so-called "self") that stands above the conflict - how can this be effectively addressed by external persons? 2. how can the experience from ifs processes be conceptualised, that the moment one's own inner parts that drive the conflict come into real contact with the self, a sometimes complete change in the view of the conflict occurs? 3. how can ifs contribute to immunisation against conflict mobilisation?

A second interesting perspective for conflict transformation is offered by the Composite Heritage concept of the Institute for Social Democracy in Delhi, India. Here, Dr. Barbara Müller co-led a 10-day ASHA (Advanced Social - Historical Analysis) workshop last year as part of her freelance work. The composite heritage concept is one of the basic concepts. It assumes that what is perceived and understood as one's own cultural heritage develops in a living and ever-changing way from processes of exchange and cross-fertilisation with other cultures. Interestingly, the recognition of this shared diversity does not take away any of the power and identity of one's "own" heritage, on the contrary. Rather, the recognition of this simple fact makes it possible to connect intensively with "one's" positive heritage, and at the same time to acknowledge the otherness of other identities without perceiving it as a threat. Since this realisation is conveyed less intellectually than experientially, it simultaneously creates an immunisation against the false simplification of "my" "pure" heritage. What is still missing is a transfer of this concept to the European context. On the Indian subcontinent, ISD has so far had very good experience in overcoming mobilisations of identities in a variety of applications and trainings.

Dr. Achim Schmitz has taught units on non-violent conflict resolution and communication at vocational schools in Waiblingen and Stuttgart. At the University of Stuttgart he received further teaching assignments for communication training. In the Fellowship of Reconciliation and in pax christi he was active in the commissions for peace education. In the year under review, he found a new full-time task in refugee work.

In March 2016, Dr Christine Schweitzer published the English study by Ellen Furnari and several co-authors on five examples of civil peacekeeping: "Furnari, Ellen (ed.) (2016) Wielding Nonviolence in the Face of Violence.

In autumn, the English translation of her study "Citizens Preventing Wars" was published by Irene-Verlag (the publishing house of co-author Jörgen Johansen). The book was presented at an event in Oslo in September.

It was accompanied by various lectures and essays, including on civil conflict transformation, Syria and non-violent ways of resisting the so-called Islamic State.

She is a co-founder of a network on research on civil peacekeeping, which was founded in England in July 2016. It is coordinated by Rachel Julian (University of Leeds).

Another focus has continued to be editorial work for the journal Friedensforum.

Since October 2012, Christine has been working with a half-time position as executive director at the Bund für Soziale Verteidigung.

Roland Vogt represents the IFGK on the board of the supporting association for the Peace Academy Rhineland-Palatinate, which he was also instrumental in founding, and in the Peace Education Network Rhineland-Palatinate.

### **Study days**

The IFGK organised one study day in the reporting period: CONCEPTS FOR PEACEWORK TODAY - FROM EXPERIENCES OF THE GDR PERIOD AND LEARNING THEREAFTER was the title of the study day, which took place on 9 April 2016 in Halle (Saale) in cooperation with the Halle Peace Circle. A detailed report can be read on the IFGK website ([www.ifgk.de](http://www.ifgk.de)).

The 2017 study day will take place on 25 November 2017 in Cologne. Topic: "Nonviolent confrontations with dissenters - experiences, suggestions, challenges".

### **International networking, cooperation and representation**

Martin Arnold continued to represent the IFGK at the Association for Peace and Conflict Research (AFK).

Roland Vogt represented the IFGK at the Peace Education Network Rhineland-Palatinate and on the board of the supporting association for the Peace Academy Rhineland-Palatinate.

Christine Schweitzer represented the IFGK at the electronic council meeting of War Resisters' International (WRI) and at the German Förde

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Several IFGK staff members took part in the annual meeting of the Bund für Soziale Verteidigung (BSV) in Magdeburg in March.

Several IFGK members also took part in the conference of the Platform for Civil Conflict Transformation.

### **Management and public relations**

The management of the IFGK continues to be carried out by several staff members who share the workload. Barbara Müller is mainly responsible for everything to do with finances and personnel; Achim Schmitz ensures that regular reports are sent to the BSV newsletter and circular letter. Christine Schweitzer is in charge of the website, is responsible for the organisational preparation of study days and looks after the distribution list of interested

parties, the information folder and the annual report. Other tasks such as preparing the content of study days etc. are carried out on a rotating basis. The chairpersons of the IFGK e.V. remain Achim Schmitz and Martin Arnold; the treasurer is Barbara Müller.

Auditors are Regine Kranich and Albert Fuchs.

All IFGK core work is done by the staff on a voluntary basis.

### **Foundation re-establishment of IFGK and BSV**

At the beginning of March 2016 and the end of August 2016, several IFGK staff members and several members of the BSV board met in telephone conferences to discuss the joint establishment of a foundation into which the IFGK's endowment money would flow. In both telephone conferences, the participants agreed in principle to initiate the establishment of such a foundation. For this purpose, a working group was formed at the second telephone conference, consisting of Outi Arajärvi (BSV), Reinhard Eismann (IFGK), Albert Fuchs (IFGK) and Sebastian Grieser (BSV). The draft of a foundation statute is in progress.