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Report on the working group on Education: Training for Peace and Non-violence

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Basically the discussion evolved around the more general issue of peace education, not focusing so much on small arms. There was a general agreement that it was necessary to find out where the resources are and to work out strategy and methodology before starting work on the actual curricula.

I will try to sum up what the different representatives were saying:

In Georgia they’ve been working on project with children where they have been drawing pictures and making posters, and they are thinking of developing that project.

In Russia they’ve been having seminars on human rights also especially aimed for physicians, and they have published books on the issue also. Later in the discussion the possibility of having a congress for doctors or physicians as well as lawyers, both professionals and students, was raised.

The Netherlands and in Denmark, students have been conducting a survey to find out the general attitude among medical students towards peace education – whether they want it included in their curriculum. The Netherlands has also developed some extra-curricular courses and core curricular courses which are taking place in several of the universities.

In Turkey, they have had peace education as part of the medical core curriculum by way of courses on prevention of injury.

In the US, there has been developed an extra-curricular course in New York at the Einstein Medical School.

In Sweden there are several core curricula courses, especially in southern Sweden.

In UK, Medact has just developed a peace curriculum that will soon be available on the internet also aimed at medical students.

That is all that we discussed on medical students. Then we talked about public peace education and how to get in contact with media and policy makers.
In Colombia they have been undertaking projects of community peace education among several other topics.

In Sweden there was representative of an international campaign network for peace education who is addressing parliamentarians, the public, and youth on this issue.

In the UK, Bradford’s Peace Studies have also worked on public education on conflict resolution.

Belarus is starting up, drawing on experience of education and peace studies in conflict prevention, trying to use the two for a peace education course.

In Finland the Peace Test which was presented yesterday by Professor McAlister have been undertaken and now students are following up by making workshops for 14 year olds on conflict resolution and peace. There’s also a network of NGOs here which had a representative at the working group working on creating awareness in the media especially and among civil servants.

In Guatemala there were other community projects both rural and urban, and they seemed to be distinguishing between the two.

Switzerland, or the International Peace Bureau, has been working on peace education projects in the former Yugoslavia. The IPB also has a lot of material available on the internet. They have a long history of peace education as one of their main campaigns, and in New York they mostly have teaching methods whereas in Geneva they are focusing on advocacy and links to UN offices on peace education issues. They have developed special youth programs, and it was suggested to refer to material from the UN High Commission on Refugees, UNHCR, for ideas for peace curricula.

Also the Utrecht Center for Human Rights in the Netherlands have developed several curricula and the US Disarmament Education could be another source of inspiration.

And finally the Hague Appeal for Peace has designed material for teachers so that they would be taught how to use peace education as an integrative part of any course in primary school and later, and it was suggested that we might want to adjust peace education material and the aim of peace education after the events of 11th of September.

We had a little bit of discussion on this and then unfortunately we didn’t have more time. So it was very much a sum up of people’s ideas and experiences, but I think it was very useful because now we have some websites and some ideas of where to go if we are to work further on the issue.
Thank you