



# International Center for Religion & Diplomacy

Bridging the political and religious spheres in support of peacemaking

Monthly Update

December 31, 2012

## The Year Ahead

### ICRD's Upcoming Projects

As life turns another page, it's a good time to look ahead. Assuming the necessary resources, we foresee ICRD activity on the following fronts:

#### **1. Pakistan**

In addition to providing continuing technical and financial assistance from afar for the madrasa project, we plan to establish a U.S./Pakistan Interfaith Consortium (UPIC) that will bring together interfaith leaders from both countries to develop capacity-building measures for easing the plight of religious minorities in Pakistan and for arresting the impact and spread of Islamophobia in the United States.

#### **2. Middle East**

In addition to our ongoing effort to develop a religious framework for peace in the Middle East (upon which political leaders can build), ICRD will continue its work with Syrian opposition leaders to help them reconcile their differences and to mitigate the retribution that will follow once the current regime falls.

#### **3. Saudi Arabia**

We will assess in greater detail the local impact of Salafist theology and Wahabbi teachings in those countries where religious extremism is taking hold and determine how best to deal with it.

#### **4. Yemen**

ICRD will engage local religious, tribal and community leaders in conflict resolution training workshops designed to counter the violent extremism that is taking hold throughout the country.

#### **5. Colombia**

In Colombia, we will engage religious communities and the formidable capabilities of women's networks in addressing the reentry problem faced by guerrilla fighters who, after laying down their arms as part of a peace agreement, are unable to find employment, largely because they don't have the necessary skills. As a result, many rearm and join militia groups or narcotics networks as their only options.

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"We thank ICRD for opening the door to a new avenue to diplomacy, for providing us with new tools of persuasion and inspiration, and for offering us a better way to deal with the religious dimensions of conflict."

## 6. Horn of Africa

We will be working to incorporate a religious dimension in peacemaking efforts along the Kenya-Somalia border in order to counter the recruitment efforts of religious radicals.

## 7. New Realities and the U.S. Leadership Challenge

ICRD will assess how the United States can move from its current posture of global superpower to that of "global statesman", with an eye toward developing a diplomatic toolkit that can facilitate the mediation of critical disputes without a resort to arms.

**As we ponder the future, we are mindful of all you have done to make possible that which has gone before. So, we send our deepest appreciation for that and wish you countless blessings in the year ahead.**

*Here's to the blessing  
of the year,  
Here's to the friends  
we hold so dear,  
To peace on earth,  
both far and near.*



**With Best Wishes,**

Doug Johnston  
*President*  
ICRD

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~ James  
Glassman,  
former  
Undersecretary  
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