



ICRD Monthly Update

June 30, 2017

Looking Forward

Eighteen years after founding ICRD based on his vision of inter-religious teams going into conflict spaces to make religion part of the solution, Dr. Douglas Johnston has retired. Since its establishment, ICRD has been a pioneering organization in the practice of faith-based diplomacy. We now look toward a future marked by challenges and opportunities, in a world where religious actors increasingly collaborate but where religion has also gained greater prominence as a driver of global violence.

From a modest beginning, we are now engaged on many fronts. In the last few years, for instance, ICRD conducted programs to build local capacity in conflict resolution and reducing violent extremism, to counter purported religious messages that encourage intolerance, and to promote faith-based reconciliation in places ranging from Colombia to Syria, and from Yemen to the United States.

In the coming year, we will build on our previous work to reduce intolerance in education materials emanating from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as observe their impact in a number of other countries. We will deepen our reconciliation work in Colombia, bringing together women of faith, victims of violence and former combatants to support reintegration. We will employ the results of our analysis on Yemen's failed national transition to advance a more inclusive dialogue process, and will expand our conflict resolution and CVE training of civil society and religious leaders. We will continue to implement a countering violent extremism methodology in Morocco that we designed for use by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. And we will continue to support the role of women in preventing violent extremism and the generation of narratives to counter sectarian violence in Pakistan.



Peacemakers' Council

As this work demonstrates, ICRD has emerged as a preferred partner for policy-makers and recognized leaders seeking to influence the fields of diplomacy and conflict resolution. Even as our vision catches hold, however, we still need to work hard to strengthen our discretionary funding. We work in inherently unstable places, where operations can shift quickly, and also need the flexibility to engage new and urgent priorities.

With that in mind, I am pleased to announce ICRD's new Peacemakers' Council. The Council is comprised of significant donors, and the former Attorney General, the Honorable Edwin Meese III, has agreed to serve as Honorary Chairman. This is an opportunity for supporters of our vision to convene, by phone once a quarter and in person once a year, to learn about and give feedback on ICRD's programs. Finally, as the work permits, Council members will be able to join ICRD in the field to observe the direct impact of our programs.

As we begin the next chapter at ICRD, I look forward to hearing from you about how our work is meaningful in your own lives, and how we might best expand upon our extraordinary beginnings.

Warm regards,



James Patton
President



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