

Introducing ORG's Strategic Peacebuilding Programme

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While maintaining its focus on the region, ORG's Middle East Programme is changing its name to the Strategic Peacebuilding Programme. We chose to launch our new name on 21 September to coincide with the International day of Peace which calls on people around the world to join together to promote a culture of peace. On this day, ORG proudly joins with 130 other peacebuilding organisations worldwide in endorsing a shared statement, *Implementing the New Commitments to Peace*.

Across the Middle East, millions are on the brink of famine and tens of thousands have been killed or injured as a result of violent conflict. The war in Syria has now been raging for longer than World War II. Hundreds of thousands

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have been forced to flee their homes by the violence in Libya. And the conflict in Yemen has created a humanitarian crisis in a country that was already the poorest in the Arab world. There is now a greater need than ever for peace in the region, and with the increasing number of intractable conflicts where traditional methodologies appear to be failing, we need to adopt a strategic approach.

Reactive, short-term responses to violent conflict can miss opportunities for peace, or even worsen the situation. Peacebuilding is an overarching term that incorporates all efforts towards building long-term peace. For peace to be sustainable it must be built at all levels of society on an individual as well as a structural level. Furthermore, Peacebuilding spans the full conflict cycle, covering preventative and post-conflict scenarios as well as preparing the way for peace-making and negotiations within an active conflict environment.

Strategic Peacebuilding recognises that you can't always resort to the same tool box to bring about genuine transformation. It is grounded in a deep understanding of the realities on the ground and the root causes and drivers of the conflict. A strategic approach to peacebuilding is flexible, responsive and innovative. It means carefully planning a relevant route towards lasting peace, and continually assessing whether, within the changing context, it remains feasible, viable, and effective.

Strategic Peacebuilding doesn't stop at bringing people together or reaching a settlement to a dispute. It seeks to change the way people think about and approach conflict, and builds local capacity for managing radical disagreement non-violently. It also responds to the complexity of a conflict environment which not only comprises the parties themselves, but also intervening government actors and third-party practitioners. Strategic peacebuilding engages with these

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interacting layers, connecting the local, national, regional and international levels. It develops meaningful engagement across and between them to better work together to build a durable and resilient peace.

About the author:

Emily Morgan is the director of ORG's Middle East Programme. Prior to joining ORG she worked for Quaker Peace and Social Witness as coordinator of a human rights programme focussed on Israel and Palestine. She also spent six years working for Control Risks, a corporate risk consultancy where she managed due diligence and business intelligence investigations across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Emily holds an MA in Peace Studies from Bradford University and a BA in Arabic from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). She has travelled extensively in the Middle East region, spending considerable time in Egypt, as part of her studies; Lebanon, coordinating an educational care centre for underprivileged children; and the West Bank, Palestine, as a human rights monitor. She is proficient in Arabic and is currently learning Hebrew.

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