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**Association for
Conflict Resolution**

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Dear Colleagues,

The International Section is built around the idea that we all benefit from building networks with each other, understanding more about each other's work, and promoting globally the field of conflict resolution. As we gather this week in Chicago for another compelling International Day and ACR conference, I'm delighted to see the section achieving these goals.

In this edition of the newsletter we include Q&As with the recipients of the 2010 Outstanding Leadership Awards given by the Section's International Development Committee, as well as an introduction to the newest members of the Section's leadership team: new chair-elect Walter Wright and at-large director Alba de Almeida.

We also want to recognize the extremely generous support of the Consensus Building Institute, Consultora Equipo IMCA and Alan E. Gross, whose sponsorship of International Day has permitted our IDC Outstanding Leadership Award recipients to travel from Uganda and India to receive their awards and share their experiences.

Thanks to all of you who support the Section's activities and volunteer your time. I look forward to inspiration from the Section in 2011 and beyond.

Warm regards,

David Plumb

Chair, International Section 2009-2010

Consensus Building Institute
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**ACR International
Section Leadership
2009-2010**

David Plumb
Section Chair 2009-2010

Luis Oré
Section Chair 2010-2011

Walter A. Wright
Section Chair-Elect

Kathleen Coogan
Immediate Past Section Chair

Lynn Cole
At-Large Director

Kyra Buchko
At-Large Director

Alba de Almeida
At-Large Director (incoming)

Janet Murdock
At-Large Director (outgoing)

Gail Ervin
Communications Committee Chair

Rochelle Arms
International Development Committee
Chair

Wendy Betts
Nominations Committee Chair

Maria Lucia Amorocho
CR Networks Committee Chair

Trip Barthel
Sections and Ethics Liaison Chair

Letter from the Chair

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as International Section Chair, to live up to our section's commitment of honoring and building understanding around the differences in cultures, language and approaches to effective conflict resolution and peace building. I am deeply interested in listening and understanding the needs and interests of our section members to jointly explore ways to address those interests, needs and concerns.



I am interested in building upon the extraordinary work of our previous section's leadership. I would like to take the IDC Mentoring Program to the next level. I do believe that we need to keep bringing about awareness of more constructive ways of dealing with differences beyond borders and keep spreading the word of better approaches to challenges and conflicting situations around our small world. One way to do this might be organizing, each of us, activities around Conflict Resolution Day which will take place October 21, 2010

I believe that our will to serve others while shifting paradigms and sharing information and best practices can contribute to the development of a better society; perhaps, the use of social media and new technologies can serve us to take our expertise and experiences to new places... We may have big aspirations, but I am sure that together WE can accomplish what we set as our shared purpose. I look forward to working WITH you all.

Kindest Regards,

Luis E. Oré
Chair, International Section 2010-2011

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Q & A with Sr. Pauline Silver Acayo, Catholic Relief Services



1. How do you describe your work?

I have worked with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) since 1998 in different capacities. In my current role I am the Peacebuilding Officer and Head of the Northern Region Office for CRS in Uganda. I supervise the implementation of projects, including the peace building projects and initiatives that promote dialogue and mediation among the varying ethnic groups in northern Uganda. I work with the cultural and religious institutions and with youth leaders in communities to increase conflict resolution skills, form peace committees and youth peace clubs. My function also includes working with partners to mitigate land disputes and supporting reconciliation ceremonies for returning adults and children formerly abducted by rebels to their community.

2. What personal traits make you good at what you do?

I am a peace-loving person. I have witnessed the disintegration of families and communities and received threats to my life because of my work advocating against the brutal civil war in Uganda. This has only inspired me to work even harder for peace in my country. I belong to

the Little Sisters of Mary Immaculate of Gulu in Uganda and my calling challenges me to use my inter-personal skills to represent the vulnerable communities on issues of safeguarding their human rights and upholding peace and harmony in the community. I am so motivated in my work. This helps me to demonstrate great perseverance, initiative and commitment to promoting human rights activities in northern Uganda.

3. In what situation can you and your organization have the greatest impact?

Seeing the situation in northern Uganda, after over 20 years of war with people living in congested camps, CRS and I can have the greatest impact by supporting activities that strengthen the capacity of both formal and informal leadership systems to resolve conflicts in the community. This includes working with elected and religious leaders as well as area land committees and community and cultural leaders, including women and youth. In a situation where there is no trust among the community members, CRS works to build trust and confidence among the leaders at the grass roots and district levels. We enable them to speak with one voice and urge communities to resolve conflict non-violently.

We support activities that promote the improvement of the quality of life in the community by providing psychosocial support to the formerly abducted people and those stigmatized by HIV/AIDS. We empower the community to mitigate conflicts among the members, such as reducing land wrangles and domestic violence associated with land issues in target communities. This work includes strengthening the capacity of our partners in peace building with trainings in mediation, dialogue and negotiation as well as conflict management, resolution and transformation.

4. In what area would you like to see the field grow?

I would like to see continued integration of peace building in all the CRS Country programs, like Agriculture, Micro Finance, HIV/AIDS, Water and Sanitation and Partnership, in order to strengthen the foundation for peace in Uganda. This includes changing the unjust structures by developing right relationships and strengthening institutional frameworks for sustaining peace.

We need to continue with the documentation of the best practices and lessons learned through experiences in conflict mitigation and peace building.

Q & A with Ashok Panikkar, Meta-Culture



1. How do you describe your work?

We at Meta-Culture use a range of tools and modules to help people talk constructively with each other. Through better communication we address conflicts and issues of differences. In the process, we also help individuals and organizations leverage those differences to enhance learning and innovation.

2. What personal traits make you good at what you do?

My interest in people and who they really are, what they value and how they want to be perceived, as well as my interest in human behavior and thinking processes. Also, my ability to pay very close attention to the people I'm talking with and an ability to pay close attention to groups and group dynamics. I also have a distrust of easy categorizations such as 'victim' and 'oppressor' and I empathize with those usually deemed to be the 'other'.

3. In what situations can you and your organization have the greatest impact?

We can have great impact whenever we have the luxury of working in a sustained fashion with a group over a period of time.

4. What kind of people does the field need going forward?

People committed to making this a career. Enthusiastic young people who are interested in peace building and conflict resolution, not because they are conflict avoidant or think disputes are distasteful—but because they appreciate that

human relations are complex and they would like to engage constructively with differences.

5. In what area would you like to see the field grow?

We need to grow in many different areas. If we wish to change the culture of discourse we need to work simultaneously at the family (micro) as well as the national/international (macro) levels. We also need to work at the corporate and the community levels.



Staff of Bangalore-based Meta-Culture

Introducing...



Walter A. Wright

Chair-Elect,
International Section

Walter A. Wright is an Associate Professor of Legal Studies in the Department of Political Science, teaching courses in both law and mediation, at Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas. Starting as a law practitioner in 1979, Wright has concentrated on domestic and international commercial transactions and commercial litigation. He discovered his passion for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) when he took his first mediation course in 1986. Since then he has mediated hundreds of cases in the areas of employment discrimination, disability discrimination, commercial litigation and family and community concerns. Wright has published articles about mediation throughout Latin America. He is currently the director and editor of an ADR newsletter called *El Acuerdo* in Argentina. Wright is also presently involved in two facilitated dialogue projects, one in Ecuador and one in Panama. As a member of all three of ACR's founding organizations, he has been a member of ACR and its International Section since its inception. As Wright has noted, "The International Section provides outstanding opportunities for practitioners and scholars from the entire world to meet and share their knowledge, experience and wisdom." In his position, Wright looks forward to enhancing the Spanish Track and International Day by increasing international participation in Conflict Resolution Day. We warmly welcome Walter A. Wright as our Incoming Chair for the International Section of ACR.



**María Alba Aiello
de Almeida**

Director-at-Large,
International Section

María Alba Aiello de Almeida has been the Director of Outreach for the International Sector (2009 - 2010) and will now become Director-at-Large for ACR's International Section. She has been an attorney and simultaneously has an extensive background as a mediator, specializing in training social actors to establish peace, and as an educator, teaching at universities in Argentina, Chile and Cuba. De Almeida is the co-author of four books on mediation, one book on the ethical value of labor and has authored numerous articles on ADR, law and ethics. Her upcoming book is entitled, "Instruments for Social Change." De Almeida believes that, "the International Section has a fundamental relevance in the development of ACR's objectives, as it is the instrument through which ACR incorporates an exchange of experiences with other cultures, reciprocally enriching everyone's contributions." De Almeida looks forward to establishing a collaborative virtual network for ADR professionals to facilitate the transmission of experiences as well as translated texts. We greatly appreciate María Alba Aiello de Almeida for her continued commitment to ACR's International Section.

ACR International Section

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Consensus Building Institute

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IMCA is a Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration Interdisciplinary Consultancy, composed of professionals from various disciplines: lawyers, doctors, psychologists, social workers, labor relations graduates, economists, engineers, and educators. Established in 1995, IMCA's aim is to cultivate social peace by: spreading the knowledge and use of methods of prevention, management and conflict resolution; improving interpersonal and organizational relationships; and opening doors to better coexistence through negotiation and creativity.

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Alan E. Gross