

## **WPP-Africa Board Exchange with Asia Board Training 2011**

WPP-Africa and the Asia Desk of the IFOR Women Peacemakers Program met in Manila, Philippines from January 16th to 22nd 2011 to embark on a session of sharing for a deeper awareness of Gender Sensitive Active Nonviolence as a way of life, as well as for a renewal and commitment to the fidelity of living out Active Nonviolence.

Some of the issues examined included Gender as a Social construct, and the system of values, norms and mechanisms put in place by Social Institution/forces, so as to maintain social control on gender roles that perpetuate unequal gender relations in society. It was reiterated that Gender equality and women's empowerment are central to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - as just and desirable ends, and as vehicles for the achievement of all the other goals.



It was emphasized that socialization institutions like the family, church, school, government, mass media, work, and community has a major role to play in redefining social placements on the basis of Gender, and that Civil Society had a major role to play in undoing “negative” socialization.

Power relations and tendencies towards violence were also assessed. It was the consensus that Cultural violence leads to structural violence when it is incorporated into formal legal and economic exchanges. While individual acts of direct violence have many causes, their



occurrence is frequently predicated upon a larger and often hidden structure that induces violence. It is one's own challenge to transform oneself from a violent script to a non violent script. It was concluded that although individual acts of direct violence have many causes, their occurrence is frequently predicated upon a larger and often hidden structure that induces violence. It is

one's own challenge to transform oneself from a violent script to a non violent script.

Participants came to a further understanding that spirituality is essential to overcoming violence; the dignity of each person is recognized by fully respecting the “inner and transcendent dimension of the human person”, which is at the core of what it means to be a human being. “Through the free exercise of conscience and moral decision making, human beings are able to transform themselves into living members of social life whose good will, charity and hope promote the dignity and well-being of every member of the human family”



Active Nonviolence overcomes evil, obtains justice and brings about fraternal relationship and reconciliation and healing on both the victim and the oppressor. Both the victim and the aggressor share a common humanity/humanness. It appeals and restores the humanness of

the aggressor in the hope of triggering a reciprocal or mutuality of response to both the aggressor and victim. It seeks to destroy enmity, not the enemy.



Discussions also centered on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 worldwide.

These resolutions are important international mandates requiring automatic adoption by member-states of the UN.