

# ICAR News

A Publication of the Institute for  
Conflict Analysis and Resolution

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

## Fatah, Hamas and the Future of Palestine

By Marc Gopin Professor of World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, [mgopin@gmu.edu](mailto:mgopin@gmu.edu)

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Ever since the disastrous split in Palestinian leadership of several years ago into Fatah and Hamas it has become clear that disunity has been a critical factor standing in the way of Palestinian statehood. Many reconciliation efforts, with several third parties, were attempted and aborted. This time it seems that things are different, despite the enormous ideological divisions and outstanding grievances between Fatah and Hamas.



Non-violent demonstration, Palestine. Photo: Michael Loadenthal, Flickr.com.

Why is this happening now? Clearly, the historic impact of the “Arab Spring” on Egypt and Syria, and across the region, is an enormous game changer. The increasing instability of Syria suggests that there is a strong possibility that A) Hamas may no longer have a stable home in Syria, but, on the other hand, Palestinians now have a much more sympathetic ear in Egypt which has been critical as a peace broker. B) Syria has long prevented its

own Palestinian population from any kind of political activism, preferring to keep them as a bargaining chip to get back the Golan. But events of Naqba Day 2011 suggest that there are elements in Syria who are ready to unleash the power of the Palestinian masses against Israel if they see their internal situation increasingly destabilized by what they say are “outside agitators”. In other words, if the spirit of the Arab Spring brings them down then these elements are threatening to take Israel with them. All of this is new and is due to the unprecedented power and effects of Arab nonviolent resistance.

Aziz Abu Sarah is Co-Executive Director of CRDC, a leading Palestinian peacebuilder, architect of CRDC citizen

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COMMENTARY

# S-CAR Hosts the OIC: Conflict Resolution in the Islamic World

By Terrence Lyons, Associate Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, tlyons1@gmu.edu



Director Andrea Bartoli, HE. Prof Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Director Cemil Aydin. Photo: GMU.

On April 11, 2011, the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR), the Center for Global Studies, and the Ali Vural Ak Center for Islamic Studies welcomed HE Prof Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to George Mason University. The OIC is the world's second largest inter-governmental organization, consisting of 57 member states from across four continents. Ihsanoglu, who previously taught at the University of Istanbul, spoke on "The Role of the OIC in Conflict Resolution: Involving Member States and Muslim Communities." A large audience of faculty, students, diplomats, international media, and other invited guests participated.

The OIC placed conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post-conflict peace building at the center of its ten-year program of action, adopted in 2005. In his remarks at S-CAR, Ihsanoglu noted that regional organizations had greater vested interests in resolving conflicts in their own backyards and a better ability to mobilize "home-grown mechanisms" to address the root causes of con-

flicts. A number of regional organizations, notably the Africa Union and sub-regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, have taken on increasingly important roles in peacekeeping. The OIC has particular authority as the largest organization representing 1.6 billion Muslims around the world. It has taken leadership in countering Islamophobia in the West and in promoting tolerance and dialogue. Along with its leadership on behalf of the global Islamic community, the OIC has important roles and authority when a conflict is between communities defined by their relationship to Islam. This is seen in the case of its successful negotiation of the 2006 Makkah agreement to reduce sectarian violence between Shias and Sunnis in Iraq.

Following opening remarks by Dr. Andrea Bartoli, Ihsanoglu was introduced by Dr. Cemil Aydin, Director of the Ali Vural Ak Center for Islamic Studies at George Mason University. Professors Terrence Lyons, Sara Cobb, and Marc Gopin highlighted a series of themes and opened up the discussion following Ihsanoglu's presentation. The faculty asked about the experiences of the OIC in conflict resolution and in particular whether there were particular characteristics of peacemaking embedded within Islam. The discussants picked up on the Secretary-General's remark that he always looked for a particular "angle" or entry point to engage in conflict resolution, a framing that differs from the focus on "neutrality" that characterizes much of the literature in the field of negotiations and mediation. As the OIC develops its capacities and commitment to conflict analysis and resolution, S-CAR looks forward to building on these early conversations and deepening our relationship with the organization. ■



(left to right) Prof. Marc Gopin, Aziz Abu Sarah, Scott Cooper, unknown, Director Andrea Bartoli, Director Cemil Aydin, unknown, HE. Prof Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu. Photo: GMU.



# The Limits of Reconciliation: Applied Practice and Theory in South Africa

By Karina Korostelina, Associate Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, ckoroste@gmu.edu



The South Africa Applied Practice and Theory Team. Photo: K. Korostelina

Every year a team of graduate students taking the Applied Practice and Theory (APT) course conducts research on an overseas conflict. The purpose of the course is to give students experience in understanding dynamics of conflict that include issues of violence, injustice, and discrimination, as well as developing research and practice projects on conflict resolution. This year, students decided to conduct research on post-apartheid society in South Africa, with the objective of understanding the current state of intergroup relations and national identity in South Africa and the factors that contribute to them. In January 2011, the team traveled to South Africa to conduct interviews in Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Johannesburg, and Pretoria. Students met and interviewed forty-one experts, learned how to develop a snowball sampling, how to negotiate and organize everyday activities in a different cultural context, and explored South African culture and social life. Every evening the team met for debriefings to discuss interviews conducted during the day. Students demonstrated an impressive devotion to research, and their dedication to teamwork was incomparable. As a result the team was able to explore the complex relationships between intergroup relations, national identity, economic development, integration of minorities, sport, history education, mass media, religion, and peace-building in South Africa. Some of the findings supported our previous knowledge about South Africa's post-apartheid society while other results were truly surprising.

The majority of our interviewees stated that the concept of Rainbow Nation is no longer relevant to the majority of South Africans. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission did not address the core of the Apartheid issue, and did not fully succeed in bringing reconciliation to society. While

mainline churches continue to work on integration, new churches are contributing to religious divides that impact national identity. The legacy of Apartheid is still salient and is reflected in very limited inter-racial interactions; mixing of groups has been largely limited to the middle class in professional/academic shared spaces. Students observed that in public spaces despite a growing tendency for multiracial environments at work and universities, representatives of different races prefer to spend free time, lunches, and dinners with people of their own race. Finally, while the media is free, it does not equally represent all social groups and does not contribute to positive intergroup perceptions.

The team's conclusions suggest that race is still a contested issue and is strongly related to the interdependency of class and race identities, supported by the persisting economic inequalities. A lack of economic opportunity remains for a majority of non-whites, which is a major concern for South Africa's future stability. Indians and Coloured are not completely integrated and continue to experience discrimination. They also found that one of the major factors of unifying the nation is rugby, nevertheless lack of resources for development in youth sport programs prevents improvement of intergroup relations. Moreover, youth are not exposed to or interested in the history of Apartheid and South Africa. The team's research showed that conflict resolution and reconciliation take place within civil society, while peace-building remains a neglected domain at the government level. South Africa is a young democratic nation, which is robust and increasingly optimistic about their capacity to succeed as a nation. However, a more comprehensive approach to peacebuilding should be developed to ensure positive inter-racial relations and cooperation. ■

initiatives

# "Exploring Communities Today": Undergraduate Annual Spring Conference

By Brydin Banning Undergraduate Program Director, [bbanning@gmu.edu](mailto:bbanning@gmu.edu)

As the university pushes for more emphasis on undergraduate scholarship opportunities, S-CAR proudly displayed its commitment to George Mason University's Students as Scholars Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at its Second Annual Spring Conference. The conference was established in 2010 as a means to provide an outlet for undergraduate research in the field of conflict analysis and resolution. This year's installment, titled "Exploring Communities Today: Dilemmas & Opportunities," focused on the program's mezzo concentration.

The conference hosted nine participants who submitted papers from around the country, as well as from various academic units within the university. This diversity correlated with the variety of research topics discussed, which included the role of video games in conflict, sustainable transportation, and the impact Facebook has on social revolution. The award for best paper was given to Mary B. Chamberlain from James Madison University for her paper titled Post-Genocide Conflict Resolution: A Comparative Case Study of the Holocaust and Rwanda.

The conference also served as a platform for this year's crop of graduating seniors to display their culminating project from CONF 490, the undergraduate program's capstone course. Under the instruction of Professor Daniel Rothbart, each student created a visual display of a specific conflict that included historical background information on the conflict parties, causes and consequences of the conflict, and a conflict map. Students presented their analyses to judges



S-CAR's Second Annual Spring Conference paper presenters. Photo: B. Banning.

Patricia Maulden, Julie Shedd, Lisa Shaw, and Susan Hirsch, among others. Those in attendance were met with a variety of topics, including Somali piracy, U.S./Mexican drug trafficking, labor disputes in the steel industry, and the debate over the definition of marriage. Christian Mullins received the award for top poster for his work, "Afghanistan: A History of Civil Strife."

With the room at full capacity, the event concluded with a keynote address from Anas "Andy" Shallal, community activist and owner of the renowned D.C.-metropolitan chain Busboys and Poets. Shallal focused on the importance of bringing the community together and encouraging differing or opposing viewpoints to be heard and discussed. He facilitates this type of dialogue through open mic nights, artwork, and mediated discussions at his restaurants. Shallal was peppered with questions ranging from the origin of the name Busboys and Poets to whether he's hiring at the moment.

At the end of the day, it was evident that the ICAR Undergraduate Program Second Annual Spring Conference accomplished what it was established to do. The recognition of scholarship was palpable throughout the day, from the presentations by the panelists in the morning to the entire lower level of the building buzzing with students and faculty inquiring about one another's research in the afternoon. With the success of this year's conference, the undergraduate program looks forward to making the Annual Spring Conference a marquee event in the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution's future. ■

## Upcoming S-CAR Community Events

**Saturday, September 10, 2011**

Welcome Dinner

TBC

**Tuesday, October 25, 2011**

23rd Annual Lynch Lecture: Mme. Yan Yunqi

TBC

**Thursday, November 10, 2011**

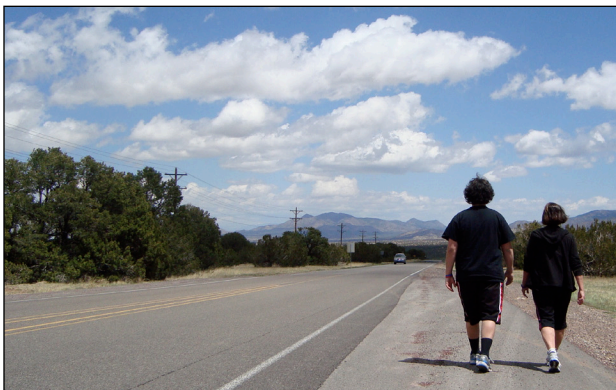
Open House

TBC

<http://icar.gmu.edu/events-roster>

# Student Opinion: Women Across America

By Mary Knapp, S-CAR MS Alumna, msmknapp@aol.com



Mary Knapp and Chandler Fredenberg-Knapp on the road.  
Photo: M. Knapp.

**M**ary Knapp, an S-CAR graduate, and her 22 year old son, Chandler Fredenberg-Knapp are walking across America to raise awareness of the need for greater participation by women, in partnership with men, in efforts to resolve global challenges. “With the world interconnected economically, technologically, environmentally and socially,” says Mary, “What is needed now are women with the skills to communicate, collaborate, share information, manage resources and weave together the well-being of families and communities.”

Mary and Chandler left Oceanside, California on March 8th and are walking across California, Arizona, New Mexico, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia and Virginia and will arrive in Washington, D.C. on August 13th. The purpose of the walk is to mobilize women to take action and leadership positions in local, national and international affairs.

Mary is a trained mediator and obtained her Master’s Degree from S-CAR. Mary is also the author of *Brushing the Cobwebs from the Sky: Awakening to Passion and Purpose*, and has been a weekly columnist for a New York Times Regional News Group. Mary’s articles focus on political, social and family issues, as well as writing feature articles for various newspapers and magazines. A dual citizen of the U.S. and Sweden, Mary is married to her high school sweetheart whom she calls “the finest man on the planet.”

With a life-long passion for social evolution, she has worked over 30 years with marginalized populations in various community based organizations. “*It’s not India, China or the Internet that are the keys to economic growth; it’s women. At this global crossroads between survival and extinction,*

## Recent S-CAR Articles, Op-Eds, Letters to the Editor, and Media Appearances

### Why Washington must look to Ankara

Michael Shank, S-CAR Ph.D. Candidate

*The Guardian*, 5/15/11

### Yemen: Expert says 'regulated escalation' expected Friday

Ibrahim Sharqieh, S-CAR Ph.D. Alumnus

*Los Angeles Times* 5/12/11

### Still hope for a deal in Yemen despite Saleh's GCC snub

Ibrahim Sharqieh, S-CAR Ph.D. Alumnus

*The National*, 5/2/11

### Islam's Nonviolent Tradition

Michael Shank, S-CAR Ph.D. Candidate

*The Nation*, 4/27/11

### Effects of a Potential Government Shut-down: Analysis by Solon Simmons

Analysis by Solon Simmons, S-CAR Professor

*CTV*, 4/8/11

<http://icar.gmu.edu/media>

*what the world needs is a woman’s touch to bring security and stability to this beleaguered world that is in so much tears and trouble.”*

Mary’s son, Chandler Fredenberg-Knapp, is a student in Peace and Conflict Studies at Malmö University in Sweden where he is a writer and co-host of a program addressing the challenges of living in today’s multi-ethnic Sweden. Chandler has worked on various humanitarian projects across the world; he is also a trained peer mediator and works with young people.

Local women and men are invited to join the walk; participate in the D.C. event; host them along the way; or donate funds to help offset expenses. ■

Mary can be contacted by email: [msmknapp@aol.com](mailto:msmknapp@aol.com), or by telephone: 646-410-7958.

PRESS



## Dolores Gomez Moran, Ombudsperson

By Tamar Palandjian, S-CAR M.S. Student, tpalandj@gmu.edu

**D**olores Gómez-Morán, George Mason University's Ombudsperson, was recently named as a Certified Organizational Ombudsman Practitioner (CO-OP) from the Board of Certification of the International Ombudsman Association (IOA). Because the IOA only recently established the certification process in 2009 Gómez-Morán is now one of only fifty internationally certified Ombudspersons.

According to Gómez-Morán, CO-OP certification is an important achievement for George Mason University, as it shows that the Ombudsman operates and conducts its business to the highest standards of the profession. In addition, the CO-OP credentialing program is a very important step for ombuds offices at large since it helps to promote awareness about the Ombuds office, ensures consistency in maintaining ethical values and standards of practice, can help protect integrity, and enhance the professional development of Ombudspersons overall.

Serving as University Ombudsman since 2007, she works with graduate and undergraduate students on problem-solving and conflict

resolution, mediating disputes, designing and implementing trainings for the campus community, and also providing recommendations on university policies and procedures. Moreover, she is extensively involved with the ombuds community by participating and presenting on numerous occasions at conferences organized by the International Ombudsman Association, the European Network for Ombudsman in Higher Education, the Mexican University Ombudsmen Network, and the Virginia Mediator Network. She has also recently become a part of a local initiative among Ombudspersons in Higher Education in the State of Virginia and is a member of the Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR). ■



Dolores Gomez Moran, GMU Ombudsperson. Photo: D. Moran.

For more information visit, <http://ombudsman.gmu.edu>

## Ethan Finley, S-CAR Ph.D. Candidate

By Kristin Moriarty, S-CAR M.S. Student, kmoriart@gmu.edu



Ethan Finley, S-CAR Ph.D. Candidate. Photo: S-CAR.

**E**than's journey to ICAR had its roots between 2002-2004 while he spent time taking care of his grandmother. During this period she helped him discover his passion and interest in studying social conflict. At her suggestion he began searching for conflict resolution programs and found

ICAR. After completing the Master's program in 2008, Ethan was accepted in to the Ph.D. program as a Presidential Scholar.

Ethan has been teaching as a Graduate Lecturer for the Undergraduate Program for the past 3 semesters. He teaches CONF 300: Conflict Resolution Techniques and Practices. Ethan first co-taught this course with Wallace Warfield who acted as a mentor, an opportunity he views as a blessing. Ethan Finley has had a significant

impact on many of his students; recently he received an "Excellence in Teaching Award" from the National Honor Society for Undergraduate Juniors.

Ethan has a wide range of practice experience, making important contributions to the conflict resolution field. He has worked as a Dialogue Facilitation Coordinator with youth from conflict zones at a summer camp called Face to Face | Faith to Faith. While in the Master's program, he was part of an applied practice and theory team that worked on a community conflict resolution initiative focusing on immigration issues in Prince William County.

As part of his graduate research assistant position with Professor Susan Hirsch, Ethan is currently working on the Undergraduate Experiential Learning Project, which develops experiential learning activities for undergraduate students. Ethan's Ph.D. dissertation is focusing on youth and violence prevention. He is very interested in continuing his work with young people and peacebuilding. ■

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Marc Gopin, ICAR  
Professor. Photo: GMU  
Creative Services.



Aziz Abu Sarah, CRDC  
Co-executive Director.  
Photo: CRDC.

diplomacy interventions in Palestine and Israel, and an important analyst featured in numerous Middle Eastern outlets. He explains Hamas' and Fatah's evolving strategies this way:

*"Hamas has been following the changes in the Middle East with growing interest and anxiety. The centers of power are changing, and some of their allies in the region are facing internal challenges and uprisings that they might not survive. They learned from watching the Arab revolutions that there is the potential for unrest in Gaza due to frustration with the status quo. At one point Gazans will ask Hamas' leaders what are they doing to make a difference, and the people will not be satisfied with just blaming Israel. They want to see a difference in their lives and they expect their leaders to have a strategy that would lead them to freedom, dignity and security. A unity government will legitimize Hamas, especially in the Arab world. Both Khaled Mashal and Ismail Hanniyeh have spoken publicly about accepting a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders. Many believe that Hamas was waiting for President Abbas to negotiate an agreement before jumping onboard."*

In other words, the Arab Spring of the young has already come to Gaza, and it is re-structuring the strategy of Hamas. The same can be said of Fatah, who were facing a restive youthful population in recent months, ready and eager to join the Arab Spring. Aziz explains:

*"The Palestinian leadership decided that they must choose a different avenue if they want to shake the political stalemate. This new path includes the internationalization of the Palestinian case and putting Israel under pressure by countries sympathetic to the Palestinian cause."*

The Arab revolutions are making all power brokers re-calculate their strategic interests in terms of the power, voice and interests of the young masses. The fear among the elites, whether or not the young protestors achieve all of their aims, is

palpable, and most recently exposed in the creation of a Colombian mercenary army for the UAE by the scandalous founder of Blackwater.

I am concerned, however, about the possibility of 'throwing the baby out with the bath water'. Many a noble Palestinian and Israeli hammered out a livable two state solution based on the '67 borders, and it is not clear that the youth--nor Hamas--are in the mood to move all this energy of resistance back to a two-state solution. It is not clear to me how Hamas could ever be integrated not only into a peaceful relationship with Israel but also with a secular Palestine. Nevertheless, I agree with Aziz that Mashal and Hanniyeh sent clear signals in recent years for what a viable peace deal with Israel would look like, good signals.

It is true that Hamas will not recognize Israel's right to exist as a starting point for negotiations, especially negotiations that turned during the Oslo years into an endless pretext for successive Israeli political coalitions to take more land. Hamas, despite its abhorrent use of violence against innocents, may have been right to not want to give away recognition of Israel until there is a real deal, and that this was Arafat's fateful error. They may have legitimate reasons to consider the Quartet's demands on them regarding recognition as unreasonable.

Hamas, however, should listen to the masses across the region and write a new page in their history, as did the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and that is the new page of nonviolence and democracy. Hamas therefore should play its part in nonviolent resistance and state building by enforcing a hudna, a long-term ceasefire with Israel without recognizing Israel, in order to test Israel's intentions and behavior, and in order to create the space for a viable two-state solution to be realized.

It is nonviolence that is the key here to the future, it is the key to the heart of Westerners and Americans who ultimately must get behind a Palestinian state, and it is the key to moving the mostly liberal Jewish masses in America into a clear coalition for Palestinian statehood. Many polls suggest that there is a majority in Israel and especially among American Jews for Palestinian statehood if nonviolence is the method and goal of its achievement. Now that Hamas is not as encumbered by Syria and Egypt it should seize the opportunity to present a new, defiant but peaceful face to the world.

The Palestinian Authority is already putting all its efforts into a nonviolent strategy of unprecedented proportions. Quietly there is support for the

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nonviolent resistance movements in the village, and publicly there is a massive and successful campaign for the unilateral declaration of statehood. Palestinian leadership is engaged in a high-stakes nonviolent resistance strategy, using their assets—global fatigue with Netanyahu's government and over forty years of occupation. This may also press the United States to go where President Obama was incapable of moving it, certainly in his first term given the power of the Lobby and the weakness of his political party. But considering the sweeping changes across the Middle East and the rising din of the popular voice of nonviolent resistance, the United States may be forced to confront the Israeli government with a stark choice; accept the Clintonian parameters of a two-state solution based on the '67 borders, or face a Middle East marching with Palestinians toward Jerusalem.

Aziz Abu Sarah concludes:

*"Palestinians are changing the rules of the game. They are*

*two steps ahead of Netanyahu and Obama in their strategic planning. The Palestinian strategy has been for too long emotional, filled with reactionary responses to Israeli actions, and consequently unproductive. It is a breath of fresh air for Palestinians to see their leaders making a giant shift in their behavior. The reconciliation between Hamas and Fatah and the clear strategy for achieving independence is inspiring Palestinians to believe once again in their leaders."* ■

### Announcement:

We have recently become the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, as such this publication will return in the Fall as S-CAR News.



## Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution

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