

War Prevention Works

Editor: Dylan Mathews

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This book, recently published by the Oxford Research Group, contains 50 stories of people resolving conflict. There are case studies of conflict resolution from Sudan, India, turkey, South Africa and a host of other countries. In Sudan the Dinka and Nuer chiefs of two opposing tribes listened to each other's stories for three full days as though they were peeling back layers of pain and discovering afresh that at their core they are from one family.

In Tajikistan, key figures agreed to meet, to listen carefully, to speak from the heart, and respect the sensitivities of others to end the civil war. In Colombia and Nicaragua the presence of American citizens and Peace Brigades International helped to defend human rights and deter contra attacks. In El Salvador, business leaders organised a 'goods for guns' scheme which was so successful that by the end of the second weekend almost US\$130,000 worth of vouchers had been given out when the organisers had only US\$19,500 in the bank. The President of the country intervened to provide enough money to contribute to and expand the programme.

If only the great powers would learn the lessons of these stories, the world could be a much safer place.

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Reviewed by: Vijay Mehta

Vijay Mehta is an author of several books, Chair of Uniting for Peace, President of Mehta Centre and Founding Trustee of Fortune Forum Charity. *The Sunday Times* described him as a 'longstanding activist for peace, development, human rights and the environment', who along with his daughter, Renu Mehta, has set a precedent for striving to change the world. (*The Sunday Times*, 1 February 2009). Vijay Mehta's new book "**The Economics of Killing: How the West Fuels Wars and Poverty in the Developing World**" will be published by Pluto Press in spring 2012.