

**THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR BRITAIN  
AND IRELAND (TRCBI)**

**Peacemaking in Britain and Ireland**

25 July 2009  
11 – 5.00 pm

Quaker Meeting House,  
Frederick Street off York Street,  
Belfast, Northern Ireland

Speaker:

**Vijay Mehta**

Contact:

International Institute of Peace Studies and Global Philosophy  
TRCIB, *Rhos y Gallt, Llanerfyl, Nr. Welshpool, Powys, Wales, SY21 OER*  
01938 820 586

Vijay Mehta

[vijay@vmpeace.org](mailto:vijay@vmpeace.org)

[www.vmpeace.org](http://www.vmpeace.org)

[www.actionfourrenewal.org.uk](http://www.actionfourrenewal.org.uk)

## **Contents**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Why we need Truth and Reconciliation Commissions**
- 3. The troubles in Northern Ireland**
- 4. Northern Ireland peace process**
- 5. Dangers to the stability of the peace process**
- 6. The alternatives for a long term peaceful future for Britain and Ireland?**
- 7. Conclusion**

## **Introduction**

Thanks Dr Thomas Daffern, Nikki Hague and the International Institute of Peace Studies for inviting me to give a talk today. Dr Daffern is an extraordinary peace thinker and a philosopher who has advocated a path of non-violence and interfaith dialogue to resolve conflicts and bring peace in the world. He is an inspiration to us all.

It is great to be here in the historic city of Belfast, among people who have risen above violence and were not defeated by the perpetrators of atrocities. They left their narrow mindedness behind and dedicated themselves to live in peace for themselves and their future generations.

I bring you greetings and a message from Archbishop Desmond Tutu who chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for South Africa. I met him at a reception at 10 Downing Street, hosted in his honour by Sarah Brown wife of the Prime Minister. I told him that I am going to Belfast to give a talk at TRCBI. He immediately wished us all well for today and asked me to see the BBC documentary called Facing the Truth which is also on the same theme. He also praised what we are doing and said 'it is our duty to help people trapped in evil regimes to free them from oppression'.

Thousands of years of conflicts and wars span over history of world civilisation. Humanity has been subject to religious, tribal, territorial and resource wars bringing endless bloodshed, misery and suffering. Europe also has a tarnished history with two world wars, holocaust, dictatorships in Spain, Portugal, Greece and Stalin's Gulags in the Soviet Union. It was also a Western country that was the first and only country to use atomic bombs resulting in loss of lives in large numbers in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. So, one can say that there has not been much success in peacekeeping. So today's meeting on peacemaking in Britain and Ireland is timely, the peace agreement is in place, but how we can keep continued peace is of vital importance. It is absolutely essential that peace is maintained as statistics show that most of the peace agreements fall back to conflicts within 2-5 years.

Many years ago, during the darkest days and nights of Northern Ireland troubles, a local newspaper invited children to write of their hopes for Northern Ireland. One little girl wrote, 'I want to grow up in a Northern Ireland where you can look at a sunset without wondering what are they bombing tonight.'

Today's children see sunsets instead of bombs. As a community they have faced and accepted realities; engaged in dialogue; achieved consensus; accepted compromise and witnessed the signs and symbols of peace

## **Why we need Truth and Reconciliation Commissions**

We need TRC's like the one today for Britain and Ireland to bring together victims and perpetrators, once adversaries, to tell each other their stories, face to face, to break the silence and tell the truth as truth has the power to set you free

To prevent future conflicts, we are holding a Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) like the one in South Africa, Peru, East Timor and Morocco. The tribunals for Rwanda and Yugoslavia are other examples. These bring into open grievances of the warring tribes, nations and religions about the misgivings of different communities. It brings home the fact that inside all of us, we are essentially the same – human beings pursuing the same goals of peace and

happiness. We need TRC's for Burma, Sri-Lanka, Middle-East, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan to bring and end to the hostilities, and live in peace.

The effort to give a name to the victims and killers begins a collective act of repentance, a national catharsis. The process, as seen in South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, is the only escape. And while justice is not always done--in South Africa the full admission of crimes saw killers granted an amnesty--dignity, identity, and most important, memory are returned. This, for many families, is enough.

**Peacekeeping to be effective is combination of several factors which include dialogue and mediation at the pre-conflict stage, enforcement of peace during the war, giving parties breathing space to reach an agreement, and post-conflict reconstruction when the warring parties entered a peace agreement and trying to work things together for a future free of violence.**

**However, I will argue that the reconciliation in the pre-conflict mode is the most important for not only finding causes and reasons for tensions and hostilities but also for resolving disputes before they become full-blown conflict. This is the sign of a successful peacekeeping operation. It not only saves millions of lives which are lost in a nasty conflict, but also saves billions of dollars (\$7 billion dollars at present spent on peacekeeping) and free much needed valuable resources (food, water, energy, etc) which are increasingly short in supply.**

### **The troubles in Northern Ireland**

Since 1969 over 3200 people have died as a result of political violence in Northern Ireland. Three more people – two soldiers and a policeman – were murdered as recently as March 2009. Respective responsibility was claimed by two nationalist fringe organisations who are opposed to the peace process that became institutionalized in late 1998. Although this sort of largely politically motivated violence has remained very much the exception for the last ten years or so, a report of the Independent Monitoring Commission of early May 2009 states that ‘there has been a continuing high level of serious violent activity.’ According to the Commission ‘overall dissident activity since early summer 2008 has been consistently more serious’ than at any time since the IMC started reporting in April 2004. It is clear that ‘the current ongoing violence is an attempt to destroy the peace process’ by, for example, provoking an ‘over-reaction by the authorities’. The vicious clash between rival football fans in late May 2009 which resulted in the brutal murder of a Catholic man by more than forty protestant Glasgow Rangers supporters in Coleraine who went on a violent rampage to celebrate Rangers’ clinching of the Scottish football league title also brought the past back to mind. It demonstrated once again that deep-seated divisions still exist and the potential for sectarian violence remains although it has become a much less frequent occurrence than was the case in the 1970s and 1980s.

The conflict in Northern Ireland began in its modern form with the 1921 division of Ireland. It has reflected a struggle between different national, cultural and religious identities – commonly depicted as a struggle between the unionist Protestant majority (53%) and the Catholic minority (44%). Many of the latter, but by no means all of them, regard themselves as Irish nationalists and aspire to achieve a reunited Ireland.

In the course of the 1970s and 1980s many attempts were made to arrive at some sort of compromise to end the violence which had begun to escalate with the growth of the civil rights movement in 1968/69. Eventually the talks and negotiations between SDLP (Social Democratic and Labour Party) leader John Hume and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams began to intensify in the early to mid-1990s. With the active involvement of the British governments led by John Major and Tony Blair and the Irish governments led by Albert Reynolds, John Bruton and Bertie Ahern

as well as through active engagement by the American Clinton administration and not least under the impression of renewed IRA violence a compromise solution was finally reached: the Good Friday Agreement of 10 April 1998.

### **The Northern Ireland peace process**

The Good Friday Agreement, or Belfast Agreement, called for devolved government and thus for the transfer of power from London to Belfast. It also established a Northern Irish Assembly and Executive (the provincial government) in which unionists and nationalists share power. In addition a North-South Ministerial Council and a British-Irish Council was set up. Not least, the Good Friday Agreement also contained provisions on decommissioning, policing, human rights, and prisoners. The Agreement recognizes that a change in the status of Northern Ireland can only come about with the consent of the majority of the Northern Irish people.

Voters in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland approved the Agreement in two separate referenda on 22 May 1998. Elections to the new Northern Irish Assembly took place on 25 June 1998. Yet, implementation of the peace agreement has been difficult, and sporadic violence from dissident groups that oppose the peace process continues. Moreover, the devolved government has been characterized by a good deal of instability, initially with decommissioning and policing the major sticking points.

Still, on the whole, the Northern Irish peace process appears to be working. The relatively well-functioning cooperation of a power-sharing government made up of unionists and nationalists was a surprise to many. This cooperation culminated when Ian Paisley, the first minister and notorious unionist firebrand, and his deputy Martin McGuinness, a former IRA commander, developed very close and friendly relations. Even the recent murder of the three security personnel mentioned above did not end or seriously de-stabilize the consensus among all political spectra in Northern Ireland that the peace process must continue. After all, Sinn Fein deputy president Martin McGuinness called the murderers traitors to the island of island and Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein's president, visited the murdered policeman's family. Fortunately the murders did not provoke any violent counter-reaction from the loyalist side as could easily have been the case as in the past.

Since 1998 Northern Ireland has developed into a very different place; a place where increasingly democratic politics and the strictly enforced observation of human rights and individual liberties rather than the gun and the threat and the use of violence determine the political process. Northern Ireland also has become a much more pleasant place to live, and not just because of its fabulous countryside.

A number of the major reasons for the successful transformation of the 'Troubles' into a relatively well functioning Northern Irish peace process are listed below. Some of these points may serve as a a model for other global peace processes. However, it must be recognized that many of the reasons listed below arose from the complexities of the local Northern Irish situation and cannot easily be transplanted to other countries and continents.

Among some of the main factors that have made a distinct contribution to the Northern Irish peace process are the following:

- By the mid 1990s, an increasing exhaustion and tiredness with the conflict and its violence could be noticed. Increasingly the support among in particular the nationalist population for the 'Troubles' began to wane until hardly any sympathy for nationalist violence has remained among the nationalist section of the population (for example the recent murder of the three security personnel referred to above found almost no support among the nationalist

populace).

- The rising economic prosperity in both parts of Ireland throughout the 1990s until the recent global economic and financial crisis played an important part. In particular many young men were lured away from conflict to capitalism. An enormous economic boom and in fact an overheating of the economy, including a huge property boom, occurred in the Republic of Ireland. This was largely due to an inflow of EU money from the structural development fund, the development of the Irish financial and service industries and investment from the US and other major countries. For the first time in recent history Ireland thus became a net importer rather than an exporter of manpower.
- There were strong local leaders such as John Hume, Gerry Adams and also Unionist leader David Trimble, who enjoyed the authority and respect of their followers and thus had the ability to embark upon serious negotiations.
- There was strong engagement from outside powers, in particular from the two main outside participants in the conflict, Britain and the Republic of Ireland. In particular the British Labour government led by Tony Blair made a great and ultimately successful effort to re-energize the peace process.
- There was a growing realization that the Irish civil war could not be won by either side to the conflict in Northern Ireland. The UK government recognized that it was unlikely that Britain would lose the civil war in Northern Ireland but it was equally improbable that the UK would be able to gain a decisive victory in what had effectively become a guerrilla war. There also was an increasing realization among British politicians that the UK could ill afford to spend so many resources, manpower and hard earned cash in order to continue fighting the IRA and its loyalist opponents.
- There was a pronounced lack of interest among wide sections of the British public in keeping Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom if the Northern Irish wished to leave.
- At the latest since the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of a serious Soviet threat in 1989/90 Britain has had no strategic interest in Northern Ireland. The rationale for continuing London's military presence in Northern Ireland for geopolitical security reasons as they existed during World War II and as they had been perceived to exist throughout the Cold War ceased to play a role.
- The British side and the nationalist side (Sinn Fein and its military wing, the provisional IRA) entered into talks as Sinn Fein was given to understand that the nationalist objectives (Irish unification) could be achieved by peaceful and non-violent means without the British standing in the way if the majority of the voters in the North were to agree with this goal in a democratic referendum.
- Increased loyalist violence against nationalists may also have contributed to persuade Sinn Fein and the IRA to consider a peaceful resolution to the 'Troubles' more seriously.
- There also was a lack of interest among voters in the Republic of Ireland in continuing to insist on unification as a primary national objective. Thus, there was very little objection to rescinding Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish constitution which made it imperative for any Irish government to pursue the unification with the Irish in the north of the island of Ireland. One of the conditions of the Good Friday agreement was that these articles were put to a

referendum in the Republic of Ireland. In the nineteenth amendment to the Irish constitution of December 1999 Articles 2 and 3 were dropped and thus the claim that the entire island of Ireland was one “national territory.” This was meant to reassure the unionists in the island of Ireland that Irish unification would not come about without a vote of the people of Northern Ireland, where the Unionists still hold the majority.

- Of considerable importance appears to have been the active involvement of the superpower of the day, the United States of America, on overcoming the conflict. The involvement of a peace envoy and mediator in the multilateral talks (George Mitchell), the close cooperation with the British Blair government and the occasional active involvement of US President Bill Clinton himself may have been crucial. However, until access to the relevant archival documents has been granted it remains difficult to properly assess the role of the USA in the resolution of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Naturally the US side emphasized the alleged crucial importance of its involvement more than did the Irish and British participants who regarded US involvement as important but not necessarily critical to concluding the Good Friday Agreement. Still, promises of US financial aid in the form of financial and industrial investments were of great importance.
- Lastly, all the governments, institutions and experts involved made a much greater effort than hitherto to actually understand the conflict and genuinely address the fears and vulnerabilities – perceived and very real ones – of both nationalists and unionists in Northern Ireland. Thus, much better and more thoughtful conflict management techniques were employed.

### **Dangers to the stability of the peace process**

*Despite the interest of the populations, all major parties and all involved governments in the continuation of the peace process, there exist some very real dangers which could lead to the destabilization and undermining of the fine balancing act achieved in the north of Ireland. Among the main dangers are the following:*

- There could well be more dissident violence which would strain the cooperation of the two sides in the power sharing government in Belfast. This also might well endanger the uneasy ‘live and let live’ attitude which has developed among the Northern Irish people over the last ten years. In particular the explosion of a major bomb with perhaps a large number of innocent victims would prove to be a substantial test for the continuation of the peace process.
- There are signs that the nationalist camp may harbour an increasing degree of dissatisfaction with the current status quo. There is a perception among nationalist supporters that Sinn Fein and its leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness have become too wedded to the peace process and have become too embedded in the power sharing structures with the Unionists at Stormont, the impressive parliamentary building where the regional seat of government in Belfast is located. To the nationalist punter in the street, Irish Irish unity has not come closer since the Good Friday agreement was signed in October 1998. After all, the unification of the island of Ireland continues to remain the uppermost objective of the nationalist community.
- The rising tide of unemployment and the current deep recession in the Republic of Ireland and to a somewhat lesser degree also in Northern Ireland could to endanger the peace process. The recession and all its manifold consequences may well create the conditions for

increasing dissatisfaction among young men in particular and a drift back into the use of violence. After all, the peace process since the late 1990s was accompanied by rising prosperity and almost full employment in the island of Ireland. It remains to be seen whether the peace process will be able to survive the current global economic crisis.

Thus, since the late 1990s the Northern Irish peace process has been fairly successful and to some extent can serve as a useful model for other peace processes in deeply divided countries. While many battles have already been won, the danger of a return to the violent past cannot be entirely ruled out. There are some serious concerns which need to be addressed. Yet, on the whole a degree of optimism regarding the successful continuation of the peace process in Northern Ireland may be justified.

### **The alternatives for a long term peaceful future for Britain and Ireland?**

**Talking to terrorists and learning from the Northern Ireland Peace Process** is now held up as a beacon for conflict resolution around the world. The 'lessons of Ulster' have been applied by prime ministers, presidents, diplomats and intelligence agencies to numerous areas of violent conflict, including Spain, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Afghanistan and Iraq.

On the basis of the British experience in Northern Ireland, it is now widely agreed that talking to terrorists is a pre-requisite for peace, and that governments should avoid rigid pre-conditions in their attempts to bring extremists into the political process. The British Foreign Office has revived contacts with Hezbollah and many suggest that it is now time to 'engage' with Hamas and the Taleban. But does this understanding really reflect how peace was brought to Northern Ireland? And can it be applied to other areas where democratic governments face threats from terrorist organisations?

Making Peace in Northern Ireland and the Basque Country suggest that what really matters is not the act of talking to terrorists itself, but a range of other variables including the role of state actors, intelligence agencies, hard power and the wider democratic process. But above all, there is a crucial difference between talking to terrorists who believe that their strategy is succeeding and engaging with those who have been made to realise that their aims are unattainable by violence.

Too many of the players in any dispute are locked into extreme, unjust and unsustainable positions for too long – fed up by continuing violence. The extremists in any conflict need to be marginalised and identified and the mainstream needs to move forward with conviction to solve in seeking sensible solutions

After 30 or more years of violence the people of Ireland North and South, Nationalist and Unionists, Catholic and Protestant were weary of the war. The power sharing agreement and the laying down of the arms by loyalist Para-military and decommissioning is a historic achievement for the society in Ireland without conflict and bloodshed, a place without guns and violence in the society.

- **The future of Ireland is in the hands of the Irish People.** They should build a new relationship between Ireland and Britain based on equality. The peace process delivered an end to the conflict. The emphasis should be on, living together in a multi-cultural pluristic democracy. The important thing is to lead a peaceful life which can open opportunities for a brighter future.

### **Have large number of peacekeepers to maintain peace**

- The most important issue is to maintain peace in Northern Ireland. For that we should have large number of peacekeepers who can help build the trust in communities, weed out the seeds of terrorism and give hope to vulnerable minorities. The fact is that substantial majority of people wish to live in peace and a small minority should not be allowed to perpetrate violence which brings disastrous results

Students and children of Ireland and Britain can sow seeds of peace and love to transcend boundaries and support those who are mistreated. The power of non-violence, dialogue and diplomacy should be used to overcome violence and find common grounds to peaceful coexistence.

- **Establish the Bill of Rights for a new beginning for Northern Ireland**

The 1998 Good Friday Agreement called for the establishment of a bill of rights for Northern Ireland, and the UK government is expected to consult on proposals soon. There is a widespread public support, but some political parties, including the Conservatives, oppose it.

At moments of historical significance, democracies have often sought to affirm the values that are held in common by the people. Those values may be enshrined in a bill of rights, codified in law. A bill of rights can be understood as a social contract between the individual members of society, and between those members and their government. It is usually enforceable.

Building upon this international experience, Northern Ireland's political parties and both the UK and the Irish governments acknowledged the central role of a bill of rights could play in Northern Ireland in creating a shared sense of confidence and security, as well as being an important component of the peace process.

The mandate given to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission by the agreement obliges it examine the 'particular circumstances' of Northern Ireland. This advice would therefore need to address the protections needed for a society scarred by a sustained period of violent conflict, suffering tremendous loss, and still divided.

The new commission should ensure that a bill of rights for Northern Ireland sees its way through to legislation. When it does, the human rights of everyone in our society will be better protected and a positive legacy will have been left for future generations.

- **Stop the war propaganda**, which is used for selling war to populations and should be defended by alternative non-violent demonstrations, material-magazines, records, brochures and the like extolling the virtues of peaceful co-existence and the resolution of conflicts.

We can challenge the war propaganda as has been done by the July 2009 issue of New Scientist which has an article entitled 'The End of War'. It appears that the view that war is an endemic part of the human condition because it is built into human nature is wrong. The consensus is developing among scientists including anthropologists that there is no evidence that war existed for the first two million years of the history of man and his forebears. In fact the fossil evidence would indicate that war did not exist until about 10,000 years ago with the development of agriculture. As farming became more accomplished, surpluses developed and these became the focus of individuals and tribes who saw an opportunity to eat without working. This meant that a warrior class was formed to protect the surpluses and the rest is history – well modern history anyway

- **Follow the work of the Peacebuilding Commission** this will help bridge the gap in co-ordination of peace building activities in Northern Ireland which is just emerging from violent conflict. It should be a corner stone of all peacekeeping. It helps post conflict recovery, reconstruction, institution building and sustainable development

- **Promote the role of activism.**

Have an active campaign for initiating policies of governments/politicians leading to the cessation of violence and killing in Northern Ireland. Hold them accountable and at the same time help them prevent and resolve conflicts. In the past, activists have changed the laws. Suffragettes and the orange revolution in Eastern Europe are credit to peace campaigners.

The case of citizens protests against their government in Iran after the recent elections and the persistent demands of the UK public to hold an inquiry on the war on Iraq are examples of protests, and pressure which brings results. The US government did not get out of Vietnam but only due to the persistent protests of its citizens, who want to live in peaceful, genuinely democratic societies with good governance and rule of law.

- **Culture of Peace and Prevention of Warfare**

2009 is proclaimed as the International year of Reconciliation in which societies effected or divided by conflicts or violence can work together to establish lasting peace.

It can promote education and non-violent ways of ending sectarian violence. It can protect Human Rights violations for maintaining long term peace and security.

One of the solutions to stop hostilities could be to promote culture of non-violence and non-killing for replacing the gun culture. It will ensure human survival. For achieving this worldwide campaign for non-violence training is essential. Non-violence is an antidote to a culture of killing that pervades the Earth. The task is challenging but for peace to prevail we have to reverse the trend of killing through hating violence, war, and mass psychological transformation for creating harmony, peace and love.

Building peace must include all parties in the process to build trust and long term commitment for finding lasting solutions. Promote reasons to avoid war like war destroys environment, hinders development and hampers the desire for decent living.

The news of the loyalists paramilitary organisations beginning to decommission weapons is certainly welcomed news, as the need to leave violence and criminality behind is necessary for starting a new beginning.

- **For lasting peace apply international law (under ICC) to stop genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.** Follow ‘**The Responsibility to Protect**’ (R2P) doctrine to stop conflicts and to get rid of dictators and evil politicians who have perpetrated rapes and murders in their own countries against their own citizens. R2P, which has been agreed by the UN, can be applied for failed states, chronic low-grade conflicts, and ungoverned spaces (Somalia and Rwanda) it should be a required reading for all in Ireland and Britain for a safer future.

## **Let me summarise the peacekeeping alternatives which are**

- Use preventative diplomacy against the surge of violence
- Work on bringing Human Rights bill a reality and treat peace as a human right to all peoples
- Continue the work on decommissioning and disposal of all weapons.
- Promote a culture of peace, reconciliation and non-violence as a vision of future peacemaking
- Deal with violations of human rights as a precondition for peacekeeping
- Hold a public consultation on the bill of rights for Northern Ireland a important step for the future of Ireland.

## **Conclusion**

If the destruction of memory is an essential component of war, the recovery of memory is also an essential component of post-conflict peace. In many post-conflict situations, justice is no longer possible. The crimes are too great, the damage is irreparable, and peace is often contingent on settling with the worst offenders. But truth-telling and the recovery of memory is still possible.

**Peacekeeping to be effective is combination of several factors which include dialogue and mediation at the pre-conflict stage, enforcement of peace during the war, giving parties breathing space to reach an agreement, and post-conflict reconstruction when the warring parties entered a peace agreement and trying to work things together for a future free of violence.**

**However, I will argue that the reconciliation and neutralising the tensions in the pre-conflict mode is the most important for not only finding causes for tensions and hostilities but also for resolving disputes before they become full-blown war. This is the sign of a successful peacekeeping operation. It not only saves millions of lives which are lost in a nasty war, but also saves billions of dollars (\$7 billion dollars at present spent on peacekeeping) and free much needed valuable resources (food, water, energy, etc) which are increasingly in short supply owing to global warming.**

There is book called 'The 33 strategies of war' by Robert Greene. It describes the horrific and brutal way wars are fought and won. The lesson from that book I learnt is that Generals and great warriors demonstrate prudence, agility, calm and keen understanding of conducting their armies in the battlefield, so that they can defeat their enemies. Similarly we need to organise ourselves on a massive scale and apply our resourcefulness, acumen, patience, dialogue, negotiation and diplomacy for making successful peacekeeping, otherwise peacemaking will always remain a dream and a distant reality.

We have covered a lot of ground today from the role of Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to the troubles in Britain and Northern Ireland, its peace process and alternatives for affirming our faith in the vision of a peaceful future for Britain and Northern Ireland. The bottom line is that if we have to establish long term peace which can only be achieved by peaceful means. This is an important role for the British, Irish and International community to fulfil this vision.

Let me conclude by what Desmond Tutu who chaired South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission said to me last week when I met him in London at a reception at 10 Downing Street. He said 'that words are often worth more than money'. " You would have thought that

most of the people who came to Truth and Reconciliation Commission were hoping for material gains. It was nothing of the sort — people wanted to tell their story. A young guy who had been involved in police action which left him blind came to the Commission and told his story and when he had finished he was still blind but a broad smile broke over his face and he said, ‘You have given me back my eyes’.”

Thank you for listening.

### **Notes**

The following publications were consulted and excerpts have been taken from them during the writing of this article:

1. Hope in the time of war: A religious perspective on peacemaking – Kathy Galloway
2. A talk given by Vijay Mehta at UNYSA, St Andrews Scotland ‘Ending wars and achieving peace – a dream or a reality’ 9<sup>th</sup> December 2008
3. Twenty-First Report of the Independent Monitoring Commission, 7 May 2009, pp.5-6: <http://www.independentmonitoringcommission.org/publications.cfm?id=71>
4. Dr. Harold Good and Father Alec Reid, Lessons from the Northern Ireland Peace Process, Gandhi Annual Lecture 2008
5. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article6684326.ece>
6. Northern Ireland Bill of Rights, Amnesty International issue 156 July - August 2009
7. Klaus Larres, The Peace Process in Northern Ireland
8. Facing the truth BBC documentary about Truth and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland

The full version of this speech can be downloaded from:

- VM Centre for Peace [www.vmpeace.org](http://www.vmpeace.org)
- Action for UN Renewal [www.action-for-un-renewal.org.uk](http://www.action-for-un-renewal.org.uk)

-----

Vijay Mehta is president of VM Centre for Peace [www.vmpeace.org](http://www.vmpeace.org) , Founding Trustee of Fortune Forum Charity [www.fortuneforum.org](http://www.fortuneforum.org) , Chair of Action for UN Renewal [www.action-for-un-renewal.org.uk](http://www.action-for-un-renewal.org.uk) and co-Chair of World Disarmament Campaign. He is an author and global activist for peace, development, human rights and the environment. Some of his notable books are The Fortune Forum Summit: For a Sustainable Future, Arms No More, and The United Nations and Its Future in the 21st Century.

His latest book is on Global Warming and is called 'Climate Change IQ,' which is available to download free of charge in electronic form from the website [www.climatechange365.co.uk](http://www.climatechange365.co.uk)

He along with his daughter Renu Mehta founder of Fortune Forum charity held two summits in London in 2006 and 2007. The summits raised over a million pounds for charity and attracted a worldwide audience of 1.3 billion people (one fifth of humanity) including print and media coverage. The keynote speakers for the first and second summit were Bill Clinton, former US President and Al Gore, former US vice-President, and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize 2007.

Vijay Mehta has appeared in various TV programmes including BBC World, Press TV, Ajjak-24 hour Indian news channel, and Think Peace documentary, Canada, among others. The Sunday Times, Independent, Observer and Guardian newspapers, among other journals have written about him. His life is devoted to the service of peace, humanity and our planet