



## PEACE CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018

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<b>Position</b>	<b>Elected September 2017</b>	<b>As at October 2018</b>
Chair	Carol Bower***	Michael Williams** (standing)
Vice Chair	Tony Marshall*	Marilyn Raatz**
Treasurer	John Gardner	John Gardner (standing)
Secretary	Rommel Roberts	Rommel Roberts (standing)
Member	Moses Standaar*	Farzaneh Behroozi**
Member		Jeremy Routledge** (standing)

\* Resigned

\*\* Co-opted, co-option confirmed at Special General Meeting

\*\*\* Stood down on May 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 to become the Interim Director

## **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Welcome to our annual reporting on our activities.

As you will see in other sections of this Report, this has been both a busy and a difficult time for the Peace Centre.

South Africa is an extraordinarily violent society, at every level: in the home, in schools and communities, and in our society. It seems that our default reaction to anything we do not like is to strike out.

This is not the way to build a just, equitable and peaceful democracy and the work of the Peace Centre is focused on trying to interrupt that narrative, of violence and intolerance.

We are proud of the work we are doing, the way in which we are doing it, and the results we are beginning to see.

Elsewhere in this Annual Report is the detail of what we have been doing since we last reported to you, and what we are planning for the future. We are confident that we are on the right track.

The Khayelitsha Information and Support Hub has been widely welcomed by a range of role-players and demand on its services is significant and growing.

Our training activities are planned to increase individual and community capacity to respond to challenges without resorting to violence.

Our advocacy activities all hinge on ensuring that our landmark constitution achieves the kind of South Africa that so many worked so hard for, and sacrificed to much for.

The Board of the Peace Centre joins me in thanking you for your ongoing support and interest; Central England Quakers, whose generous support has kept our doors open during this challenging period; and my colleagues on the Board who have given generously of their time and talents. Their contribution is acknowledged with thanks.

Last but not least, we thank the staff for their hard and dedicated work.

Michael Williams

Board Chair

## **ANNUAL REPORT April 2017–March 2018**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

The year under review (2017/2018) has been something of a roller-coaster ride, an *anno horribilis* and an *anno magno*.

By half way through the period, the Peace Centre was running out of money. Two major funders withdrew their support during 2016, and no further funds had been raised to fill the gap, save for a relatively small amount from the Western Cape Department of Social Development, for a parenting support programme. None of the other work was funded, and this had begun to seriously deplete our reserves.

The Board was faced with a difficult decision: retrench all the staff while we still had the funds to pay retrenchment packages, or keep going until the money ran out. The Board decided on the retrenchment option.

Subsequently, a facilitated strategic planning meeting was held, at which it was agreed that the Peace Centre would focus on defined areas for strategic intervention, as follows:

- Conflict resolution/peace building best practice;
- Peace and justice advocacy; and
- Empowerment of women and youth
- It was also agreed that the services offered by the Peace Centre should be clearly identified as needed by members of the local community

Activities to address these areas were identified as follows:

- The Peace Centre should become a focal point for anyone wanting to work on peace in the Western Cape, and eventually in the country;
- We should put most of our energy into practical community-level activities, and concentrate on support and capacity-building; and
- We should build networks and collaborate with others also working to maintain and increase peace and strengthen stake-holder relations.

It took a while to set off on this new direction, time that was spent tidying the Mowbray office, getting rid of serious amounts of rubbish, strategizing for the future and defining a new role and direction for the organisation. We also found premises for, and staffed and equipped an Information and Support Hub in Khayelitsha. The hub opened on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, just after the commencement of the 2018/2019 financial year, thus not the subject of this Report.

### **2 NEW DIRECTION AND FOCUS**

The Peace Centre (formerly the Quaker Peace Centre) envisages and works towards a just, equitable and peaceful society. We work to increase the number

of people willing to act against all forms of violence. We have developed a holistic response to the suffering around us, working to reduce violence in homes and communities.

South Africa has extraordinarily high levels of violence of all kinds: sexual, domestic, familial, community and state. High rates of unemployment (+50%) and deep intergenerational poverty and despair at any meaningful change occurring exacerbate and fuel the violence, leading to feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. A significant driver is a lack of self-agency.

We believe that while the fundamental economic and political problems are beyond our reach, the Peace Centre can and should act. It has developed a multi-level response to the suffering around us.

## **2.1 Future plans**

Although commencing only in April, we would like to share with Friends of the Peace Centre and our supporters what we have planned for the 2018/2019 year. The work of the 'new' Peace Centre is focused on three main projects, which contain sub-projects within them.

### ***The Information and Support Hub:***

The Hub's central activity is building a database, which is constantly updated and contains information on, for example,

- a) Organisations or opportunities which may be of use to anyone in the community. This includes organisations within and outside the township (government departments such as Home Affairs, Health and Social Development), employment opportunities, further education and training opportunities, and services offered by local NGOs, churches, sports clubs, schools etc.)

Regular database analyses are carried out to look for patterns in the data (patterns of both need and opportunity) to ensure that it is responding appropriately, and to identify any necessary changes.

- b) Requests for advice and help from both individuals and from organisations.
- c) Members of the community register as users at no cost, and this entitles them to access information and a range of different opportunities.

In addition the Hub provides a base for a variety of other activities, including AVP and constitutional literacy training. The Hub also facilitates access to recreational, cultural, and awareness-raising opportunities.

### ***Training for Peace:***

There are two sub-projects within this project:

The hub staff are to be trained to deliver the *Alternatives to Violence Programme* (AVP); the intention is to provide access to AVP for civic, social, community and/or faith-based groups around the site of the hub.

In addition, the Peace Centre will support AVP training at Pollsmoor by providing administration services.

Training on *constitutional literacy and voter education* is planned for early in 2019, ahead of the next General and Provincial elections. This will be aimed at first-time voters and will include screening of relevant documentaries, followed by facilitated discussions.

Each AVP workshop is 16 hours in length, and usually takes place over two-to-three sessions.

### **Strategic advocacy**

There are two sub-projects within this area of endeavour:

Firstly, *strengthening child protection* by (a) monitoring the implementation of the prohibition of corporal punishment in educational settings, and facilitating access to training and capacity-building opportunities for teachers in local schools; and (b) advocating for the prohibition of corporal punishment in the home in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the Children's Act, currently being prepared by the national Department of Social Development.

Secondly, we are *taking action against corruption* and holding its perpetrators to account, and are litigating for the establishment of an Integrity Commission.

We hope that, by this time next year, we will have a really good story to tell.

## **3 NAME CHANGE**

After the 2018 Southern African Yearly Meeting (SAYM) of the Religious Society of Friends, the Peace Centre was informed in late January this year that it should cease using 'Quaker' in its name, within six months. Accordingly, as of August 1<sup>st</sup>, we are known simply as The Peace Centre.

The bureaucratic aspects of the name change will take a while to effect, but are in process.

We retain our close links with the Southern Africa Quaker community, especially Cape Western Monthly Meeting; all our current Board members are Quakers; and we continue to honour and act under the guidance of the Quaker values of non-violence, tolerance, respect for diversity and speaking truth to power.

## **4 ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW**

### **4.1 Pupils' Advisory Forums on Violence (PAFOV) project**

This project should have come to an end in March 2018. However, the funders withdrew the last year of their support, and from March to September 2017, it was continued with financial inputs from unallocated and reserve funds. The project concluded in October 2017. *Get us Involved*, a report on the PAFOV Project was published in 2017.

## 4.2 Parenting support

Although this project was scheduled to continue until March 2018, and it had been funded by the Western Cape Department of Social Development, it was terminated at the end of September 2017 due to the fact that the DSD subsidy fell far short of the actual costs of running the project (until September 2017, the shortfall had been made up from the reserve funds), and that to honour its commitment would have cost the Peace Centre more than it could afford.

## 4.3 Child Protection

During the period under review, the Peace Centre became one of three amici (friends of the court) in an appeal before the South Gauteng High Court. The appellant was convicted of assaulting his 13-year-old son and found guilty, after which he appealed his conviction on the grounds of the common-law defence of reasonable chastisement open to parents who assault their children. The amici (the others are the Children's Institute at UCT and Sonke Gender Justice, represented by Adv Ann Skelton of the Centre for Child Law at the University of Pretoria) prepared a submission on the constitutionality of the defence. In October 2017, the South Gauteng High Court agreed with the amici and struck down the common-law defence. This decision was appealed by Freedom of Religion South Africa (FORSA) on the grounds that the courts have no business meddling in the private sphere of the home. The matter has been referred to the Constitutional Court and is set down for the end of November 2018.

## 4.4 Acting against corruption

These activities have focussed on three areas:

Cancelling the BAe component of the 1999 Arms Deal, which was found to be corrupt by US courts and the UK Serious Crimes Office. We are arguing that the fighter jets purchased at a cost of R34 billion, which we can neither fly nor maintain, should be returned to the manufacturers and the money returned to our national fiscus. This matter is due to go to the Constitutional Court in 2018/2019.

Establishing a further Chapter 9 institution, to be called something like the Integrity Commission, which fulfils the STIRS criteria set by the Constitutional Court in the Glenister matter: such a Commission should be **S**pecialised, **T**rained, **I**ndependent because accountable to Parliament and not the President, **R**esourced with **S**ecurity of tenure. We anticipate that this matter will also go to the Constitutional Court in the 2019/2020 year.

Pursuing the interest accrued by Grindrod Bank in the SASSA/grants payment debacle. The Peace Centre has left it up to the Black Sashes of the world, who have been doing a fine job, to pursue issues raised concerning the legality of the contract with Cash Paymaster Solutions (CPS), and focussed instead on the interest earned by Grindrod Bank every month when the approximately R17 Million for social grants sat in their account for 3-5 days each month for 5 years. The money was transferred monthly from the national fiscus to Grindrod ahead of the due date for grants payments. Our concern is that there has been no satisfactory explanation yet about what has happened to that interest.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

It's been a tough year, but a productive one, We, Board and staff, see a future where the Peace Centre goes from strength to strength and takes on again the key role it played in the 1980s and 1990s, during apartheid's darkest days, and in our (relatively) violence-free transition to democracy.

Thank you and take care



CAROL BOWER, Interim Director

### **STAFF**

Carol Bower	Interim Director, based in Mowbray
Pharie Sefali	Project Manager, based at the hub
Ongeziwe Badli	Administrator, based in Mowbray
Mthunzi Mentjies	Data base/IT at the hub
Khayakazi Baliso	Community Leader, based at the hub
Lukhanyo Simangweni	Community Leader, based at the hub

**PEACE IS A GROUP  
EFFORT**