

Report from the Mediation/Conflict Resolution Committee  
September 27, 2006

Members: Bob McMurray, Odile Hugonot Haber, Susan Jacobson

In the past two months, the committee has had 3 meetings, two at the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) with Michele Kinnucan and Sol Metz, representing the METF and Susan Butterwick and Joan Binkow of the DRC. After listening to both groups, Susan and Joan declined offering their services as they do not presently have the skills to facilitate this process. They are presently seeking training in mediating with groups of our size. They recommended the services of a professional group outside the area, the cost of which was prohibitive.

Susan and Joan of the Dispute Resolution Center encouraged us to pursue mediation and conflict resolution. Based on meeting with the two groups separately and collectively, they expressed hope that this could be accomplished.

On behalf of their task force, Michele and Sol presented the idea of each group choosing a mediator and then those two people choosing a third mediator to facilitate the process of conflict resolution and mediation. They had already invited Paul Versluis and we have consulted with Sheri Wander.

We chose Sheri because she has extensive knowledge of ICPJ being a former staff person. She is known for her work with the Michigan Peace Team, and has been in the Middle East. She is presently on the Board of the International Nonviolent Peace Force. Most importantly, she has formal training and experience in group mediation.

It is our firm belief that unless this process is not pursued, the situation will repeat itself and further handicap the efforts of ICPJ. In reviewing the comments of the **Imagine** facilitator, David Yamamoto, it was reinforcing to read his statement recommending "...the engagement in a healing process – such as the current mediation- that will allow everyone to move forward in a supportive fashion in making the Alliance work successfully."

With all this in mind, we respectfully submit the following proposal for the consideration of the Membership and the Steering Committee of the Interfaith Council of Peace and Justice as the next step in resolving this conflict and potentially creating a stronger organization.