

Highlights / Lessons Learned from this Morning's Session

- To achieve a more enduring peace, we need to address the roots of conflict. It is not enough that we prevent imminent armed confrontation; peacebuilding also means preventing future conflicts by paying attention to human rights and justice issues.
- Peacebuilding is both political and relational. It seeks political and structural changes as well as right relationships between and among peoples and groups.
- The resolution of a conflict should not be left in the hands of armed actors – state and non-state – but should involve the participation of the people, who have a stake in the process. Hence, there is a need to build a strong peace constituency through education, media engagement, etc.
- Peacebuilders need to step back and assess their work, to examine what the success indicators have been. This helps determine how the work can move forward.
- Peacebuilding becomes even more effective when groups pull together their efforts in the spirit of cooperation, complementation, and concerted action.

- Although local peacebuilding should be in the hands of the local community, there can be a place for international participation in the form facilitation, training, etc. (There is a need to deepen this international dimension to include raising local issues into the global consciousness and solidarity.)
- Love of neighbor is the heart of Christ's message and should be the basis of our actions as Catholic peacebuilders.
- Working for justice is a constituent element of peace and also of our Catholic identity. This idea of working for justice, however, is not exclusive to the Catholic faith tradition.
- Reconciliation should have the following elements: acknowledgment of mistakes, forgiveness, and restoration. The church itself can lead the way particularly in the latter element.
- There is a need for re-membering, bringing together fragmented communities/groups which have been dis-membered, in order to look at the problem together and find solutions.
- Finally, peacebuilding is an activity of hope. We don't really know what the fruits will be, but we continue to persevere, because we know it to be our calling. We also believe that God's gift of peace will come in His own time.