



BONN INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR CONVERSION

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Facilitating Peace and Development

By Peter J. Croll and Susanne Heinke

BICC (Bonn International Center for Conversion) will be 15 years old in 2009. It was founded in 1994 on the initiative of the *Land* of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Its spiritual fathers include the then UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, and Johannes Rau, who later became German Federal President.

2009 also marks the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the official end of the Cold War. The idea to establish BICC originated in this period of global political upheaval. Conversion in those days involved military bases, the arms industry and arms research. It raised the question of the peace dividend and dealt with the demobilization and reintegration of soldiers and the disposal of stocks of weapons.

Unfortunately, many of the hopes embodied by the term 'conversion' have not been realized. The peace dividend turned out to be smaller than had been anticipated. Military expenditure has increased continuously over the last five years. The ceiling of 1,000,000,000,000 (one trillion) US dollars per year was already exceeded in 2005. The United States' expenditure on arms has doubled since 2001 and accounts for over 40 percent of the world's overall military budget. The rift between military expenditure and expenditure on development aid has widened steadily. The Georgian-Russian war, the civil wars in Chad, in Sudan (Darfur) and in Somalia, the violent conflicts in Sri Lanka, in Pakistan, in the Middle East, in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the armed conflicts in Colombia show that no region in the world could claim to be 'peaceful' in 2008.

But where should a center for conversion begin against such a background? "When old concepts

are no longer effective, it is all the more important to develop new ideas," was Johannes Rau's advice on the occasion of BICC's tenth anniversary.

BICC has expanded its range of topics and opened itself to new issues. Current foci of its work are:

Peace and development: BICC provides advice on demobilization and reintegration (DD&R), evaluates demobilization and reintegration processes as well as peacebuilding tools, studies the role of the security sector, conducts research on the nexus between development and peace as well as on early warning systems for crises.

Arms—global trends, exports and control: BICC analyzes global trends in defense expenditures, armed forces personnel and militarization, reveals interrelationships between arms exports, development aid and human rights, and lobbies for global arms control.

Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW): BICC offers advice and training programs on small arms control worldwide, provides advice on the marking and tracing of SALW as well as on the safe stockpiling of SALW and ammunition, collects data on the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and evaluates small arms control activities.

Resources and conflict: BICC studies the nexus between natural resources and conflicts while performing lobbying and training work in the field of 'natural resources and conflict'.

Migration and conflict: BICC carries out research on the nexus between migration in Africa and security, discusses the challenges of internal migration and displacement in Sub-Saharan Africa, and studies the African diaspora in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), in Germany as a whole, and in the European Union.

Base conversion: BICC has fifteen years experience in base conversion—and is active not only in Germany but worldwide.

This is reflected in concrete projects throughout the world.



BICC has restructured its working methods in order to perform these tasks. As an independent, non-profit organization, it now offers services in four areas:

Applied research (research papers, background and evaluation studies, impact analysis, indicator development, data collection and analysis as well as project assistance and implementation).

Advisory services (background analyses, policy recommendations, expert workshops).

Capacity-building through the elaboration of concepts and modules for education and training.

Public relations (publications, conferences, events, and exhibitions).

Our clients and partners in these areas are international and UN organizations, governments, international and national foundations, international and national research institutions, international and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as federal and *Länder* ministries. Through its work, BICC sets out to help to prevent violent conflicts and to contribute to their constructive transformation.

Disarmament releases resources which can be used to combat poverty. Conversion ensures that these resources can be redirected purposefully and used to the best possible advantage. In a time when the word 'change' has taken on a new meaning, shouldn't the term 'conversion' be addressed all the more courageously? After all, the problems of peace and development cannot be solved without conversion—both with regard to policies and with regard to thoughts and actions.

Peter J. Croll is Director of BICC, Susanne Heinke is BICC's Press Spokesperson.

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Staff Spotlight



Jan Grebe

Jan Grebe joined BICC as an Intern in May 2008 and, since October 2008, is working as a Research Assistant. His interest predominantly lies in research on targeted sanctions, military expenditure/armament and African crises. At the moment he is mainly involved in a project focusing on traditional conflict resolution analyzing the mechanisms and processes of local conflict resolution systems. Together with BICC Senior Researcher Michael Ashkenazi, he has just returned from three field trips to Africa and Southeast Asia. Prior to that, he was involved in a project on the self-conception of private security contractors. He is also dealing extensively with the Zimbabwean crisis and will be presenting a paper at the European Conference on African Studies in Leipzig about the EU/ US sanctions against Zimbabwe.

Jan studied Political Science, Sociology as well as Economic and Social History at Aachen University. Before taking up his studies Jan lived for six months in Zimbabwe where he developed his interest in African conflicts and security issues. During his studies he dealt mainly with questions on causes of war, international security and conflict resolution. In his thesis, he analyzed the effectiveness of EU/ US sanctions against Zimbabwe. He gathered his expertise during an internship with the GTZ in Kampala, Uganda, and a six-month internship with the Military Expenditure Project at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

In his free time Jan enjoys playing rugby and spends time with his friends watching rugby games. He also loves to travel whenever there is an opportunity.

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Gulf and Africa Strategy Forum 2009

Under the topic “Developing a New Strategic Partnership”, the Gulf Africa Strategy Forum 2009 was held in Cape Town on 24-25 February and was hosted by the Gulf Research Center (GRC).

The overall aim of the event was to find ways of reviving the old ties between the Gulf States and Africa, which have suffered in the last decades due to the vast difference in development, especially in the economic sector.

By identifying trends and prospects of a better mutually beneficial relationship, both sides can gain in economic, scientific terms as well as in security issues. A set of proposals for policy recommendations was thus presented during the conference, with Peter Croll being one of the important contributors.

He also participated in the panel discussion on “Social Development Challenges”, where he provided four major topics:

Social development changes in Africa: Development is no longer limited to economic progress, but has been extended to social, political, economic, cultural and environmental aspects. He gave two concrete examples, the lack of adequate sanitation for 2.6 billion Africans and the absence of a decent health care system for almost all Africans.

Stability and Human Security: The destruction of infrastructure through armed conflicts is one of the main causes of under-development in Africa today.

The perception of Africa in the media: Far too often, Africa is portrayed as a conflict-prone continent, although a closer look reveals that positive news are on the rise.

Enhancement of research twinning: Research twinning is the effort to build a bridge between researchers, practitioners and political decision-makers, which can help provide not only better solutions but better results in the area of social development.



Additional foci in Peter Croll's contributions were migration and population movements as well as **natural resources management in Africa**. He pointed out that

the former has many positive aspects within the social development in Africa, and the latter is a crucial issue when it comes to preventing conflicts. Thus more responsibility should be taken by national

and foreign companies to provide a better understanding of natural resources governance.

The conference was part of the overall expansion of the Gulf-Africa Research Program at the Gulf Research Center (GRC). GRC and BICC are cooperating on the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding.

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International Migration Conference Sparks off New Cooperation

From 13–14 February 2009, researchers, practitioners and politicians from Africa and Europe participated in the international BICC Conference: “Migration and Displacement in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Security-Migration Nexus II” in Bonn.

The first day of the conference focused on research questions and dealt with causes and different shapes of forced migration in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as its social impact. On the second day, participants mainly examined courses of action and instruments of migration governance.

The conference especially addressed the nexus between research and policy. As another core issue, capacity-building and training were pointed out. The challenge posed by forced migration requires an interdisciplinary approach hence there is the need to involve all stakeholders. Forced migration discussions should also include gender perspectives.

The conference urgently called for improved data and information exchange. Africa rarely shares information on international migration. As another mayor point the participants called for changes in development policy. Causes of forced migration should be addressed strategically not merely to minimize resources needed to respond to the consequences of forced migration. A weak focus on conflict prevention is one of the reasons for the escalation of the problem of forced migration.

BICC, inspired by the conference, will build up a network for sharing ideas and fostering cooperation in the field of migration and displacement and is planning to organize a follow-up conference, preferably in Africa.

All contributions to “Migration and Displacement in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Security-Migration Nexus II” will be part of a conference report, which will be published soon.

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New BICC Publications

Occasional Paper

Jerry Sommer (ed.). 2009. "New Chances for a Compromise in the Nuclear Dispute with Iran?" Conference documentation with contributions by Hans Blix, Ebrahim Yazdi, James Walsh, Bernd W. Kubbig, and Jerry Sommer. March 2009.
http://www.bicc.de/uploads/pdf/publications/papers/occ_paper_01/occasional_paper%201_03-09.pdf

Wartime Rape and Post-conflict Research. A BICC Project. Project overview. March 2009.
http://www.bicc.de/uploads/pdf/publications/other/BICC_Wartime_rape-project.pdf

Diaspora - Migration – Peacebuilding. BICC-Newsletter 2. February 2009.
http://www.bicc.de/uploads/pdf/publications/other/diaspora_nl/BICC_Diaspora_NL_2_english.pdf

Kritische Infrastruktur: Sicherheitstechnologische Lösungen zum Schutz der Bahnhöfe vor Anschlägen und ihr Arbeitsplatzpotenzial. Endbericht. Hartmut Kühle. Oktober 2008.
<http://www.bicc.de/index.php/publications/other>

BICC Notes

BICC researchers Andrea Warnecke and Wolf-Christian Paes participated in the 50th Annual International Studies Association (ISA) Conference in New York City from 15 to 18 February 2009. Wolf-Christian Paes presented a paper with the title "The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme: Global and Inclusive Governance for the Diamond Sector?" while Andrea Warnecke, together with BICC Associate Volker Franke, presented a paper on "Developing Peace: Assessing the Contribution of Development Activities to Peacebuilding".

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On the occasion of the World Women's day on 5 March 2009, InWEnt und BICC presented the movie "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" with a following discussion. The movie tells the story of courageous women in Liberia who get together with the intention to stop the bloody civil war in the West African country.

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On 23 February 2009, BICC together with GTZ and the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation in Colombia (FESCOL) organized an inter-institutional dialogue on DD&R with government, civil society and donor representatives in Bogota. Senior BICC Researcher Wolf-Christian Paes made a presentation on the relationship between DD&R and Transitional Justice, which was followed by a lively panel discussion. BICC, GTZ and FESCOL are planning to organize a number of follow-up dialogues in the coming months.

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Since 5 February 2009, BICC is running a new Internet homepage: www.bicc.de. In its 15th year of existence, the center thus offers the web user even more information and service—both in English and in German.

The section 'Our work' refers to BICC's current activities. Further links lead to publications, events, press and six independent project websites. All other information worth knowing about BICC can be found at "About"—such as BICC staff, boards, internships, job offers, and contact. The monthly BICC newsletter can still be ordered on-line.

A clear structure and graphic arrangement makes most of the contents of www.bicc.de accessible to people with disabilities.

BICC also offers a new service, RSS-newsfeeds, on current press, publications and events.

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On 4 February 2009, Peter Croll was officially appointed by Armin Laschet, Minister for Generations, Family, Women and Integration (MGFFI) of the Land North Rhine-Westphalia, as a member of the German Development Institute's Board of Trustees. The Institute is one of the leading think tanks for development policy worldwide. Its Board consists of 10 members who are appointed by the Federal Government, represented by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The Land, represented by the MGFFI, appoints five members. Chair of the Board is Ms. Karin Kortmann (Member of the German Bundestag), Parliamentary State Secretary at the BMZ.

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