

Toda Institute 2011 Annual Report

Background: Overview of the World Situation

The year 2011 offered stark reminders of the fragility and impermanence of human life. On March 11 the 9.0 “Great East Japan Earthquake” triggered a gigantic tsunami that devastated the coast of Tohoku and caused a number of nuclear accidents. In all, more than 15,000 people lost their lives and more than one million buildings were either destroyed or damaged. The capacity of the Japanese people to recover from a disaster of such magnitude, to organize themselves and to rebuild their lives was a matter of admiration and amazement for the whole world.

Dubbed the “Arab Spring,” a series of events brought the fall of several governments in North Africa and the Middle East. Tunisian President Ben Ali left the country on January 14 (after 23 years in power), Egyptian President Mubarak resigned on February 11 (after 30 years), and Libyan leader Colonel Gaddafi was killed on October 20 (after 41 years). In Yemen, President Saleh accepted a power-transfer agreement on November 23 and formally ceded power on February 27, 2012 (after 21 years). The consequences of the “Arab Spring” cannot be evaluated fully at this point, with most of the region still in a state of instability.

There are many more events worth mentioning, but here I would like to shift the focus to what we have accomplished. During 2011, the Toda Institute has forged ahead along the path of its mission to promote the “Dialogue of Civilizations for Global Citizenship,” based on a conviction in the interdependence of people and nature, in the imperative of nonviolence when dealing with political, strategic and economic upheavals, and in the inherent preciousness of each living being. We would like to share some of our activities during this eventful year.

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

Global Conference

In collaboration with the Rabita Mohammadia des Oulémas (*Muhammadan League of Scholars*), the Toda Institute co-organized an international conference in Rabat, Morocco, on February 4-5, 2011, on the theme : *Global Visioning for a Common Future: Hopes, Challenges and Solutions*. Speakers from around the world explored the themes of Searching for Common Ground, Dialogue of Religions, The Power of Literature and the Arts, Education and Development, and Civil Society and Nonviolence.

Consensus was reached concerning the fact that all human activities should have as the central and clear goal the enhancing of people’s happiness and their flourishing. We reaffirmed how

important it is to realize that whenever something is put before human beings and is given priority, i.e.: profit, power, leverage or other selfish pursuits, human beings always suffer and often in catastrophic ways. The conference showed that it is possible for people and organizations inspired by various ideologies and cultures to find common ground and to agree on global solutions through dialogue. Both organizations have expressed the desire to renew the experience and to hold more conferences for further exploration on this theme. A publication of the proceedings is in progress.

For more information please visit the Toda website at:
http://www.toda.org/conferences/GlobalVisioning2011_Morocco.html.

Regional Projects Conferences

The conference *The European Security System Revisited* took place in Oslo, Norway, May 13-14. It addressed two interrelated issues which stemmed from the question: How can Europe best contribute to peace and security for the global common good? The conference brought together experts from around the region to examine how Russia may become an integral part of European security and cooperation, and it addressed the complex transnational peace and security challenges related to this specific issue, asking: How can policies to reduce such risks and policies to integrate Russia become mutually reinforcing? These topics were examined with a view to peace and security in the global domain. It was acknowledged by all participants that a gap has emerged between concepts and practice in peace and security affairs.

Some of the questions that were addressed by participants were: What is the best approach to the integration of Russia? What kind of security system should Europe aim for? Which transnational risks should be securitized?, and How can European security become a contribution to global public goods in an increasingly multi-centric world? The Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, NUPI (Norsk Utenrikspolitisk Institutt: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs) and the EGMONT Institute (Royal Institute for International Relations, Belgium) plan to print the various proceedings in a special issue of the journal *Studia Diplomatica* in early 2012.

On May 28-29, the *International Conference on Protecting Sacred Spaces and Peoples of Cloths: Academic Basis, Policy Promises*, was held in Bangkok, Thailand, on May, 28-29, 2011. It was co-organized by the Peace Information Center, Center for Global Nonkilling and the Toda Institute, with the collaboration of the Berghof Peace Support (Thailand) and Open Society Foundation. The conference brought together 55 participants from various regions (35 locals and 20 internationals) and backgrounds, including academics, NGO activists, policy makers, embassy representatives, and religious personnel, among others.

The two-day conference established the fact that violence against sacred spaces is indeed a global trend threatening peoples around the world indiscriminately. It was found that during 2009-2010, there have been 104 incidents related to sacred spaces and religious personnel around the world. In 2010, the number of people killed in relation to sacred spaces increased 19.8% and those wounded increased 29.1%. These incidents combined have killed 1,730 people and wounded 3,671. Presentations highlighted various conflict cases in different regions addressing crucial questions which include: When has such violence against sacred spaces and personnel begun? What is the frequency of such attacks? How have such attacks taken place? How could the ways in which violence turns from being used against normal physical targets to symbolically-endowed places and persons be addressed? and What have been the consequences of such violence? In pursuit of the conference's objectives, there are at least two major concrete outcomes. One is a set of draft academic papers presented at the conference.

The other is that a knowledge-based policy paper on international protection of religious places and personnel was submitted to the ASEAN Secretary General by Prof. Kevin Clements, Toda Institute Secretary General and Prof. Chandra Muzaffar, the President of JUST. ASEAN Secretary General Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, who participated throughout the conference, emphasized that it is important to protect sacred places. Protecting sacred spaces will sustainably mitigate the deadly conflicts based upon religions and beliefs within this region of diversity.

Learning from Our Experience in Conflict/Violence Prevention, was held at Tuft University in Medford, Massachusetts, USA, July 28-29, 2011. It was convened by Professor Eileen Babbitt, Toda Institute Senior Research Fellow and Professor of Practice, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University. This workshop brought together a selected group of people who are actively engaged in designing and implementing conflict prevention initiatives. The purpose was to identify the key elements learned so far about what “works” to prevent political violence, and what questions should drive our analysis to improve efforts going forward. The workshop was co-sponsored by the Toda Institute, the BEFORE Project, and CDA Collaborative Learning Projects.

To focus our discussion, we used two overarching criteria to guide our workshop. The first was to define conflict prevention very specifically as “primary” prevention – i.e., efforts that take place in the early stages of conflict, before violence has occurred. Referring to the “conflict escalation curve” that diagrams levels of violence over time, this means concentrating on either end of the curve, as escalation is beginning or as it is ending and moving toward “peace” after massive violence has taken place. The emphasis was therefore NOT on crisis management or mid-conflict interventions, but on attempting to prevent crises from happening.

The second criterion to frame the analysis was an interest in creating “peace writ large.” We wanted to know what can be done to influence the forces in society and national politics that are

increasing the chances of political violence in the countries/regions at risk. This included looking at what strategies actually move political elites to adopt nonviolent rather than violent approaches to political development and statebuilding.

Workshop participants included representatives of five organizations engaged in designing and implementing conflict prevention projects:

- The Conflict Prevention Team, Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery of UNDP
- The Burundi Leadership Training Program, Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars
- The US Institute of Peace, Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention
- The BEFORE project, a collaboration of swisspeace and the Alliance for Peacebuilding
- The Conflict Prevention group of GPPAC (Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict)

Workshop Participants were: Tatsushi Arai, Eileen Babbitt, Emmanuelle Bernard, Kevin Clements, Heinz Krummenacher, Sverre Lodgaard, Michael Lund, Elizabeth McClintock, Toshiyuki Nasukawa, Mark Rogers, Chaiwat Satha-Anand, Satoko Takahashi, William Tsuma, Abiodun Williams, Lawrence Woocher, and Peter Woodrow.

For more information on the Regional Efforts to Achieve Peace (REAP) Projects please see the Toda website at: <http://www.toda.org/conferences/reap.html>

Director's Presentations

As a Toda representative I toured different cities to give lectures and expand the Toda Institute network, on the topic of the power of music for peacebuilding: in Tallinn, Estonia in September, in a conference organized by the UNESCO-affiliated International Music Council on the topic of Music and Social Change, and in Kyoto, Japan, in October, during the Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association conference.

Plans for 2012

A conference on *Music, Power and Liberty* is planned for February 3-4 in Paris, France and a Nuclear Experts Working Group Meeting on March 10-12 in Tokyo, Japan. More regional projects are also being planned.

Publications

The sixteenth issue of our annual journal, *Peace & Policy*, entitled *Empathetic Understanding and Virtuous Dialogue in a World of Risk and Uncertainty* was co-edited by Kevin Clements and Olivier Urbain. The book *Music and Solidarity: Questions of Universality, Consciousness and Connection* is the second one in our series on music and peacebuilding. It was edited by Felicity Laurence and Olivier Urbain. Our efforts to contribute to a more sustainable society came to fruition as *Climate Change and Environmental Ethics*, edited by Ved P. Nanda and *Ethical Transformations for a Sustainable Future*, edited by Olivier Urbain and Deva Temple.

Acknowledgements:

On behalf of the staff of the Toda Institute in Tokyo and Honolulu, I would like to express my gratitude to the founder of our institute, Daisaku Ikeda, for providing continued support and inspiration. We also would like to thank our Secretary General, our senior fellow researchers and affiliated researchers throughout the world for their outstanding contributions. I also would like to express our appreciation to the more than 500 members of the Toda International Advisory Council (TIAC) Network, and the countless friends and colleagues who have collaborated with us throughout 2011. Finally I would like to express my gratitude to the staff of the Honolulu and Tokyo offices for their amazing dedication, and for all their help in preparing this annual report.

“Dialogue of Civilizations for Global Citizenship” is needed more than ever on our planet, and I look forward to promoting the theory and practice of interdependence with all of you through networking, research and publication.

Olivier Urbain, Director,
Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research,
May 15, 2012