

Transmission 2024 Peace & Justice

Study Guide



How great people who are working in conflict zones bring peace and justice in the world, against all odds.

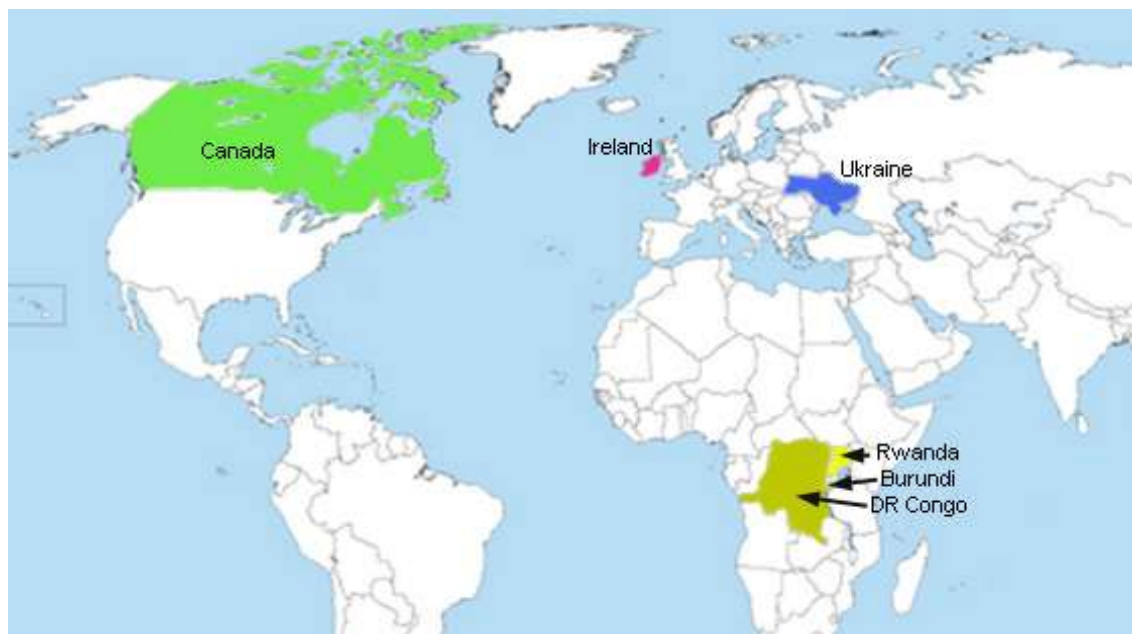
By: Hajo Hajonides

Content

Content	2
Introduction	3
Discussion Topics	4
Background information	9
Ukraine	9
Ireland	11
Central Africa.....	13
Indigenous Peoples in Canada.....	15
The Transmission video series	17
Profiles in order of appearance	17
Project supporters	18
Sponsors	18

Introduction

Transmission is a series of five, 10-minute video productions leading up to 2025, the 500-year celebration of the Anabaptist movement. Peace and Justice is the fifth production in that series. Each of the videos gives voice to young adults from a different continent. In each case, they grapple with issues they face as Anabaptists.



In this video, we first enter the war zone in Ukraine, where we hear about the injustices, destruction and killings of this senseless war. We also hear about the heroes who, against all odds, help people in dire needs with evacuation, food, clothing, heaters, etcetera. The pastors in these areas are doing as much as they can to keep morale up for the inhabitants and the fighting soldiers.

Next we come to Ireland, where they have a peace agreement since 1998. However, although there is no more fighting, there is no peace either. Old religious differences are transferred into political differences and the situation in Ireland is very grim. We visit workers who try to smooth out the hostile feelings the parties have toward each other.

Then we jump to Africa where we see many conflicts between ethnic groups. In Burundi, peace coaches are teaching people with different backgrounds from Congo, Burundi and Rwanda about how to resolve conflicts non-violently. After this training the trained people return to their home to teach other people.

Finally, we visit an area where wrongdoings from the past toward the Indigenous people in Canada are being mended to do at least some justice to these people who have suffered so much from the attitude of (Christian) European immigrants in the past.

This study guide is designed to provide added perspective and depth to your faith journey. People from all over the world worked together to bring this unique production to life. To view this and the other video series in many languages go to:

<https://mwc-cmm.org/en/resources/transmission/>

The study guides can also be found on the same website.

Discussion Topics

We suggest that you view the video in a group setting. It may be good to watch the video and briefly discuss in the group what caught your attention. Then watch the video again so you have a good grasp of what has been said.

As a discussion leader, you can guide the conversation with your own questions and input, but the questions below may also help you in this discussion. Of course, you can pick the questions you think would be most interesting for your group. The situation you are in may differ from the issues addressed in this video and in these questions. If you come up with new insights or questions, please feel free to share them with the production group by contacting hajo.hajonides@ziggo.nl

In this video we describe four different situations of conflict:

1. Ukraine: Living for Peace
2. Northern Ireland: Hearing God's voice
3. Burundi, Rwanda and Congo: Preparing for Justice
4. Canada: Finding Hope

Each situation differs from the other and represents a different stage in the peace and justice process; from war, through post-war, struggling for peace and justice and correcting historical injustice.



Andrés states that peace and justice processes in war or post-war situations are very complex. It is important that the deeper backgrounds, emotions and historical contexts of the conflicts are clear.

Next it is important that the parties involved in the conflict are willing to find a solution to stop hostilities.

Finally, unbiased negotiators with empathy and tactical skills are needed to pave the way to peace and justice.

Below we have given some possible causes for contemporary conflicts and some qualities for adequate peace negotiators.

1. Would you agree that these contemporary dynamics are shaping modern conflicts? Or do you think there are other emerging causes we should pay more attention to?
2. For each of the described situations in the video, what do you think are the main causes for the conflicts?
3. For each of the described situations in the video, what do you think are the main topics that need to be solved, in what order and how?
4. If you were to pick a good peace negotiator, what character qualities do you think are most important and for which particular situation would each of the qualities be of essence?

Causes of contemporary Conflicts

In contemporary conflicts, many of the causes are a mix of several factors, and these causes may be intertwined in complex ways. However, a few causes seem particularly prominent in today's conflicts:

1. **Ethnic, religious or cultural tensions:** *With globalization and migration, ethnic and religious divides have become more pronounced in some regions. Conflicts in places like the Middle East, parts of Africa, and even Europe have often been fueled by these types of tensions, sometimes exacerbated by the legacy of colonialism or foreign intervention. In some cases, radicalization along ethnic or religious lines contributes to ongoing conflict.*
2. **Political instability and weak governments:** *In many contemporary conflicts, the failure of governments to provide security, stability, and basic services has led to unrest. Weak or collapsed states—like in Syria, Libya, and Yemen—create power vacuums where various groups, including extremist organizations, can vie for control. These situations are often made worse by foreign interventions that further destabilize the region.*
3. **Economic competition and resource scarcity:** *As global populations grow and resources like water, oil, and food become scarcer, economic competition is increasingly a driver of conflict. For example, conflicts in the Sahel region of Africa and the South China Sea are partially driven by competition for resources and control of important trade routes. Climate change is also contributing to this, as droughts, flooding, and changing agricultural patterns worsen resource availability and create new fault lines for conflict.*
4. **Misperceptions and misunderstandings:** *With modern technologies and the rapid spread of information, misunderstandings can escalate more quickly than before. Fake news, misinformation, and disinformation campaigns—often exacerbated by social media—can fuel fears, amplify hostilities, and make diplomatic efforts more difficult. For example, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has been fueled not just by territorial disputes but also by propaganda, leading to polarized perceptions on both sides.*
5. **Nationalism and ideology:** *In some regions, nationalism has seen a resurgence, and this can lead to aggressive foreign policy and conflict. For example, the rise of nationalism in countries like Russia, China, and India has led to tensions over borders and spheres of influence. Ideological battles are also playing out on a global scale, with competition between liberal democratic values and authoritarian models, which shapes foreign policy and international relations.*
6. **Revolution or rebellion:** *In countries with entrenched autocratic regimes or poor governance, popular uprisings, rebellions, or revolutions continue to be major drivers of conflict. The Arab Spring, for example, sparked a series of conflicts in countries like Syria, Libya, and Egypt. These internal rebellions can quickly escalate into larger regional conflicts, especially if foreign powers intervene.*
7. **Cyber warfare and hybrid warfare:** *A more recent and increasingly important cause of conflict is cyber warfare. Attacks on critical infrastructure, interference in elections, and digital espionage are new forms of conflict that often bypass traditional military engagement. These forms of warfare can create tension between nations, even if they don't lead to all-out war. Hybrid warfare, where states use a mix of conventional, unconventional, and cyber tactics, is also becoming more common.*

So, while the causes of war in the past remain relevant, modern conflicts often involve new dimensions, such as digital warfare, economic factors exacerbated by climate change, and globalized political movements. These contemporary elements complicate the picture and make it harder to pinpoint a single cause, as multiple factors often feed into one another.

Qualities of peace negotiators

Peace negotiators play a vital role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Their qualities are crucial for navigating the complexities of peace talks and finding solutions that all parties can accept. Here are some key qualities of effective peace negotiators:

1. **Patience:** Peace negotiations can be lengthy and frustrating. Negotiators need to be patient, as breakthroughs often come slowly, and progress can be incremental. Rushing decisions or pushing for quick resolutions can undermine the process.
2. **Empathy:** Understanding the perspectives, grievances, and needs of all parties involved is essential. Empathy helps negotiators build trust, bridge divides, and work toward mutually beneficial solutions. It helps them recognize the emotional and human aspects of the conflict.
3. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Every conflict involves different cultural, religious, and historical contexts. A good negotiator should be culturally aware and sensitive to these differences, as they can shape the attitudes and expectations of the parties involved.
4. **Strong communication skills:** Clear, effective communication is at the heart of negotiations. Peace negotiators must be able to express ideas concisely, listen actively, and ensure that all voices are heard. Misunderstandings or miscommunications can derail progress.
5. **Problem-solving ability:** Peace talks often involve complex, multifaceted problems. Negotiators need to be skilled in identifying creative solutions, finding common ground, and proposing compromises that satisfy the needs and interests of all sides.
6. **Resilience and determination:** Negotiations can be tough, especially when emotions run high or when faced with setbacks. A good negotiator needs resilience to keep pushing forward and the determination to work toward a resolution, even when the process seems difficult or stalled.
7. **Neutrality and impartiality:** Successful peace negotiators are often seen as neutral parties who do not take sides. They are able to act as mediators and facilitate discussions without showing favoritism. This helps create an atmosphere of trust and fairness.
8. **Flexibility and open-mindedness:** Negotiators need to be open to new ideas and adaptable to changing situations. Sometimes, unexpected opportunities for peace arise, and a successful negotiator must be willing to adjust strategies when needed.
9. **Strategic thinking:** While being empathetic and patient, peace negotiators must also think strategically, weighing long-term consequences and understanding the underlying dynamics of the conflict. They need to anticipate challenges, plan responses, and keep the bigger picture in mind.
10. **Emotional intelligence:** Being able to manage one's own emotions and understand those of others is crucial. High emotional intelligence helps negotiators maintain calm in tense situations and navigate the emotional undercurrents of the negotiation.
11. **Diplomatic skills:** Negotiators must be able to build and maintain relationships with diverse stakeholders, including governments, organizations, and civil society groups. Their diplomatic finesse enables them to broker agreements and maintain communication across various levels.
12. **Knowledge of conflict resolution:** A deep understanding of conflict dynamics, legal frameworks, and past peace agreements can provide invaluable context to negotiations. Having expertise in these areas helps negotiators guide discussions toward productive outcomes.

The combination of these qualities enables peace negotiators to manage complex, high-stakes conversations and increase the chances of a lasting peace agreement.



5. In the video Aleksey is talking about the loss of family and property. He feels that great injustice has been done to his country, his family and his life. How do you think this can be mitigated?

6. Aleksey is speaking with soldiers who are at the front and also those in hospitals, where they have lost legs or arms. Aleksey prays with

them often doubting his own words, but as he says, "God provides me with the words". What do you think is God's role in helping people like Aleksey to survive and supporting him to help other people?

7. In the war in Ukraine, we see many war crimes being committed. What should be done with these and how can the responsible people be held accountable for those crimes?



8. Kateryna and Oksana are talking about patience, love and forgiveness. Do you think that is possible and if so, what is needed to come to forgiveness. And if not, how can the Ukrainians move forward?



9. The Ukrainians pray and hope for peace. Do you think that the situation in Ukraine will result in a long-lasting stability? What is necessary to come to such a stability in regards to a guaranteed safety for Ukraine, Europe and Russia, accountability for war crimes, satisfaction with the peace treaty on both sides, restoring the physical damages, restoring the materialistic damages, and maybe restoring justice?

10. Andrés states that peace does not end with the silencing of weapons. Peace is an ongoing process, which includes healing deep wounds and broken relationships. In this video we see various situations where violence, hate and contempt return after some time, after a peace treaty has been signed. Why is that and what could be done about that?



11. Gordon says that in Northern Ireland there is an absence of violence, but he doesn't think there is peace. It seems that the elder people still want peace, but the younger generation is less forgiving. Why do you think later generations pick up the historical oppositions rather forcefully. Have you seen this process elsewhere as well?

12. Mary asks Gordon how he would define violence in Belfast. Gordon answers that he physical violence has become a violence of language, attitude where even the scripture got weaponized. It seems an ongoing process and as such a frustrating one. Why do you think the work of peace workers remains important?



13. Gordon answers Mary's question with: "The violence has changed now, it's become a violence of language and attitude, even the Scripture gets weaponized to justify sectarian attitudes". Does the last part of this answer disturb you?



14. Mulanda is teaching people from Congo, Burundi and Rwanda how to solve conflict non-violently. These people then go back to their countries to start peace building initiatives. One of the main approaches he uses is to help people start listening to each other so they can understand what is behind the pain and the hate. Why is truly listening so difficult and how would really listening to one another help the peace process?

15. Mulanda believes in educating people from the region in how to deal with peace and providing them with skills to make intermediate discussions possible. What do think of that belief and which basic skills and conditions are necessary to make these discussions fruitful.

16. Jonathan explains that during colonization of the America's land was taken from the indigenous people to make it usable and to turn it profitable for the nation. The Canadian settlers drove the first nations people from their land and took their children to be raised as civilized people. After this injustice the first thing needed is to rectify this. The wrongdoers need to be held accountable. If justice is done, the long process of forgiving can start. How useful do you think this process of justice is for the indigenous people and for the Mennonite churches in Canada?



17. As Adrian explains the first nations people have a different idea about ownership of nature, the land and the air we breathe. They cannot see nature, land or air as a property of a person or company. How do you feel about this concept? How should we deal with our attitude towards nature, land and air?

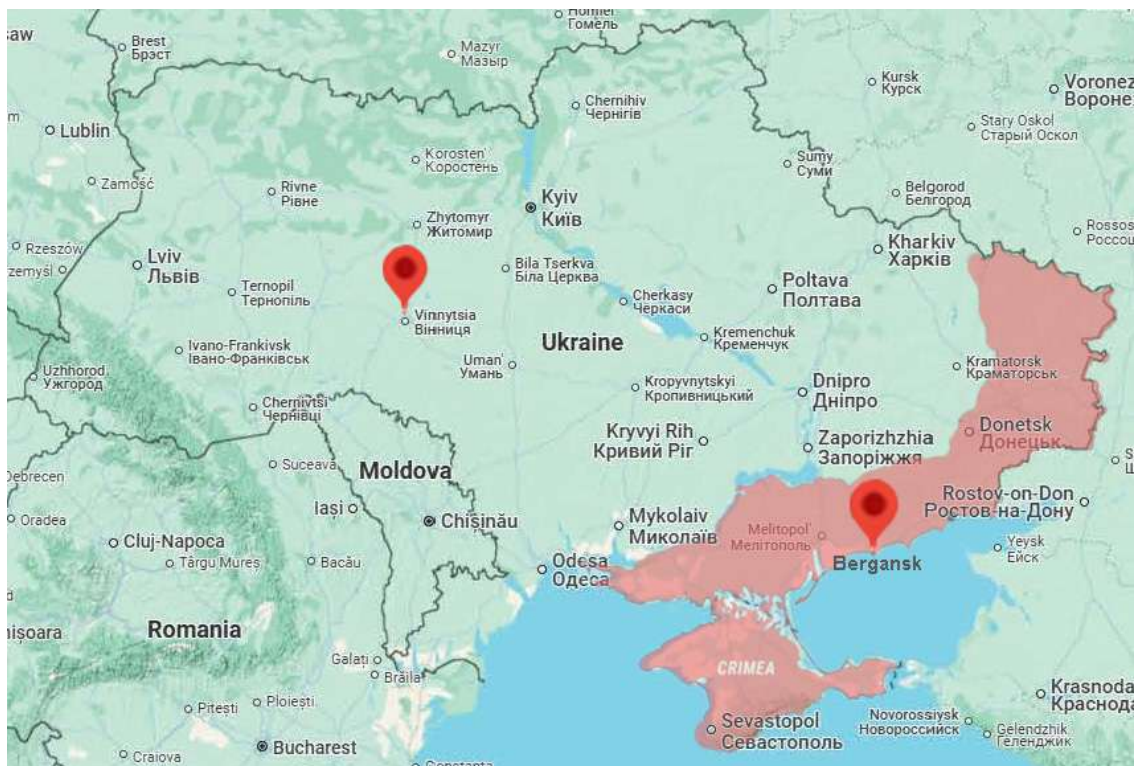
18. In all the conflicts that we discussed in this video, do you think justice has been done and the wrongdoers are held accountable for their deeds? In all the mentioned conflicts where are we in the process of peace, justice and forgiveness?

Background information

Ukraine

Ukraine has a long and intense history. Following the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the chaos of the Russian Civil War, Ukraine declared independence in 1918 but was quickly incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1922. During the Stalinist period, Ukraine experienced the Holodomor, a man-made famine in the 1930s that caused millions of deaths.

Ukraine declared independence from the Soviet Union again on 24 August 1991, following the collapse of the USSR. In the years following independence, Ukraine faced political and economic instability, with internal divisions between the pro-European western part and the pro-Russian eastern part of the country. Tensions were especially pronounced in relation to Ukraine's relationship with Russia and its desire to integrate more closely with Western institutions like the European Union and NATO.



In 2013, protests broke out in Ukraine after President Viktor Yanukovich, who was aligned with Russia, refused to sign an association agreement with the European Union. The protests, known as Euromaidan, grew into a larger movement calling for democratic reforms. In early 2014, Yanukovich fled the country, and a pro-European government took power. This shift in Ukraine's political orientation angered Russia, which saw it as a loss of influence over Ukraine.

In response to the change in government, Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014 and began supporting separatist movements in eastern Ukraine (Donetsk and Luhansk regions). This sparked the ongoing war in Donbas, where Ukrainian forces have been engaged in combat with Russian-backed separatists.

The current phase of the conflict began in February 2022, when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, dramatically escalating the war. The invasion was preceded by increasing military buildup along Ukraine's borders and diplomatic tensions.

On 24 February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a military assault on Ukraine, marking a significant escalation in the conflict. Russian forces initially attempted to capture Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, and other major cities but faced fierce resistance from the Ukrainian military and civilians. The invasion quickly became a war of attrition, with heavy fighting in various regions of Ukraine, including the east, south, and the Kyiv area.

The invasion has provoked widespread international condemnation. The United States, European Union and other countries have provided significant military and economic support to Ukraine, including weapons, intelligence, and financial aid. Sanctions against Russia have been imposed, aiming to weaken its economy and military capabilities. NATO and European countries have provided extensive support, although NATO itself has not directly intervened militarily.

In the months following the invasion, Ukrainian forces mounted successful counteroffensives, regaining significant territory in the Kharkiv region and the southern region of Kherson. The conflict has been marked by brutal fighting, particularly in the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine, with heavy casualties on both sides.

As of 2024, the war is ongoing, with the frontlines remaining fluid. Russia continues its efforts to control large parts of eastern and southern Ukraine, particularly the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, while Ukraine continues to push back and defend its territory. The war has caused a massive humanitarian crisis, with millions of Ukrainians displaced internally and abroad. The international community remains engaged, with a focus on diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict, but a lasting peace agreement has not yet been achieved.

During the war many people stood up against the Russian aggression. One of them is Alexey Yuditsenko. Alexey lived in Berdiansk, an area now occupied by the Russians. He was a pastor for the Heart of Christ Mennonite Brethren Church and started 11 years ago. With about 7 churches in 2022 there were around 100 people, and 10 to 15 baptisms per year.

Alexey was a senior pastor when in 2014 the war started. He and his team visited the front 1 or 2 times a week, where they helped people and distributed humanitarian articles. The team started churches in Donetsk and Mariupol. The main focus was to help people and pray with them and also go to the frontline to help soldiers with sermons. In 2022 there were 5 churches together with the Pentecostal and charismatic church to have services and baptize people. Every week Alexey had to drive 500 or 600 km, to be able to visit 2 of the 5 churches one of them in Berdiansk, in cooperation with the other churches.

Berdiansk is now an occupied territory and the Russians stole everything. When in 2022 the Russians came Alexey had to run and left everything behind. He only took a couple of T-shirts, extra jeans and €200. He took his family and together with 25 other people left. Alexey now lives in Vinnytsia. Before the war there was a wide network with all sorts of pastors from different denominations and there were 25 Mennonite churches. Now Alexey is senior pastor of a couple of those churches and he helps, he serves and he distributes food and supplies.

Ireland

The troubles in Ireland, often referred to as “The Troubles,” was a complex and violent conflict that took place between the late 1960s and 1998, primarily in Northern Ireland, though it also involved the Republic of Ireland, Great Britain, and various political and paramilitary groups. It was rooted in centuries of sectarian, political, and religious tensions, but the modern phase of the conflict was sparked by a mix of social, economic, and political issues.



At its core, The Troubles were a conflict between two main communities in Northern Ireland: **Unionists (Protestants)**: Predominantly Protestant, these individuals identified as British and sought to remain part of the United Kingdom. Unionists were often referred to as “Loyalists” and viewed their identity as tied to British rule.

Nationalists (Catholics): Predominantly Catholic, these individuals identified as Irish and sought either greater autonomy or independence for Northern Ireland, ultimately aiming for a united Ireland. Nationalists were often referred to as “Republicans.”

These two groups were divided along both religious and political lines, and tensions had existed for centuries, particularly after the partition of Ireland in 1921, which resulted

in the creation of Northern Ireland as a separate entity within the United Kingdom. While the Republic of Ireland gained independence, Northern Ireland remained part of the UK, with a Protestant majority and a Catholic minority.

There are many causes that played an important role in the conflict:

Sectarian Divisions: The Protestant Unionists and Catholic Nationalists were often in opposition over their political, social, and religious identities. Protestant Unionists felt threatened by Catholic Nationalists’ demands for civil rights and a united Ireland, while Catholics felt marginalized and discriminated against in terms of political representation, jobs, and housing.

Civil Rights Movement: In the 1960s, inspired by similar movements in the United States and around the world, Northern Irish Catholics began demanding equal rights, including an end to gerrymandering (the unfair division of electoral districts), access to jobs, and an end to discrimination in housing and policing. This was initially a peaceful movement, but it was met with resistance and sometimes violence from the state and loyalist groups.

Political Instability: Northern Ireland's government, controlled by the Unionists, was often seen as oppressive by the Catholic minority. The state police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), was accused of bias against Catholics, further exacerbating tensions.

Violence and Armed Groups: In response to perceived injustices, both Unionist and Nationalist groups began to resort to violence. The Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) emerged as the main militant Republican group, seeking to use armed resistance to end British rule in Northern Ireland and unite Ireland. In response, Loyalist paramilitary groups such as the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) formed to defend the Protestant community and maintain Northern Ireland's union with Britain.

The conflict began to escalate after the civil rights movement was violently suppressed, culminating in events such as the Bloody Sunday massacre in 1972, when British soldiers killed 13 unarmed Catholic protesters in Derry. The violence became widespread, and the British government deployed the British Army to Northern Ireland to maintain order, though they soon became embroiled in the conflict themselves.

The 1970s and 1980s saw an increase in bombings, shootings, and attacks from both sides. The IRA carried out bombings in Northern Ireland and England, while Loyalists targeted Catholic civilians. There was also an ongoing campaign of hunger strikes, notably by IRA prisoners like Bobby Sands in 1981, which drew significant international attention.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, efforts to bring an end to the violence intensified. The British government engaged in peace talks with various groups, including Sinn Féin (the political wing of the IRA) and the Ulster Unionist Party. The Good Friday Agreement (Belfast Agreement) of 1998 was the culmination of these efforts, establishing a devolved government for Northern Ireland and providing for power-sharing between Unionists and Nationalists. It also outlined mechanisms for dealing with the legacy of the conflict and addressing issues like policing and disarmament. Though the agreement did not immediately resolve all underlying issues, it brought an official end to the large-scale violence and laid the foundation for peace in the region.

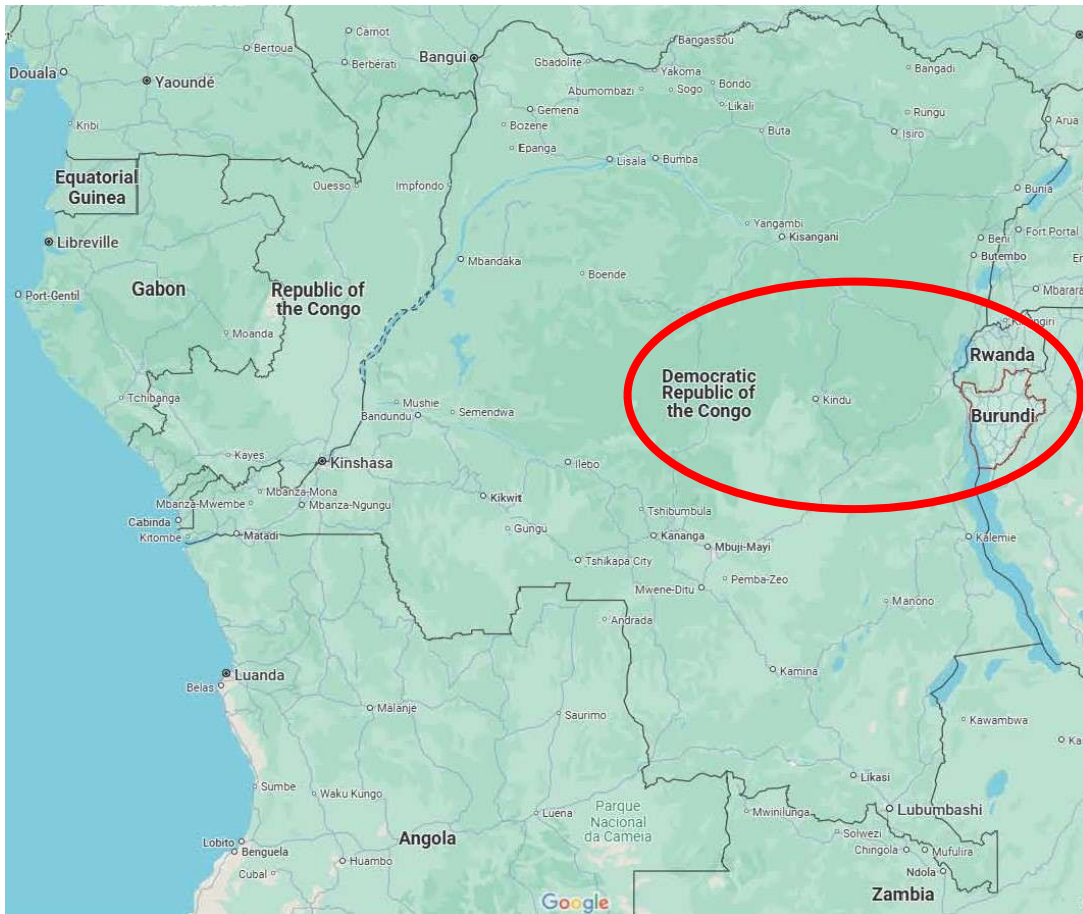
Even after the Good Friday Agreement, tensions and sporadic violence continued for years, with some dissident groups rejecting the peace process. The legacy of The Troubles remains deep, especially in Northern Ireland's divided communities. Social and economic inequalities, as well as segregated neighborhoods and schools, continue to shape Northern Irish society. Nonetheless, the peace process has largely succeeded in maintaining relative stability, and the majority of the population in both communities now support peaceful coexistence.

The Troubles led to the deaths of over 3,500 people, the vast majority of them civilians, and thousands more were injured. The conflict remains one of the most painful chapters in the modern history of Ireland and the UK, but it also led to significant lessons about negotiation, reconciliation, and the importance of peacebuilding.

Gordon McDade, from Forthspring Inter Community Group which is based on the Woodvale and Springfield interface in Belfast, is currently working in the peace center which is literally a part of the Peace Wall. The Peace Wall was erected to separate the Unionist and Nationalist districts. Forthspring promotes dialogue and relationship building between divided communities along Belfast's biggest peace wall. Gordon notices that the old religious opposition has now become a political opposition. Especially younger people who do not know the horrors of the troubles seem to radicalize. Gordon sees his task as to dampen these radical developments as much as he can.

Central Africa

The Great Lakes region of Africa, which includes the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Burundi, has been the site of longstanding conflicts, with various peace initiatives and efforts to stabilize the region over the years. The conflicts in these countries are deeply interconnected, often fueled by ethnic tensions, political struggles, and the involvement of foreign powers and armed groups.



Peace workshops and peacebuilding initiatives have played a key role in addressing conflict and promoting reconciliation in the Great Lakes region of Africa. These workshops often focus on fostering dialogue, healing, and cooperation among different ethnic groups, political factions, and communities affected by violence. They aim to create spaces for dialogue, facilitate understanding, and build capacities for peace.

The **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** has faced continuous instability since the 1990s, due to internal conflict, the aftermath of the Rwandan Genocide, and the wider regional dynamics in Central Africa. The First and Second Congo Wars (1996-1997 and 1998-2003, respectively) involved various rebel groups, neighboring countries, and international actors. Even after the official end of the wars, armed groups continue to operate in the eastern provinces of the DRC, contributing to insecurity.

Given the widespread violence, the DRC has been a key focus for peacebuilding initiatives, and peace workshops have been used to address issues like community reconciliation, demobilization, and the prevention of further violence.

Rwanda's history has been marked by ethnic tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi populations. The 1994 Rwandan Genocide, in which an estimated 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed, left a deep scar in the country and the region. After the genocide, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), led by Paul Kagame, took control of the government, and efforts were made to rebuild the country. However, Rwanda's involvement in regional conflicts, particularly in the DRC, has been a source of ongoing tension.

The country has made significant progress in terms of peacebuilding and reconciliation since the genocide, with the government implementing a series of initiatives to foster national unity. Peace workshops in Rwanda have been central to the healing process, focusing on reconciliation, restorative justice, and the promotion of unity among the country's diverse ethnic groups.

Burundi, like Rwanda, has faced ethnic violence and political instability, with a history of conflict between the Hutu majority and Tutsi minority. The most notable conflict was the Burundian Civil War (1993-2005), which followed the assassination of the first democratically elected Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye. The civil war ended with the Arusha Peace Accords in 2000, but tensions remain, particularly after the 2015 political crisis that followed President Pierre Nkurunziza's decision to run for a controversial third term.

Peace workshops in Burundi have focused on fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and the prevention of future violence.

In the great Lakes region of Africa Peace initiatives are mainly focused on Reconciliation and Trauma Healing and Community-Based Workshops. These are focused on victims of violence and young people:

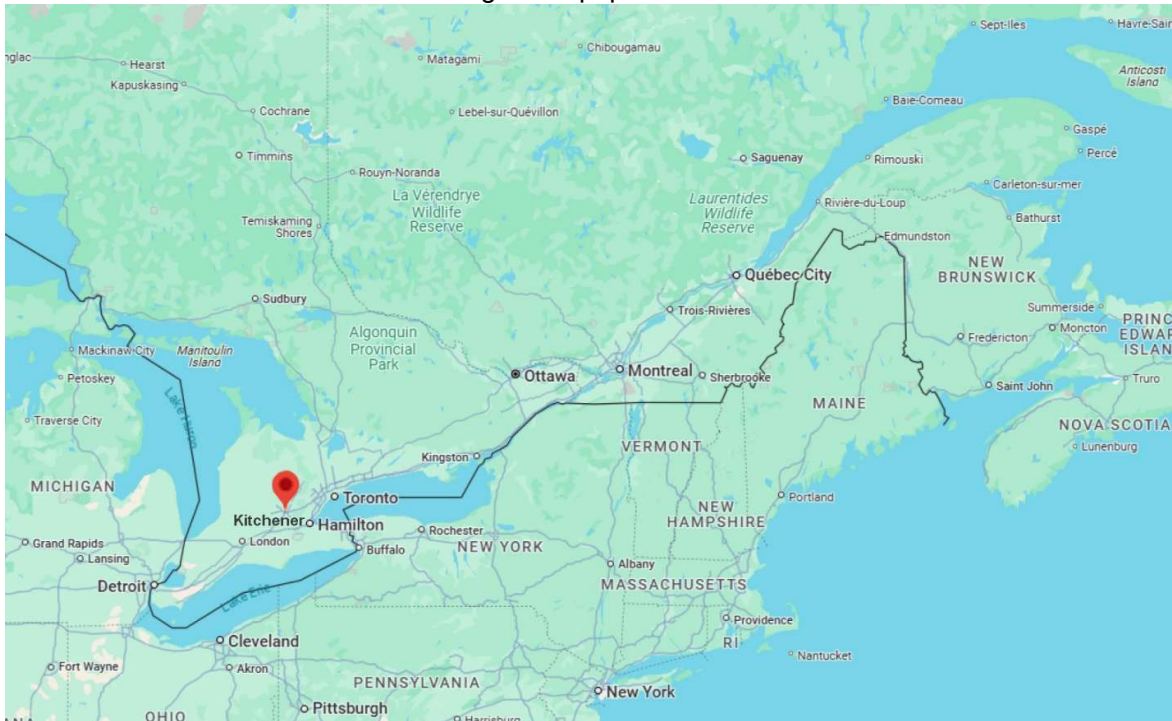
Reconciliation and Trauma Healing: Many peace workshops in the DRC focus on healing the deep psychological scars left by years of war and violence. These workshops involve counseling, conflict resolution training, and community dialogue to help victims and perpetrators of violence come together and begin the process of reconciliation.

Community-Based Workshops: Local communities are often involved in peace workshops where members are taught nonviolent conflict resolution strategies, how to handle ethnic or political tensions, and how to advocate for peace. These workshops often include representatives from diverse groups, including victims of violence, former combatants, and women, who play a key role in peacebuilding.

In our video we see the work of Mulanda is focused on Community-Based Workshops, where he teaches people to bring peace to their own communities, when they get back to their home region.

Indigenous Peoples in Canada

The Indigenous peoples in Canada have faced a range of injustices throughout history. Years of government inaction have made matters worse and led to a political scandal. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau therefore commissioned a large-scale investigation in 2016, which cost more than 40 million Canadian dollars (approximately 25 million euros). Trudeau hoped that this would restore ties with the indigenous population.



The report showed that the problem is much bigger than people thought; especially murders, disappearances and a pattern of disproportionate violence against indigenous women in Canada, was disconcerting. Although indigenous women represent approximately four percent of the Canadian population, 16% of the murdered women are indigenous. Since the 1970s, more than 1,200 indigenous women have been murdered or gone missing, the study states, but according to indigenous advocacy groups, that number is likely much higher: estimates run to over 4,000.

The problem is deeply rooted in Canada. Between 1870 and 1990, more than 150,000 indigenous children were taken from their families by the Canadian government to be placed in boarding schools and white foster homes, where they were to become “civilized Canadian citizens.” The “Indian in the child had to die” was the underlying motto.

But not only ‘the Indian in the child’ was destroyed, but also the child itself. Thousands of them were abused, neglected or committed suicide after sexual abuse. More than seven thousand children died or went missing during this period and the real number may be higher. The last boarding school only closed in 1996; in 2008 the Canadian government apologized for the cruel policy.

Various indigenous social work groups are working to “put the Indian back in the child and the adult.” They call this re-indigenization. The communities are actively trying to decolonize themselves.

Injustice towards Indigenous peoples in Canada is addressed through a combination of governmental, legal, and community-based approaches.

While progress has been made, systemic issues remain, and ongoing work is required to address the deep-rooted injustices faced by Indigenous peoples in Canada. Continuous dialogue, policy changes, and community empowerment are essential for effective resolutions.

Mennonite communities in Canada have taken various steps to address historical injustices faced by Indigenous peoples. Their initiatives often align with principles of peace, justice, and reconciliation deeply rooted in their faith. Here are some ways they are contributing:

1. **Education and Awareness:** Mennonite organizations provide educational resources and programs that promote understanding of Indigenous issues and history among both Mennonites and the wider community. This includes workshops, seminars, and discussions focused on reconciliation.
2. **Partnerships with Indigenous Communities:** Many Mennonite churches and organizations seek to build relationships with Indigenous communities. This includes actively listening to Indigenous voices, supporting their rights, and collaborating on projects that respect Indigenous sovereignty.
3. **Advocacy:** Mennonites engage in advocacy efforts to promote justice for Indigenous peoples, addressing issues like land rights, the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and systemic racism.
4. **Financial Support:** Some Mennonite organizations provide funding for Indigenous-led projects, initiatives, and cultural revitalization efforts. This financial support aims to empower Indigenous communities and help address immediate needs.
5. **Volunteering and Service Work:** Many Mennonites participate in volunteer opportunities that involve working with Indigenous communities, helping with various projects, and providing assistance in areas like education, healthcare, and housing.
6. **Conflict Resolution:** Mennonites, with a strong focus on peacebuilding, engage in conflict resolution work, facilitating dialogues between Indigenous peoples and other communities to promote mutual understanding and healing.
7. **Commitment to Reconciliation:** Several Mennonite churches publicly acknowledge the injustices faced by Indigenous peoples and commit to engaging in ongoing reconciliation efforts within their congregations and communities.

These actions reflect a growing recognition within Mennonite communities of their responsibility to contribute to healing relationships and addressing past injustices against Indigenous peoples in Canada.

The Transmission video series

Producer Max Wiedmer, a Swiss Mennonite from Affox (a video, film, and multimedia company), together with Hajo Hajonides, a Dutch Mennonite from the International Menno Simons Center, developed a video project to commemorate the first Anabaptist baptism in Zurich, in 1525. Alongside other festivities being organized in Europe, the two partners are producing five short videos each year between 2020 and 2024. Each video covers a topic that is close to the hearts of Mennonites around the world. To emphasize the global dimension, the videos are being filmed in different countries. Many different video teams are part of the making of the series.

These videos are intended to be used in workshops, discussion groups, Sunday schools, and so on. The videos are narrated or subtitled in several languages, making them widely accessible. Each title has a study guide which provides background information about the country where the recordings were made and about the subject itself. The guides include questions that can serve as a basis for discussion.

In 2020, the first video was produced on the subject Freedom of belief. This film, shot in Ethiopia, is about the Meserete Kristos Church which was heavily oppressed during the country's totalitarian Communist regime. Despite that oppression, the church grew with an impressive rate. Today it is the largest Anabaptist body in the world.

In 2021, the second video was released about the dialogue between Muslims and Christians. In the video Hani and Adi share their faith journeys on how they relate as Mennonites (a small minority) and Muslims (a large majority) in Indonesia. It shows how the Mennonites in Indonesia can live together in peace.

The 2022 video covering the topic of Creation Care was released focusing on examples of how our brothers and sisters in Latin America are practicing creation care. The stories cover four different countries, each with their own set of challenges. We visit various Mennonite locations and people, who are all very much concerned about the future of their children and the next generations. They want them to live in a better and cleaner world.

In 2023, the subject of Migration and Displaced People was covered. The video covers five different countries, each with their own set of challenges. We visit various migrant locations and meet people who are concerned about the welfare, nourishment and psychological issues of migrants. The aim of the helpers is to provide a better prospect for displaced families.

The Transmission video series can be found on the Mennonite World Conference website: mwc-cmm.org/transmission-videos/ On that website you can also find the study guides which can be downloaded for free. See affox.ch for more information about the production teams.

Profiles in order of appearance

Andrés Pacheco Lozano	Amsterdam Center for Religion and Peace & Justice Studies
Alexey Yuditsenko	Chaplain, Pastor, Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Ukraine
Kateryna Danilevska	Member, Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Ukraine
Max Oliferovski	Member, Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Ukraine
Lina Ignatchenko	Member, Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Ukraine
Oksana Makaiova	Member, Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Ukraine
Andrii Kyselov	Member, Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Ukraine
Roman Rakhuba	Executive Director, Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Ukraine
Mary Matute Castro	Psychologist, member of the Honduran Mennonite Church
Gordon McDade	Pastor, Mentor, Peacemaker
Mulanda Juma	MCC Representative for Rwanda and Burundi
Jonathan Neufeld	Indigenous Relations Coordinator Mennonite Church Canada
Adrian Jacobs	Senior Leader Indigenous Justice & Reconciliation, Christian Reformed Church
Laura Enns	Pastoral team member, Missions, Peace and Justice Worker
Eric Hunsberger	Member Stirling Mission, Peace and Justice Kitchener, Ontario
Pamala Albrecht	Member Stirling Mennonite Church, Spiritual Covenant Working Group

Project supporters

The production group offers thanks to these contributors and the many others who helped make this video possible.

AFHAM, Association Française d'Histoire Anabaptiste-Mennonite

AEEMF, Association des Eglises Evangélique Mennonites de France

KMS/CMS The Swiss Mennonite Conference

AMBD, Arbeitsgemeinschaft Mennonitischer Brüdergemeinden in Deutschland e.V.

Anabaptist Mennonite Network, Great Britain

IMSC, International Menno Simons Centrum, Netherlands:

Mennonite Church Canada, International Witness, Canada

Mennonite World Conference, a community of Anabaptist-related churches celebrating 500 years in 2025.

Sponsors

Affox AG, Switzerland

Anabaptist Mennonite Network, Great Britain

Horsch-Stiftung, Germany

International Menno Simons Centrum, Netherlands

Doopsgezinde Stichting DOWILVO, Netherlands

Stichting het Weeshuis van de Doopsgezinde Collegianten De Oranjeappel, Netherlands

Doopsgezinde Zending, Netherlands

Mennonite Central Committee Europe

Swiss Mennonite Conference