

SPECIAL REPORT SERIES
WINTER 1999

THE
CARTER CENTER



WAGING PEACE



FIGHTING DISEASE



BUILDING HOPE

DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT
PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

BY JOYCE NEU AND VAMIK VOLKAN

THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM AND THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF MIND AND HUMAN INTERACTION ARE GRATEFUL TO THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS, THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE, THE CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION, AND THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND EXCHANGES BOARD FOR FUNDING THIS PROJECT.

DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY
FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION:
THE CASE OF ESTONIA

BY JOYCE NEU AND VAMIK VOLKAN



CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM
THE CARTER CENTER
ONE COPENHILL
453 FREEDOM PARKWAY
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30307
(404) 420-5185
FAX (404) 420-3862
WWW.CARTERCENTER.ORG
WINTER 1999



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Map of Estonia	-2-
Preface and Acknowledgments	-4-
Workshop Series	-5-
List of Key Participants	-6-
Key Terms	-10-
Introduction	-11-
Major Issues Confronting Estonia	-12-
Methodology	-16-
Topics of Small Group Discussions	-22-
Workshop Outcomes	-28-
Recommendations and Conclusion	-32-
Appendices	-39-
About The Carter Center	-48-



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Although Estonia's secession from the Soviet Union in 1991 essentially was peaceful, the volatile emotional undercurrents unleashed after decades of Soviet rule permeated even seemingly simple issues. The continued presence of Russian troops three years after independence and a large Russian ethnic minority compounded the many problems of Estonia's newly won sovereignty and its economic and political transformation.

Because Estonians and Russian speakers¹ had no means of informal, unofficial dialogue, virtually no communication took place between these groups.

From 1994-96, The Carter Center's Conflict Resolution Program (CRP), in partnership with the University of Virginia's Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction (CSMHI), led an interdisciplinary International Negotiation Network (INN) project in Estonia to "vaccinate" the country's major ethnic groups. The initiative sought to prevent tensions from developing into dangerous domestic and/or international conflict.

A CRP/CSMHI team conducted six high-level, unofficial (Track Two), psychopolitical dialogues between influential Estonians, Russians, and Russian speakers in Estonia. These workshops, "Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Political Change," brought together parliamentarians, government officials, scholars, professionals, and students to discuss Estonia's future. The CRP/CSMHI team facilitated the meetings to head off potential miscommunication, rigidification of policies, tendency toward revenge and retribution, and any threat of hypernationalism at the decision-making level.

The workshops created an extensive network among people who previously had little to no contact. Through the psychopolitical dialogue process, participants gradually altered their previous conceptions of "us" and "them."² Also, several personal

relationships developed that had a positive impact on Russian-Estonian relations. Indeed, rigid, emotion-filled positions on all sides have loosened. Some Estonians now are working, albeit slowly and cautiously, toward institutionalizing new, adaptive strategies for a more tolerant, multiethnic Estonia. The dialogue series set the stage for the development of models of interethnic collaboration and coexistence in Estonia.

We believe this INN project has helped advance the development of an interdisciplinary methodology for conflict prevention and peaceful coexistence. We hope the dialogues detailed in this report serve as a model for reducing ethnic tensions.

The project benefited from the dedication and professionalism of several people. Joy Boissevain of the University of Virginia served as the primary coordinator of workshop logistics. Peeter Vares, deputy director of the Institute for International and Social Studies, courageously offered his partnership and lent his staff for this project; Esta Ivalo and Vera Truleva ensured that the workshops ran smoothly. Anne Kemppainen, a Carter Center intern, helped draft this report. Laina Wilk and Pam Auchmutey edited and coordinated its layout.

The CRP and CSMHI are grateful to the Pew Charitable Trusts, the United States Institute of Peace, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and the International Research and Exchanges Board for funding this project. CSMHI wishes to thank its Advisory Board chair, Robert Carey, M.D., dean of the University of Virginia School of Medicine, for his unflinching support of this project. The authors particularly would like to thank President Carter for supporting our efforts to develop a model for preventing violent conflict. ■

Joyce Neu
Vamik Volkan



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

WORKSHOP SERIES

APRIL 1994-APRIL 1996

First Workshop:	April 4-7, 1994	Tallinn
Second Workshop:	Oct. 10-13, 1994	Pärnu
Third Workshop:	Feb. 10-11, 1995	Tallinn
Fourth Workshop:	Sept. 11-14, 1995	Tallinn
Fifth Workshop:	Nov. 6-9, 1995	Tallinn
Sixth Workshop:	April 22-24, 1996	Tallinn



JOYCE NEU

Workshop participants explored the old town square, pictured here, in Estonia's capital of Tallinn.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

LIST OF KEY PARTICIPANTS

(Titles accurate at the time of the workshop series)

FACILITATION TEAM MEMBERS

Maurice Apprey, Faculty Member, Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction (CSMHI); Associate Dean and Professor of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, University of Virginia (UVA), Charlottesville, Va.

Margie Howell, Advisory Board Member, CSMHI; Clinical Specialist in Adult Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing; Certified Mediator; Charlottesville, Va.

Nathaniel Howell, Resident Diplomat, CSMHI; Former U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait

Norman Itzkowitz, Advisory Board Member, CSMHI; Professor of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.

Demetrios Julius, Faculty Member, CSMHI; Chief, Psychiatry Services, Veterans Administration Medical Center, Charlottesville, Va.

Joyce Neu, Senior Associate Director, Conflict Resolution Program (CRP), The Carter Center; Adjunct Associate Professor of Anthropology, Emory University, Atlanta, Ga.

Gregory Saathoff, Faculty Member, CSMHI; Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Family Medicine, UVA, Charlottesville, Va.

Harold Saunders, Advisory Board Member, CSMHI; Director of International Affairs, The Kettering Foundation; Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State; Washington, D.C.

J. Anderson Thomson, Assistant Director, CSMHI, Charlottesville, Va.

Yuri Urbanovich, Faculty Member, CSMHI; International Scholar (Russia), UVA, Charlottesville, Va.

Vamik Volkan, Director, CSMHI; Professor of Psychiatry, UVA, Charlottesville, Va.

STAFF ASSISTANTS

Joy Boissevain, Program Director, CSMHI, UVA, Charlottesville, Va.

Bruce Edwards, Managing Editor, *Mind and Human Interaction*, CSMHI, UVA, Charlottesville, Va.

Kelly Hale, Administrative Assistant, CSMHI, UVA, Charlottesville, Va.

Esta Ivalo, Administrative Assistant, Institute for International and Social Studies, Tallinn

Sara Tindall, Assistant Program Coordinator, CRP, The Carter Center, Atlanta, Ga.

Vera Truleva, Administrative Assistant, Institute for International and Social Studies, Tallinn

DiAnn Watson, Administrative Assistant, CRP, The Carter Center, Atlanta, Ga.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA



This building in Tallinn houses Estonia's parliament, the Riigikogu.

ESTONIANS

Arno Adamsoo, Head of Psychiatric Hospital, Tartu University, Tartu

Toomas Alatalu, Member of Parliament (MP), Tallinn

Mare Haab, Researcher, Institute for International and Social Studies, Tallinn

Klara Hallik, Senior Researcher, Institute for International and Social Studies; Former MP; Former State Minister in Charge of Ethnic Affairs, Tallinn

Arvo Haug, MP, Tallinn

Mati Heidmets, Dean, Social Sciences, Tallinn Pedagogical University, Tallinn

Mati Hint, Professor, Tallinn Pedagogical University; Former MP, Tallinn

Priit Järve, Director, Institute for International and Social Studies; President's Representative on the Round Table for Minorities; Tallinn

Andres Kalda, Student, International University of Social Sciences "LEX," Tallinn

Jaan Kaplinski, Writer; Former MP, Tallinn

Katrin Kase, Student, Tallinn Pedagogical University, Tallinn

Paul Lettens, Advisor, Political Department, Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Current Councilor to the Prime Minister, Tallinn

Keit Pentus, Student, Tallinn Pedagogical University

Arnold Rüütel, Deputy Speaker of Parliament; Director, Institute of National Development and Cooperation; Former President of Estonia, Tallinn

Tarmo Sild, Student, Tartu University, Tartu

Endel Talvik, Psychotherapist; President of the Estonian Psychoanalytically Oriented Society, Tallinn

Peeter Vares, Deputy Director, Institute for International and Social Studies, Tallinn



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

RUSSIAN SPEAKERS (CITIZENS AND NONCITIZENS)

Hanon Barbarer, President, College of Environmental Technologies, Sillamäe

Ilja Denks, Student, Tartu University, Tartu

Pavel Goncharov, Student, Tartu University, Tartu

Sergei Gorokhov, Director, Institute for Social and Economic Analysis of Estonia, Narva
Division, Narva

Vladimir Homyakov, Medical Doctor; Former Deputy, Narva City Council, Narva

Sergei Issakov, MP, Russian Faction, Tallinn; Professor, Tartu University, Tartu

Sergei Ivanov, MP, Russian Faction, Tallinn

Alexei Naumov, Student (by correspondence), University of Architecture and Construction
in St. Petersburg, Narva

Iliya Nikiforov, Co-Chair, Russian Representatives Assembly, Tallinn

Georgi Perovich, President, International University of Social Sciences “LEX,” Tallinn

Alexei Semionov, Advisor, Tallinn City Government; Member of the Board, Russian
Representatives Assembly, Tallinn

Angelika Trusova, Student, International University of Social Sciences “LEX,” Tallinn

RUSSIANS

Viatcheslav Bakhmin, Executive Director, Open Society Institute, Moscow

Valery Fadeyev, Expert, Committee on International Affairs, State Duma of the Russian Federation,
Moscow

Vera Gracheva, Chief, Division of Bilateral Humanitarian Cooperation, Department of International
Cooperation and Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Moscow

Andrei Jakushev, Press Secretary, Russian Embassy, Tallinn

Aivars Lezdinysh, Former Member, State Duma of the Russian Federation, Moscow

Marina Svirina, Analytic Researcher, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, State Duma of
the Russian Federation, Moscow

Alexandre Trofimov, Russian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Estonia, Tallinn

Yuri Voyevoda, Deputy MP, State Duma; Vice Chair, Committee on CIS Affairs and Relations with
Compatriots; Chair, Auditing Committee, Socio-Political Movement of Social Democrats, Moscow

Andrei Zakharov, Deputy General Director, Foundation for the Development of Parliamentarism
in Russia; Former Deputy MP, State Duma, Moscow



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

Other Participants (in one or two workshops)

Canada

Allan King, Filmmaker, Allan King Associates Ltd.

Kaspars Tuters, Psychoanalyst, Toronto

Latvia

Aina Antane, Senior Researcher, Institute of History, Latvian Academy of Sciences

Lithuania

Halina Kobeckaite, Former Director, Department on Ethnic Minorities, Vilnius;

Lithuanian Ambassador to Estonia, Tallinn

Russia

Konstantin Kirjuhin, Consultant, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, Moscow

Alexander Obolonski, Senior Researcher, Institute of the State and Law, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

Mikhail Reshetnikov, Director, East European Institute of Psychoanalysis, St. Petersburg

Stanislav Roschin, Senior Researcher, Institute of Psychology, Russian Academy of Science, Moscow

Anatoli Trynkov, Head of Department, Institute of Strategic Studies, Moscow

Zoja Zarubina, Associate Professor, Diplomatic Academy; Founder and First Director of Courses for Simultaneous Interpretation, Moscow Institute of Foreign Languages, Moscow

United States

Richard Arndt, Past President, Fulbright Alumni Association; Lecturer, George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

Harry Barnes, Director, Conflict Resolution Program, The Carter Center, Atlanta

Hrach Gregorian, Former Director of Training and Education, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C.

George Moein, Director, Earth 2020—Center for Environmental Policy and Hazardous Materials Management Institute, UVA, Charlottesville

Joseph Montville, Senior Associate and Director, Conflict Resolution Project, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, D.C.

Mary Theodore, Psychiatrist, Cornell Medical Center, Payne-Whitney Clinic, New York



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

KEY TERMS

CRP/CSMHI	Joint effort between the Conflict Resolution Program at The Carter Center in Atlanta, Ga., and the Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Va.
State Duma	The lower house of the Russian Federal Assembly, a bicameral parliament, the State Duma consists of 450 deputies, who are elected to serve four-year terms.
Narva	Town in northeast Estonia that borders Russia. More than 95 percent of its population is Russian-speaking.
OSCE	Established in Helsinki in 1975, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was institutionalized at the 1994 Budapest Summit, and its name was changed to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The post of high commissioner on national minorities was created in 1992 following the Soviet Union's dissolution. The high commissioner identifies and seeks early resolution of ethnic tensions that might endanger peace, stability, or friendly relations between participating OSCE states.
Paldiski	Former Soviet nuclear submarine base in Estonia.
Pärnu	Estonian beach resort town that provided an important air base during the Soviet era.
Riigikogu	Estonia's parliament, based in Tallinn.
Sillamäe	Town in northeast Estonia with a population of more than 95 percent Russian speakers.
Tallinn	Estonia's capital city, located on the Baltic coast in the northwest.
Tartu	Town in central Estonia that houses Estonia's oldest and most prestigious university, the University of Tartu.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

INTRODUCTION

In April 1994, with Russian troops still stationed in Estonia, The Carter Center's Conflict Resolution Program (CRP) joined with International Negotiation Network (INN) members Vamik Volkan of the University of Virginia's Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction (CSMHI) and Harold Saunders of the Kettering Foundation to implement a set of workshops. The three-year series aimed to reduce tensions on two fronts: between Russia and Estonia and between Russians in Estonia and Estonians.

Throughout the project, the CRP/CSMHI team consulted with and received cooperation and moral support from governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Importantly, CRP/CSMHI collaborated with an Estonian organization—the Institute for International and Social Studies of the Academy of Sciences of Estonia—on all phases of the initiative. Through the offices of its deputy director, Peeter Vares, the Institute helped the CRP/CSMHI team identify participants for the dialogues and choose appropriate meeting sites in Estonia. It also took the lead on producing preparatory paperwork and documentation.

With a population of approximately 1.5 million people, Estonia gained independence in 1991; almost one-third of its population was ethnic Russian. Thus, the country faced several issues:

- What to do with the almost 500,000 Russian residents, the former “colonizers;”
- How to deal with environmentally hazardous sites created by the Soviet military and industries; and
- How to demarcate Estonia's borders with Russia.

In addition, Estonia had to decide which economic and political roads it would take to ensure survival as a viable state. After the Soviet Union collapsed, few “friendly” official efforts existed to resolve problems between Russians and Estonians. Each side had concerns about ultranationalist sentiments expressed by the other. Emotions ranging from anxiety to humiliation and from elation to wishes for revenge fueled these tensions.

No blood was shed and no atrocities were committed, but hurt on both sides ran deep and the threat of confrontation remained real. Preventing tensions from rising between Estonia and Russia on the one hand and between Estonians and Russians in Estonia on the other became an important test for how the international community responded to an early warning of conflict. In 1992, Max van der Stoel, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) high commissioner on national minorities,³ saw Estonia as a country with the potential for violent conflict. CRP/CSMHI efforts sought to help the country shape an identity inclusive in its political, legal, and economic transformation to avert dangerous flareups between the groups.

To do so, the CRP/CSMHI team used a psychopolitical process, developed by the CSMHI, to provide all parties with a safe space in which to talk.

The process is guided by the philosophy that there is an optimal balance in addressing conflictual situations and dealing with participants' psychological investment in their own groups as well as the political realities they face. Facilitators hoped that by helping to defuse tensions among Estonians, Russian speakers in Estonia, and Russians, the workshops would serve as catalysts to transform the way they thought about each other. Methodologically, they would advance the study and practice of conflict prevention. ■



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

MAJOR ISSUES CONFRONTING ESTONIA

1) SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE

Estonia's primary concern after 1991 was removing former Soviet troops from its territory.⁴ At the time of the CRP/CSMHI's first workshop, approximately 2,500 troops remained—perceived by Estonians as a continuation of Soviet rule. Further arousing suspicion, Russia did not provide the Estonian government with exact figures for the number of troops and former military there. Numerous military installations, where Estonians had been forbidden to go, remained intact.

By the second workshop, the last troops had left Estonia as scheduled on Aug. 29, 1994. The withdrawal agreement was accompanied by a pact on social guarantees to all retired Soviet military living in Estonia as well as establishment of a timetable for dismantling Paldiski, a former Soviet nuclear submarine base. Problems remained in processing permanent residency applications for the nearly 19,000 Soviet military pensioners and their families.

2) BORDER DISPUTE

Drawing a border between Estonia and Russia remained a major obstacle to normalization. Treaty negotiations stalled due to a lack of agreement on recognizing the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty. For Estonians, the Treaty is the cornerstone of Estonian-Russian relations. Ignoring it would suggest that Estonia was never free and that an independent Estonian state never existed (see Appendix A). Estonians want Russians to acknowledge that the U.S.S.R. illegally annexed Estonia and that independence was *restored* in 1991—not just *started* then.

Significant progress was made in border negotiations in the last quarter of 1996, when Estonia renounced its demands that Russia recognize the validity of the Tartu Treaty. The Estonian government expressed willingness to sign a pact as soon as Russia was ready to do so. However, talks in November 1997 ended without agreement, and thus, Estonia remains without a border treaty with Russia.



Facilitators and participants visited Paldiski, a former Soviet nuclear submarine base. Here, a boat lies deserted on the shores of the frozen Baltic sea.

Joyce Neuf



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

Joyce Neu and Sergei Gorokhov stand in front of the coat of arms for Narva, where the Russian-speaking population forms an absolute majority.

3) SECURITY

Withdrawal of troops did not lead to the expected improved relations. Instead, Estonian-Russian tensions were characterized by lack of trust and little personal contact. The “good neighbor” policy of Finland and Russia did not exist between Estonia and Russia, and Estonians still perceived Russia as a major threat.⁵ Membership in the European Union (EU), which deals mainly with economic aspects of integration, was seen as one factor that would increase Estonia’s security. However, the stairs to NATO membership remained steep, with Russia vehemently opposed to admission of the Baltic states.⁶

Estonia’s policy toward its Russian minority has significant foreign and security policy implications. Russia has accused Estonia of violating Russian-speaking residents’ human rights. Certain circles in Moscow have said they would protect Russian speakers, thereby threatening Estonians with a possible act of aggression. Some policies promoted by the Estonian government, such as support for Chechen independence during the 1994-96 war there, also have fueled more radical elements in Russian politics. Aggressive rhetoric from Moscow, in particular before the 1996 Russian presidential elections, exacerbated Estonian fears of an expansionist neighbor.

4) MINORITY ISSUES

Another challenge after independence was how to involve minorities in Estonia’s political, social, and economic development.⁷ The minority groups, who are mainly Russian speakers,⁸ often do not have sufficient command of the Estonian language and



have only partially become acculturated to Estonian society. Most live in Tallinn and northeastern industrial cities such as Narva, Kohtla-Järve, and Sillamäe, where they form absolute majorities⁹ (see Appendix B). This region’s Russian-speaking population is concerned about citizenship, financial difficulties including housing and employment, and the environment. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) first established a presence in Estonia through a December 1992 visit; it followed up with a longer-term mission in early 1993.¹⁰

Only those Russians in Estonia before 1940 were viewed as Estonian citizens. After 1940, every Russian had to apply for citizenship, even if born there. Since 1992, approximately 90,000 applicants have acquired citizenship, but a large percentage of Estonia’s population remains foreign or stateless. Of those of non-Estonian origin, about 130,000 are Estonian citizens, 116,000 Russian citizens, and roughly 170,000 have no nationality. At first, only temporary residence permits, each valid for five years, were issued. In 1994,



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

Estonian authorities made available alien passports to all noncitizens so they could leave the country without requesting permission. As of Feb. 3, 1997, nearly 133,000 people had applied for the passports; about 33,000 had already received them (see Appendices C and D).

Noncitizens are subject to several restrictions due to their legal status, which affects their economic and political rights. Citizenship is necessary to sit on some companies' boards. Noncitizens cannot belong to a political party or vote in general

elections. However, noncitizens do have the right to vote in local elections—a right granted in few other countries. Under a January 1995 law, only Estonian citizens can be civil servants, but transitional provisions allow noncitizens to retain their posts while naturalization applications are pending, e.g., in the police force.

The Riigikogu has no rules granting special representation to minorities, but six members of a Russian-speaking party have held parliamentary seats since the March 1995 elections. These mem-

ESTONIAN POPULATION CHANGE

Percentage of Estonians and non-Estonians in Estonia 1934-1995 and predictions for 2000. (Table adapted from *Estonia Human Development Report 1995*, United Nations Development Programme, p. 30.)

Year	Population Total	Number of Estonians	Number of Non-natives	Percentage of Estonians in Population	Percentage of Non-natives in Population
Pre-WWII					
Period:					
1934*	1,126,413	992,520	133,899	88.1%	11.9%
Post-war					
Period:					
1945	854,000	831,000	230,000	97.3%	2.7%
1959	1,196,791	892,653	304,138	74.6%	25.4%
1979	1,464,476	947,812	516,664	64.7%	35.3%
1989	1,565,662	963,269	602,393	61.5%	38.5%
After Restoration of Independence					
1994	1,506,927	962,326	544,601	63.9%	36.1%
1995	1,491,000	956,000	535,000	64.1%	35.9%
2000**	1,445,000	954,000	491,000	66.0%	34.0%

* In the borders of the Republic of Estonia prior to 1945

** Prediction compiled by Aksel Kirch on the basic parameters of the population estimates of Eike Hindov and Arvo Kuddo



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

bers represent mainly Russian speakers who are citizens of Estonia. Estonian President Lennart Meri initiated a Round Table on Minorities in 1993, which brought together representatives of all minority groups to consider matters affecting them.¹¹

5) CITIZENSHIP LEGISLATION

International organizations, including the United Nations, the OSCE, and the Council of Europe, have identified several shortcomings in Estonia's citizenship and naturalization policies.¹² Under a 1995 law, applicants must pass an exam testing their proficiency in the Estonian language and their knowledge of the country's history and institutions. New procedures, introduced by law in April 1995, did not increase the number of naturalizations, and the number of candidates remained relatively low. The small number of applications has been explained by applicants' fear of the exam's difficulty and by the relatively high cost of registering for it. Another negative factor is that applicants must wait one full year to take the exam after submitting their applications.

The law soon after was improved by eliminating the written and oral tests for elderly people. The 1995 law, however, put the existing citizenship exam on hold until a new one could be developed. A new exam, completed at the beginning of 1996, appeared to be more difficult but was standardized throughout the country. This enabled better documentation of results and greater transparency in the process.

A set of Jan. 1, 1997, rules introduced more improvements, making the exam easier to pass. The success rate for this new test was estimated at 80-90 percent. According to Estonian authorities' forecasts, about 7,000 people were naturalized during 1997. At that rate, however, it would take 47 years to naturalize all 335,000 noncitizens, assuming no new immigrants entered the country. ■



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

METHODOLOGY

The CRP/CSMHI team began workshops in Estonia in April 1994 as part of a Baltics project that Vamik Volkan's CSMHI team had initiated.¹³ The "Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Political Change"¹⁴ conferences represented a first attempt at developing a conflict prevention methodology and the first International Negotiation Network project of its kind (see Appendix E).¹⁵

What made these small group discussions unique were the insights and clinical skills of the CRP/CSMHI psychoanalysts/psychiatrists, along with the knowledge and experience of diplomats, historians, and other team members.¹⁶ When members of opposing groups convene for psychopolitical dialogues and face the "enemy," they tend to cling to and bring along the baggage of their large-group identities. Individuals may say or do things to enhance or protect their collective identities, and when these processes become exaggerated, they poison the meeting atmosphere, creating barriers to constructive dialogue. The impulse to protect group identity also creates resistance to modifying political/diplomatic positions. During small group discussions, CRP/CSMHI facilitators identified and articulated conscious and unconscious resistances and interpreted their meanings.

In the course of the project, patterns of behavior emerged that, once understood, could be defused so they no longer impeded the dialogue.



Joyce Neuf

The CRP/CSMHI group visited several "hot spots" during the workshop series. This cemetery in Tallinn represents one such spot where past events evoke strong emotions among Estonians.

For example, facilitators recognized what they termed the "accordion phenomenon," when members of opposing groups developed empathy for each other and seemed to come close together, only to abruptly distance themselves again, much like the squeezing and pulling apart of an accordion. This happened when both Estonian and Russian participants blamed extremists in each camp for the problems between the two countries. With a common enemy in "extremism," they appeared to squeeze together in a friendly, agreeable manner. These feelings of togetherness proved illusory, for when two opposing groups become "friendly," the perception that they have more similarities than previously thought rouses anxiety. In a "hot" conflict, each group bases its identity on the belief that they are "good" and their enemy is "bad." However, when these crucial distinctions blur, each



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

group attempts to preserve its own identity and retreats from closeness (Volkan, 1998b, 348).

Another phenomenon derived from the same need to maintain distinction from the enemy is the exaggeration of minor differences. Seemingly small issues take on major importance as groups strive to shore up their identities as different from the “other.”

Psychoanalysts on the team brought to participants’ attention their hidden (unconscious) shared visions and perceptions. For example, Estonians feared that their survival as a people was in jeopardy and that it depended on their statehood and on not being diluted by the Russians among them or invaded by Russia. Once articulated during the dialogues, this fear became less of an obstacle to realistic discussion.

As the series progressed, participants relaxed and expressed negative emotions without anxiety, instead of channeling them into resistances. They developed symbols to use in discussion that let them play out anticipated dangers and design action plans to improve the situation. Estonian and Russian participants compared tiny independent Estonia to a rabbit and gigantic neighboring Russia to an elephant. Then they playfully imagined the ramifications of a relationship between these two animals. Even if friends, the rabbit could not help fearing that the elephant

would step on him. In fact, if the rabbit trusted too much, he could become careless and not realize the elephant was about to inadvertently crush him. When participants played with anxiety-producing relationships, they better appreciated each other and modified perceptions of the other. With the elephant-rabbit metaphor, some Russians came to see Estonians not just as ungrateful for the Soviet Union’s past help but also as understandably cautious (Volkan, 1998b, 353).

The small group dialogues also served to separate emotions pertaining to past conflicts from discussions of present problems. As noted above, participants from opposing camps primarily spoke from their group identity rather than as individuals. A group’s identity often is marked by a “chosen trauma,” that is, the image of a past event during which a large group suffered loss or experienced helplessness and humiliation in a conflict with a neighboring group. When perceptions and emotions relating to this trauma condense with a current conflict, a “time collapse” occurs, making resolution nearly impossible. CRP/CSMHI facilitators encouraged a time expansion to separate past from present, enabling more productive negotiation.



Participants met for the final plenary session, marking the end of the three-year workshop series. Pictured are (left to right) Katrin Kase, Andres Kalda, Paul Lettens, Alexei Semionov, Peeter Vares, Sergei Gorokhov, Priit Järve, Mare Haab, Klara Hallik, and Andrei Zakharov.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

Thus, little by little, the poison of interethnic tension lessened.¹⁷ Efforts were made to spread any insights or new attitudes gained from the dialogues to local and national governmental groups and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). A few practical projects were created to help build institutions that would be left behind when the project concluded. This approach, nicknamed the “Tree Model” (Volkan, 1998b), involved a methodology that planted roots for constructive, open discussion, fed those roots, and facilitated growth of healthy, new branches, such as concrete model programs promoting peaceful coexistence.

Before and during the dialogues, the facilitators took several information gathering trips in Estonia. The American team visited many towns and villages to gain a deeper understanding of the issues at hand, meeting with local officials and businesspeople. Firsthand data collected by the CRP/CSMHI team in so-called “hot spots” proved crucial to diagnosing the mental representations of recent and more distant events. These hot spots included national cemeteries, memorials, museums, or monuments that had become invested with strong emotions due to political, military, or cultural events. Visiting these places with the workshop participants, observing their behavior, and listening to their remarks allowed the facilitation team to better comprehend what the sites represented and the psychological impediments that likely would emerge in

group interaction. The visits also revealed what otherwise might have remained unexpressed in group dialogue and provided both facilitators and participants with important information.

One Estonian “hot spot” was the former Soviet nuclear submarine base at Paldiski on the Gulf of Finland, west of Tallinn. In spring 1994, a tour of Paldiski was arranged for the project’s American team and its Russian and Estonian participants. At the time of the visit, the heavily fortified base had been mostly shut down, and it looked like a huge garbage dump. The guide, a local history teacher fluent in English, referred angrily to Paldiski as “the carcass the Russians left” and repeated several times, “The devil himself sat here.” Seeing Estonian and Russian participants’ reactions to Paldiski as well as hearing the guide’s interpretation of its role in Estonian history provided facilitators with a “shortcut” to understanding emotions associated with Soviet occupation of Estonia. Other “hot spots” the group visited included Tartu, home of the oldest university in Estonia and a cultural capital, and the northeastern towns of Narva and Sillamäe, where well over 90 percent of the population is Russian.

The psychopolitical workshops were not academic gatherings nor part of an official process. They did not involve presentation of scholarly papers nor were they one-time events.



Facilitators (left to right) Maurice Apprey, Gregory Saathoff, and Harold Saunders return to their hotel during the second workshop.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA



Paul Lettens (left) enjoys dinner with fellow participant Arvo Haug in September 1995.

JOYCE NIU

Instead, they were a series of gatherings using an open-ended process. Intensive, facilitated, small group dialogues addressed group and national identity. Themes included objective review of historical grievances and elaboration of and deliberation on specific problems facing each group.

This process helped participants learn both sides' concerns, as many misunderstandings existed due to lack of information and contact. An open discussion approach made participants "hear" multiple meanings attached to what was being said and allowed them to modify their views. Facilitators could absorb emotions that surfaced when members of opposing groups traded historical grievances.

The workshops' continuity proved very important. The meetings took place about twice a year for three years, involving both veterans of the process and some new members. The team retained the same core members in an effort to transform participants' thinking about each other and eventually change relationships. Through such attitudinal transformation, positive actions could take place. This was particularly significant for participants

who played an important role in shaping a more tolerant, democratic Estonia. The CRP/CSMHI's work to grasp the underlying causes of participants' rigid or extreme positions facilitated their loosening. This in turn potentially contributed to the ability of Estonian and Russian leaders to resist immoderate policies even when there was evidence of support for such policies among constituents.

Throughout the three-year process, the facilitation team consulted with representatives of Estonian and Russian NGOs; the Estonian Foreign Ministry; the OSCE mission in Estonia; the U.S., Swedish, and Norwegian embassies; the European Union; and the U.S. State Department to share information and obtain different perspectives. From the beginning, the team had contact with a representative of the Estonian President's Roundtable and with members of the Estonian diplomatic corps.

THE WORKSHOP SERIES

The first CRP/CSMHI workshop was held in Tallinn on April 4-7, 1994, modeled after two previous workshops in Kaunas, Lithuania, and Riga, Latvia. Some of the Lithuanian and Latvian partici-



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

pants joined the Estonian participants at this workshop. However, facilitators decided that while Latvia and Estonia faced similar issues,¹⁸ more progress would be made by focusing solely on Estonia. Thus, the Lithuanians and Latvians did not take part in the remaining five workshops (see Workshop Series on page 5).

A typical meeting lasted four consecutive days, seven hours each day with several hours spent eating meals together and attending group social events. Project grants covered participants' travel and accommodation expenses. For out-of-pocket expenses, each attendee received a small stipend.

Workshops were divided 20/80 percent between plenary sessions and small groups of about 12 people each. Meetings began with a plenary session in which a representative from each group—ethnic Estonians, Russians living in Estonia, and Russians from Russia—reviewed any developments since the previous workshop and discussed their significance. Thus, participants framed each meeting's agenda with recent events, which the facilitation team would listen to closely and subsequently explore in depth with the small groups.

Facilitators met at least daily to discuss the process and any concerns and resistances of the participants to consider the most appropriate interventions. This methodology borrowed certain principles from clinical psychoanalytic processes. For example, the facilitation team avoided giving advice and explained various meanings of participants' perceptions and experiences to remove inhibitions to the group dialogues.

Meetings concluded with another plenary session to summarize findings and action possibilities and to generate ideas for the next gathering. Generally, plenary sessions were chaired by two CSMHI members with different backgrounds: Harold Saunders, a former high-ranking U.S. diplomat, and Vamik Volkan, a psychoanalyst and director of the CSMHI. Two to three facilitators, also from varying disciplines, oversaw each small group. One had expertise in small group psychodynamics, the others in diplomacy, political science, or history. Small group members were held as constant as possible throughout each four-day meeting as well as throughout the entire workshop series. The meetings were conducted in Estonian, English, and

*(From left)
Demetrios Julius,
Alexei Semionov,
Harold Saunders,
and Vamik Volkan
prepare for another
session.*





DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

Russian, and interpreters were available at all times. Of the facilitators, only one spoke Russian, and none spoke Estonian. Of the participants, only a few of the Russian speakers and Russians spoke English and even fewer knew Estonian. Most of the Estonians were proficient in both Russian and English.

PARTICIPANTS

Each workshop consisted of 40 people: a core group of people who were present at each session, members added during the process, and facilitators. The CRP/CSMHI team comprised nine-10 people; 25-30 people represented the three parties. The workshops brought together participants interested in entering into dialogue with groups that represented different sectors of society and who were influential decision-makers in their respective communities.

During the fourth workshop, facilitators and core participants, ages 35-60, decided that to help transform relationships between groups, the next meeting would be intergenerational as well as interethnic. They believed the younger generation of Russian speakers and Estonians might have fewer prejudices and more permeable attitudes. Thus, the fifth workshop brought in eight university students—four Estonians and four Russian speakers. They were included to develop cohesion among the students across ethnic lines as a model for a future Estonian society. Facilitators hoped the students would think in terms of the whole country rather than focus on ethnic components.

Combining generations and ethnic groups proved to be productive. In February 1996, to cement the students' developing bonds, the facilitation team brought them to the United States for leadership development at The Carter Center in Atlanta, Ga., and the CSMHI in Charlottesville, Va. The experience collectively exposed them to influences that would help them understand how societies can integrate minorities, methods of doing so, and consequences of not integrating minority groups.

Their change in attitude was dramatically demonstrated in Atlanta on the morning of their departure for Estonia. Two of the Russian-speaking students announced their decisions to remain in the United States, where each knew someone with whom they thought they could stay. Both wanted to learn English (neither had more than rudimentary knowledge of it) and get jobs.

Although each had reached the decision separately and had informed Neu the previous evening, the announcement to the group was devastating. Instead of attending a planned farewell brunch, the students went to The Carter Center to have a discussion with Neu (in the room) and Volkan (by phone). Several students shed tears at their friends' "defection" and at their own lack of understanding of how difficult life in Estonia could be for a noncitizen. Neu and Volkan explained to the two Russian-speaking students that by not returning they were violating the trust of the entire group and the sponsoring organizations. The consequence would be that they would not be invited to the next workshop in Tallinn or be part of any follow-up work.

After several hours of group discussion, consultation between Neu and Volkan, and private, individual conversations between Neu and the two students, the students agreed to go home as planned. Although the rest of the students—including two other Russian speakers—greeted the decision with hugs and smiles of relief, the mood on the ride to the airport was somber, and the group's newly developed trust in each other was shaken. This disruption caused the students to realize how quickly and invisibly bonds had formed. They regretted any weakening in those bonds, which the two students' near defection precipitated.

In a subsequent meeting in Estonia, the facilitators elicited more discussion among the students, many of whom have since positioned themselves to play a strong role in a new Estonia (see "Workshop Outcomes" on pages 28-31). ■



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

TOPICS OF SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Discussion often began with a specific real-world problem and attempts to find a logical, agreed-upon solution to it.

Participants at the second workshop identified more than 20 obstacles to a unified Estonia including:

- The need for Russia to acknowledge its 1940 annexation (occupation) of Estonia.
- The importance of having a shared understanding of Russia's and Estonia's histories.
- The need to treat elderly Russians fairly in gaining citizenship.
- The importance of Russians making good-faith efforts to learn Estonian language and culture.
- The value for the Estonian government to make good-faith efforts to provide Estonian language classes at a reasonable cost.
- The need to allow the Russian-speaking community access to the media and politics.

HISTORY

Both Estonians and Russian speakers had strong but vastly different senses of Estonia's history (see Appendix A). Some participants said no truthful interpretation of 1939-40 Baltic-Russian history was available in Russia, which caused serious misunderstandings between Estonians and Russians in both countries. Some Russians believe that Estonia voluntarily joined the Soviet Union in 1940; Estonians argue their country was annexed forcibly. The Estonians also insisted that Russia should recognize the crimes committed against Estonians during Soviet occupation.

The Russian-speaking participants did not seem to grasp what Soviet occupation meant to most Estonians. Some ethnic Russian attendees believed they should feel guilty for the pain caused to Estonians during Soviet rule. However, one ethnic Russian, whose family had lived in Estonia since Czar Nicholas II in the early 1900s, said he did not feel guilty because he himself was not an occupier. Others believed that people joined the Communist Party because they wanted to, not because it was one of the



A traditional Estonian home is wooden, such as this one in Tartu.

only ways to get a decent job. Russians also questioned why Estonians, if so unhappy during Soviet times, had not just picked up and left. Apparently these Russians were not aware that the



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA



One of the small groups meets for a workshop session. Pictured are (left to right) Marina Svirina, an interpreter, Vladimir Homyakov, Mare Haab, Peeter Vares, Norman Itzkowitz, and Valery Fadeyev.

U.S.S.R. did not issue passports to everyone and that freedom of movement was severely restricted.

The student participants thought Estonians overdramatized the country's history. To the older Estonians' surprise and disappointment, the younger generation had little sense of the history from an Estonian perspective, as they had been educated using Soviet textbooks. The young Russian Estonians expressed sadness and anger at being the victims of Estonian resentment. They did not understand the humiliation Estonians experienced under Soviet rule. However, to many Estonians, they had become representatives of the old Soviet system and thus targets for revenge.

To the older Estonians' surprise and disappointment, the younger generation had little sense of the history from an Estonian perspective.

STATEHOOD

Estonia's struggle for independence seemed to be not only political but also existential. Open to their larger neighbor's geopolitical ambitions, Estonians regarded statehood as their only guarantee of survival as a people. Over the centuries, the Estonian population has been reduced, deported, assimilated, or killed, and a fear of shrinking or disappearing was still evident during the workshops. One Estonian noted that several thousand Estonians are "lost" every year due to suicide, crime, alcoholism, and a declining birth rate.

The second workshop occurred just weeks after the ferry "Estonia" sank, killing 852 passengers, most of whom were Estonian. Thus, that meeting began with somber reflection on the loss of the many lives and brought to the fore Estonians' fear of disappearing as a people.

In its 5,000-year history, Estonia first gained independence on Feb. 24, 1918. It was cut short only 22 years later on June 17, 1940, when Soviet troops occupied Estonia. More than 50 years later, Estonia regained independence on Aug. 20, 1991 (Fjuk and Rõuk, 1994). Because of this history and the occupation, Estonians had a hard time acknowledging Russians as part of their society. This small state



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

(Left to right)
Toomas Alatalu, Priit
Järve, an unidentified
guest, and Arnold
Rüütel, former
president of Estonia,
discuss the nation's
future.



JOYCE NEU

(Estonia) was being asked to incorporate citizens of a powerful neighbor (Russia), which had not previously manifested good will. The Estonian government's restrictive citizenship policy on Russian speakers in Estonia reflected a nation based on ethnic and cultural criteria rather than on a pluralistic concept of statehood. The large number of stateless and foreign people, unable to participate in shaping the country's future, provoked questions in the workshops about the nature of democracy in

One said it was humiliating for Estonians to hear about human rights from Russians after the Soviets had subjugated Estonians for decades.

Estonia. Many Russians felt that to receive political rights, they had to assimilate, i.e., replace their language and culture with another language and culture. One Russian participant remarked that to be a good and loyal citizen, one did not need to be culturally assimilated.¹⁹

Estonian participants had difficulty comprehending Russian and Western concerns with their country's human rights record. They pointed out that no such concerns were expressed for them during Soviet occupation. One said it was humiliating for Estonians to hear about human rights from Russians after the Soviets had subjugated Estonians for decades, denying them their culture and language. The Russian speakers shared Estonians' pain only because of the loss of the "empire" in the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Many Russian speakers believed they would be able to live permanently in Estonia without learning about Estonian ways of life or the language. Longtime Russian-speaking inhabitants, many of them former communist elite, saw their status reduced to that of aliens.

INTEGRATION

At the start of the project, Estonian decision-makers had not elaborated a general policy toward the Russian community and were not promoting integration of those Russians who wanted to stay. Many favored the idea of Russia being Russian speakers' "homeland," ignoring the fact that most Russians in Estonia, having been born there, had no other home. During the workshops, former Estonian President



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

Arnold Rüütel promoted the idea of giving World Bank loans to Russians who lived and worked in Estonia. Thus, they could return to Russia if they wanted, and discussion on this issue could end for good.

By the time Russian troops had withdrawn from Estonia in August 1994, a growing number of Estonians acknowledged that ethnic Russians likely would stay. Most participants thought integration of these Russians into Estonian society was necessary, but they could not agree on how to achieve it. Most Estonians spoke about integration but believed it was up to the Russians to find the means to do so, because Estonians distrusted Russian speakers' loyalty. The Russian community's inclination in Estonia to turn to Moscow for help exacerbated and perpetuated Estonians' suspicions.

Furthermore, poor knowledge of the Estonian language restricted Russian speakers' opportunities in Estonia's labor market and created a sense of insecurity among them. Workshop representatives from

Moscow did not hide the fact that Russians from Estonia would not be welcome back in Russia, where few jobs or housing were available, even for its own citizens. Thus, the Russian speakers felt abandoned by both the Estonian government and "Mother Russia." They said some Russian speakers in Narva were considering emigration, and more

would leave and "return" to Russia if the economy there was better. One Estonian participant noted there were wealthy Russians in Tallinn who wanted to assimilate and be

considered Estonian. She thought assimilation would gain more importance with future EU membership, since it might be advantageous to speak Estonian to benefit from the many jobs and opportunities available across Europe.

Citizenship held critical importance for Russian residents' integration into Estonia and for mitigating tensions.²⁰ Participants felt citizenship requirements were too rigid, particularly for the elderly and invalid. Most non-Estonians believed they should receive automatic citizenship without condition, other than length of residence in Estonia. Russians and Russian speakers lobbied for a bilingual Estonia—already the de facto situation in certain regions—but Estonians were reluctant to accept Russian as a national or official language.

The Russian speakers felt abandoned by both the Estonian government and "Mother Russia."



Joyce Niu

Ilja Nikiforev (left), a Russian speaker, goes over some minority issues with Nathaniel Howell, a facilitation team member.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

Estonian decision-makers did not favor simplifying the citizenship process for non-Estonians, insisting that if Russians wanted citizenship, they should make good-faith efforts to learn Estonian language and culture. One Estonian participant, a politician, noted that Estonia was merely protecting its language and culture, just as Russia was protecting its language and culture.

The Russian government pressured Estonia through complaints of human rights violations against Russians living in Estonia (Alongi, 1996, 10). These were based on what were seen as excessively stringent and ambiguous citizenship requirements. As part of the criteria, the Estonian government established a language exam with reportedly obscure, difficult questions. Because most Russians living in Estonia did not speak Estonian and the exam was administered by individuals who sometimes were impugned to hold negative feelings for their former “oppressors,” Russians considered the exam unfair. According to some, even Russians with a good command of Estonian could not pass the exam.

Obtaining citizenship was said to be hampered by the lack of resources available to Russian speakers to learn Estonian. For example, Russian speakers in the northeast had virtually no exposure to Estonian, since few Estonians live there. This Russian-speaking majority had few opportunities to see Estonian-language movies or take part in Estonian cultural events. Therefore, few Estonian language courses existed, and where available, they were expensive. Russian speakers in the workshops argued that the Estonian government should provide Estonian language classes at reasonable cost. Also, if a person passed the language exam, participants argued that he/she should be reimbursed for class costs, as was done in the northeast town of Sillamäe, where over 95 percent of the population are Russian speakers.

Language problems created difficulty in obtaining information about developments in Estonia and led to a sense of social isolation. Many of the Russian

speakers complained about the lack of news in Russian about Estonia. This situation has improved significantly in recent years. To date, the Russian minority can choose from three daily newspapers and two weeklies in Tallinn, three radio networks

Estonians believed they might again lose Estonia to Russian control, this time through the democratic process of elections.

including a public one, and several Russian-language broadcasts on both state and private television channels. Russian can be used in courts and local administration in districts where Russian speakers represent the majority.

Many Estonian participants said they felt threatened by the large Russian-speaking population in their country. With the March 1995 elections, the Russian community’s activism, and the Estonian population’s comparative passivity, Estonians believed they might again lose Estonia to Russian control, this time through the democratic process of elections. A 1996 law required all candidates for local government and the Riigikogu to meet a certain level of Estonian proficiency. Estonians feared that because candidates running for office in the Tallinn city government spoke no Estonian, council meetings would be conducted solely in Russian.

Several participants from the Russian-dominated northeast section of Estonia believed that the government wanted to alienate them from politics, pointing out the Russians’ threat to establish an alternative legislative body in Narva. Russian speakers have representatives on municipal councils of towns where they make up a sizable percentage of the population, e.g., 16 of the 64 town councilors in Tallinn.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

According to some Russian speakers in the CRP/CSMHI workshops, Russian representation suffered because there was no coordinated Russian movement in Estonia. Some participants complained about discrimination against ethnic Russians for government jobs. Also, they did not know who to go to with grievances, as no one in the government spoke Russian.

LARGE GROUP INTERACTION

Fears and stereotypes of the other as the “enemy” prevailed at the project’s first workshop. One Estonian participant said Russians and Estonians did not even try to communicate or understand each other. One Russian speaker from Narva recalled that when he was a child, there was no animosity between Estonian and Russian children, but there also was little communication. Due to 50 years of Soviet occupation, anti-Russian sentiments remained high among ethnic Estonians. Also, because of the growing presence of the Russian mafia, Estonians perceived many Russian speakers as criminals.

As the workshops progressed and participants felt “safer,” perceptions of the other were brought out illustrating some of these fears and stereotypes. Cultural differences contributed to Estonians’ apprehension and dislike of Russians. For example, several Estonians claimed Russian behavior was offensive. One Estonian participant described differences in how the two ethnicities typically arrange themselves on the beach. Estonians allow 20-30 meters distance between parties, reflecting a high value on privacy. Russians sat only 2-3 meters apart, making Estonians feel their space was invaded.

Other examples included Russian speakers’ fondness for a certain blue color to paint buildings, which Estonians found distasteful, and Estonians claimed Russians were loud and unconcerned about keeping public spaces clean.

Several participants reported that some Estonians believed Russians had biological and psychological differences, too. It was said that Russian children were strong and aggressive and that they physically matured at a different rate than Estonians. Members of the American team were told that segregating children was good because Russians and Estonians have “different psychologies.” One Estonian said some of her ethnic peers feared that if the children mixed, Estonian children would be negatively affected. However, in her experience, Russian and Estonian kindergartners tended to separate on their own, even when not forced.

Another Estonian participant suggested that the relationship between the two groups depended not only on personal interaction but also on political manipulation, such as through varying versions of history. Several participants claimed ethnicity was not a major problem but rather an issue that had arisen out of economic and political changes in Estonia. No one thought religious differences caused problems in Estonian-Russian relations.

According to a Russian participant, the groups have much in common and should not make so much of their differences. Both, he noted, suffered under the Soviet system and thus shared similar problems. An Estonian participant remarked that ethnicity should not be a reason for chaos in Estonia’s political decision-making structure or for ideological divisions. ■



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

The “Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Political Change” workshop series yielded several tangible results. It facilitated professional and private networking among people who previously had little to no interaction with each other. A major benefit cited by a Russian participant from the State Duma was the chance to meet informally and unofficially with Estonian parliamentarians.

Professional contacts among decision-makers strengthened outside the dialogues. The Riigikogu invited Vladimir Homyakov, former deputy of the Narva City Council and representative of the Russian-speaking population, to address the parliament so Estonian deputies might better understand Russian concerns. Yuri Voyevoda, then vice chair of the Committee on the Commonwealth of Independent State Affairs and Relations with Compatriots in the State Duma, asked that Estonian and Russian parliamentarians meet regularly.

During the fifth workshop, three State Duma representatives were invited to the

Riigikogu, where they met with their counterparts. They discussed the then-upcoming Russian parliamentary elections and Russia’s reaction to Estonia’s desire to join NATO. Both Estonian and Russian members of parliaments (MPs) at the workshop reported that the talks were productive.

Facilitators watched as personal contacts between CRP/CSMHI participants also grew. During the last workshop, Russian policy consultant

Andrei Zakharov, who had never met an Estonian before the project, invited Sergei Ivanov, leader of the Russian-Estonian faction in the Riigikogu, to participate in a conference on security issues in Pskov, a Russian town near Estonia’s border.

Workshop discussions helped participants reflect on their attitudes and in some cases, revise them. Sergei Gorokhov, a Russian Estonian who was

Workshop discussions helped participants reflect on their attitudes and in some cases, revise them.

(Left to right) Vamik Volkan, Zoja Zarubina, Joyce Neu, and Margie Howell display the soup ladles they received as gifts of hospitality from Estonians who helped organize the second workshop, held in Pärnu.



THE CARTER CENTER



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA



JOYCE NEU

Vera Truleva (left) and Esta Ivalo, both of the Institute of International and Social Studies, helped organize the series.

director of the Narva-based Institute for Social and Economic Analysis in Estonia, said he would never have understood the Estonian viewpoint if he had not taken part in the project. Arno Aadamsoo, an Estonian psychiatrist, said the workshops allowed him to learn how others feel about Russian-Estonian relations. Aivars Lezdinysh, a Russian MP from Kamchatka, remarked during the fifth workshop that now he could see the “wrong” aspects of Russian behavior in Estonia. He credited the project with changing his way of thinking and broadening his comprehension of the issues.

Arnold Rüütel, former Estonian president and deputy speaker of the Riigikogu²¹ attended portions of four of the workshops. Although his views remained highly nationalistic, his continued interest in the process was welcomed as was the participation of a representative from the Estonian Foreign Ministry. In some cases, participants translated their changed attitudes into action. For example, Homyakov softened his initial resistance to Estonian demands and began taking Estonian language classes. During the

last workshop, he declared with pride that his daughter had passed the language exam for Estonian citizenship.

Some State Duma members told facilitators that their participation in the workshops caused them to review Russian policies toward Estonia. They were now better informed about Baltic affairs and shared what they had learned with peers in the Russian Foreign Ministry and the State Duma. Endel Talvik, an Estonian psychologist who previously had professed a nationalist outlook, said he surprised even himself by writing a dissenting response to a nationalist article, which had been published in Tallinn’s main newspaper. Jaan Kaplinski, a former Estonian parliamentarian and 1995 candidate for the Nobel Prize in Literature, wrote several opinion pieces for Estonian newspapers to help promote a more democratic, tolerant society.

Another positive development from the unofficial project was the active effort by certain Estonians, who also were members of the official Estonian Presidential Round Table on Minorities, to serve as liaisons



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

between the two groups. Many veteran participants, including Priit Järve, Jaan Kaplinski, Alexei Semionov, and Sergei Issakov, who attended both the workshops and the Round Table, exchanged ideas and contacts between the official and unofficial dialogue processes. This relationship afforded the CRP/CSMHI's Track Two team direct access to the highest levels of decision-making in Estonia's government.

One unintentional outcome, the CRP/CSMHI's partnership with the Institute for International and Social Studies in Tallinn,²² helped the Institute better manage a difficult transition from total government support to more autonomy. Along with the Institute's role in the workshop series, it published the research paper "Estonia and Russia, Estonians and Russians: A Dialogue." Funded by the Olof Palme International Center, it was printed in English, Russian, and Estonian and was written collaboratively by about six of the participants. Margie Howell, a member of the facilitation team, edited the English version.

Throughout the series, facilitators requested that participants identify strategies to improve Estonian relations with Russian Estonians. As ideas came in for projects in a variety of locations, the CRP/CSMHI team visited many of these sites. Thus, ideas generated in the international dialogues were taken from the city into the towns of Estonia. Of the 30 action-oriented ideas generated, three have been funded through a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts to the CSMHI to increase inter-ethnic contact in local communities. Beginning in

1995, civil society development projects were initiated in two rural and one urban area of Estonia: Klooga, Mustvee, and the Tallinn suburb of Mustamäe. In each location, the population was approximately 50 percent Estonian and 50 percent Russian-speaking.²³ These projects used the methods developed during the CRP/CSMHI workshops. Endel Talvik, a workshop participant, became the Estonian partner in the Pew process, and some of the workshop participants accompanied the CSMHI team on visits to the projects. The results of these projects have been shared with the Estonian

Throughout the series, facilitators requested that participants identify strategies to improve Estonian relations with Russian Estonians. As ideas came in for projects in a variety of locations, the CRP/CSMHI team visited many of these sites. Thus, ideas generated in the international dialogues were taken from the city into the towns of Estonia.

prime minister, who appeared ready to consider these projects as models for future efforts to be undertaken by the government. In fact, the project in Mustamäe recently received government funding.

With support from Harold Saunders and The Kettering Foundation, Endel Talvik and Alexei Semionov traveled to Dayton, Ohio, to participate in a Kettering training program on civic education and democratization.

Another result was Joyce Neu's work on the citizenship exams. During the project, she observed four administrations of the exam in Tallinn, Narva, and Pärnu. She watched more than 30 people take the test, and on each visit, she consulted with members of the Estonian language board as well as directors of the language schools where the exams were



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

administered. She unofficially shared these observations with the OSCE high commissioner on national minorities and with Estonians involved in the exam process. Thus, the reports may have contributed to changes in the exam in 1996.

Other projects proposed by participants included an Estonian-Russian project to reforest an area in Estonia destroyed by Russian tanks. This initiative was seen as a way to build confidence between the two groups. One participant suggested a review of the history of the Soviet era in Estonia so more accurate textbooks for schools could be generated to give children a clearer picture of what occurred during Soviet occupation. Several participants saw use in creating courses or units of area studies at Russian and Estonian universities. For example, departments of Finno-Ugric languages and Baltic studies in Russia could help so students and faculty would engage in teaching and research about the other and enhance their appreciation for each other's history, language, and culture.

Although the project's eight university students did not join the process until November 1995 and thus only participated in two workshops, they saw themselves six months later as a unified group of future leaders of Estonia—whether in politics, education, or business. The group's cohesiveness across ethnic lines grew significantly during their training trip to the United States. By 1998, two students had started their own businesses. Another works for

a political party, two are law students, and one has returned to the United States to learn English. Several of the students united for an environmental endeavor, and others planned to work on parts of CSMHI's Pew project. Two students applied for internships at The Carter Center. This young group may serve as a model for older citizens on how to break the generational transmission of stereotype and prejudice.

The CRP/CSMHI's unofficial diplomacy led to increased trust in and acceptance of the neutral but active position of the facilitating group among Estonians, Russians, and international officials. The project received increasing attention and credibility in Estonia, where media interviewed several participants during the fifth workshop. Media in Russia also covered the project. Numerous international officials expressed support for the work, saying it was important that different ethnic groups had a way to unofficially meet to dispel some of the tensions that existed between Estonia and Russia and between Estonians and Russian speakers in Estonia.

In many ways, the CRP/CSMHI project typified a successful INN project, where third-party expertise and an interdisciplinary team achieved optimal results. The workshops represented the only regular, unofficial dialogue process in Estonia that directly addressed the problems between the ethnic groups and brought people together face-to-face to resolve their differences. ■



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

After it gained independence in 1991, Estonia faced potential conflict on three levels. First, tension between the Russian and Estonian governments brewed on border issues, the history, and the rights of the Russian minority in Estonia. Second, on the national level, problems arose from Estonia's fairly restrictive citizenship policy. The large, mainly Russian minority was perceived as a major threat to the newly re-established state. Third, integration of Russians into Estonian society was hampered by prejudices and claimed cultural differences from both sides.

Through the workshop process, it became clear the Russian speakers wanted

to return to pre-1991 Estonia, and the Estonians wanted the Russian speakers to leave. Because neither option was realistic, the attitudinal transformation required dedication and a long-term commitment from all involved.

Initially, discussion of integrating Russian-speakers into Estonian society was a source of acute, emotion-filled tensions and fruitless arguing in both the CRP/CSMHI dialogues and in Estonian political arenas. As aspects of the external political as well as internal psychological environment changed with time, thereby improving communication, discussion of integration became possible. More and more Estonians accepted the reality that some ethnic Russians would remain in Estonia and that naturalization procedures must be accelerated to enable

Russian-speaking noncitizens to better integrate. Estonians' desire to be considered part of the West and join its multinational institutions further has increased their willingness to fulfill required international standards.

The potential for imminent chaos and extreme "solutions" such as ethnic cleansing have substantially decreased throughout the Baltic region, especially in Estonia, where democracy and economic development are progressing. Consequently,

international assistance has been decreased or in some cases terminated.

Despite the positive prognosis, potential for problems remains.

Estonia's wish to join NATO has met with both direct and indirect threats of Russian retaliation and even invasion by some extreme Russian nationalists. More work is necessary to strengthen both sides' immunity to the onset of hyper-nationalism and confrontation. Russians living in Estonia still feel threatened by citizenship policies and perceived discrimination, while Estonians still fear their language and culture will be contaminated by Russians' presence. Several other impasses exist on the path to a new social, political, economic, and psychological order, but nevertheless, Estonia is well on its way.

Estonia's efforts toward democratization and a free market economy will be accompanied for sometime by an identity search for their new

"Estonia's efforts toward democratization and a free market economy will be accompanied for some time by an identity search for their new nation-state. ... This process must promote an understanding and development of democratic institutions and civil society within the entire body politic."



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

nation-state. True “immunity” from the problems associated with a transition to democracy and the enduring traumas of the Soviet era can only be achieved through a difficult, time-consuming process. This process must promote an understanding and development of democratic institutions and civil society within the entire body politic. CRP/CSMHI participants saw firsthand that as hard as it was to create such institutions, changes in attitudes proved even more difficult.

The series also stimulated the births of other related projects. Indeed, while the CRP/CSMHI workshops remained the trunk of the tree, branches sprouted in numerous levels of Estonian society. The ultimate result of the CRP/CSMHI’s involvement in the region was a model for reducing ethnic tensions through a coordinated high- and mid-level psycho-political approach, which can be applied, with appropriate modifications, to other domestic and international situations.

In his 1992 *Agenda for Peace*, former U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali called for more emphasis on preventing conflicts from becoming violent rather than fighting the flames once ignited. Too often, the massive killings of this decade were foreseen. Efforts to prevent them occurred too late or not at all.

Early, effective prevention is difficult for several reasons. First, how do we predict which conflicts will become violent and what the violence’s scale and duration will be? Second, if a situation is not violent, how can parties be convinced to act when no tangible evidence of a problem exists? Third, a multitude of crises are going on at any given time; how can resources be mobilized to deal with noncrisis situations? Fourth, when conflict prevention is effective, there is little to no concrete proof that the intervention contributed to maintaining peace more than other factors.

Importantly, the CRP/CSMHI project began prior to violence and was possible only because of the farsightedness of funders willing to take a risk on a project that, if successful, would have little visibility. If the workshop series in Estonia is considered successful conflict prevention, then the following were important contributions:

- Early recognition and identification of a problem by the OSCE high commissioner for national minorities.
- Early funding for the CRP/CSHMI project.
- Partnership throughout the series with a local institution that all parties respected.





DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

- Selection of participants who could transfer information from the workshops into other fora—official or unofficial.

- An interdisciplinary facilitation team that knew the conflict's history, understood small and large group dynamics, and remained neutral while helping participants sort through difficult and controversial issues.

- A core group of participants committed to remain engaged in the process. This continuity of both participants and facilitators proved crucial.

- Frequent exchanges between facilitators and officials outside the process to share information and remain current on Estonian issues.

All of the above were important in reducing tensions, but these workshops did not take place in a vacuum. Factors outside the unofficial CRP/CSMHI process immeasurably enhanced any positive workshop outcomes. These included the international community's constant presence through OSCE missions in Estonia, led by Max van der Stoep, a very engaged high commissioner for national minorities. This international presence began early, involved representatives on the ground, spoke with one voice, and was recognized by both Russian speakers and Estonians.

President Lennart Meri's leadership also contributed in positive ways. Meri would not play the "ethnic card" and responded to occasional Russian nationalist rhetoric in a moderate, subdued fashion. At the time of the series, Estonia's economy was expanding and its international trade increasing. Visible changes in towns and cities also undoubtedly helped quell people's desire to take up arms and risk jeopardizing a better standard of living.

Those dedicated to preventing conflicts must better identify where, when, and how to conduct efforts. The CRP/CSMHI psychopolitical workshops marked one step in advancing the understanding of such a methodology.²⁴

Through the CRP/CSMHI process, the initial and hardest steps of loosening rigid, emotional positions on all sides and fostering an environment of trust and open communication were completed. Many participants believed that the project was crucial during Estonia's difficult transition period to an independent, democratic state. However, the process is not over, and interethnic relations in Estonia still need improvement. Ultimately, the participants themselves will have to decide whether to continue the dialogue to address the country's problems, allowing all the people of Estonia the chance to work together toward the common goal of increasing stability and democracy in their country. ■



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

ENDNOTES

¹ A large majority of ethnic Russians in Estonia are either Russian citizens or without any nationality. We use the term “Russian speakers” to refer to Russians in Estonia regardless of legal status and the term “Russian Estonian” to distinguish those of Russian ethnicity who are Estonian citizens. For attitudes of Russian speakers and Russian Estonians, see Appendix D.

² For discussion on the role of mediation in changing images of the “other,” see Ayres, 1997, 431-47, and Committee of International Relations, 1987.

³ Established in Helsinki in 1975, the CSCE was institutionalized at the 1994 Budapest Summit, and its name was changed to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The post of high commissioner on national minorities was created in 1992 following the U.S.S.R.’s dissolution. The high commissioner’s function is to identify and seek early resolution of ethnic tensions that might endanger peace, stability, or friendly relations between OSCE participating states.

⁴ This section on major issues reflects the perceptions and discussions of workshop participants, not the authors’ beliefs.

⁵ In October 1997, Russia proposed a regional security pact, offering guarantees to the Baltic states—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The Baltic states rejected the offer, viewing it as an attempt by Russia to weaken their desire to join NATO and move them into Russia’s sphere of influence. U.S. President Bill Clinton signed a charter of cooperation in January 1998 with the three Baltic presidents after they failed to get an invitation to join the first round of NATO enlargement at the July 1997 Madrid summit.

⁶ Estonia is a member of the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, and many other international organizations. As an associate member of the European Union (EU), Estonia applied for full EU membership on Nov. 24, 1995, and accession talks were launched

in March 1998. Estonia is an associate partner of the Western European Union (WEU). It also participates in the North Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace initiative and wishes to become a full member of the WEU and NATO as soon as possible. The Council of Baltic Sea States, a regional organization, was for a long time the only forum where Estonia and Russia could meet regularly. To reinforce bilateral dialogue, a special commission between the two countries was founded in 1997.

⁷ Estonia has experienced a dramatic shift in the composition of its population. In the 1934 census, during its interwar independence period, more than 88 percent of the population was Estonian, with less than 12 percent minorities. Russians consisted of 8.5 percent, Germans were 1.5 percent, and the remaining minorities were Swedes, Jews, Latvians, Poles and Finns (Pullerits, 1937). In the 1989 census, Estonians made up only 61.5 percent of the total population. The main minority group was Russian (33 percent) with 3 percent Ukrainians and less than 1 percent each of Belarussians, Finns and Ingrians, Jews, Tatars, Germans, Latvians, Poles, Lithuanians, and Swedes. The OSCE has focused on Estonian minority issues. The Council of Europe also has produced a convention on protection of national minorities. See Birmingham, 1995; Conflict Management Group and Harvard Negotiation Project, 1992; Council of Europe, 1995; and Foundation of Inter-Ethnic Relations, 1996.

⁸ Minorities in Estonia today consist of 29 percent Russians, 2.7 percent Ukrainians, and 1.5 percent Belarussians. The relatively large number of Russian speakers was caused by the Soviet policy of encouraging settlement of Russians in Estonia after 1945.

⁹ Narva, an Estonian town on the border of Russia, has an almost exclusively Russian population (95 percent). Its neighbor, Sillamäe, has an even higher percentage (97 percent).

¹⁰ See Huber, 1994, and Packer, 1997, 279-91.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

¹¹ For more information on the Round Table on Minorities, see *Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations 1996 Annual Report*, 1997, 14-15. See also Lund, 1996, for discussion on how conflicts may be prevented through moderate leadership, such as that demonstrated by President Lennart Meri.

¹² For more on Estonian and Latvian citizenship, see de Jong, 1995; Forced Migrations Projects, 1997; Kamenska, 1995; and Shorr, 1994. See also the *U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities*, 1992. Estonia's citizenship legislation is based on *ius sanguinis* (law of the blood, i.e. one or both parents must be citizens of the country) and naturalization. However, most of the international community's concerns have focused more on the laws' implementation and application than on the legislation itself. For citizenship studies, see Forced Migration Projects, 1997; Harlig, 1997; Neu, 1994-96; and Young, 1995.

¹³ The Estonia project began after the CSMHI had already gained considerable insight into the Baltic republics through two meetings (one in Kaunas, Lithuania, and one in Riga, Latvia), prior to the first workshop in Estonia. Influential representatives from all three Baltic countries as well as Russia attended. See Volkan, 1992, and Volkan and Harris, 1993. The CRP/CSMHI team included psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, psychologists, former diplomats, political scientists, one historian, one linguist, and one psychiatric nurse. See "List of Key Participants" on pages 6-9.

¹⁴ The meetings were so titled because they were designed to be participatory discussions rather than mediation sessions. In a country such as Estonia, where there has been no armed conflict, using the term "conflict prevention" is controversial because it evokes images of imminent destruction and violence.

¹⁵ The INN has undertaken heads-of-state level mediation missions in Bosnia, Ethiopia, the Great Lakes region of Central Africa, Korea, Liberia, and Sudan. Prior to this, projects typically were short-term and led by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. The Estonia project represented the first long-term, sustained intervention at a non-head-of-state level.

¹⁶ For more on the workshops' methodology and process, see Volkan and Harris, 1992; 1993; and Volkan, 1997; 1998a and 1998b.

¹⁷ For information on the stages of the dialogue process, see Chufirin and Saunders, 1993.

¹⁸ For analysis of issues in Latvia, see Aasland, 1994.

¹⁹ The terms "assimilation" and "integration" often were used interchangeably in the workshops, although some participants did make the distinction made by intercultural communication scholars. "Assimilation" meant loss of Russian identity with the addition of Estonian identity. "Integration" meant the addition of Estonian identity while maintaining Russian identity, i.e., learning more about each other yet retaining one's own identity.

²⁰ Citizenship became a contentious issue after independence. Granting citizenship to ethnic Russians who came to Estonia during the Soviet era was perceived as recognizing that Soviet domination was legitimate. See Tompson, 1997.

²¹ Rützel ran for president again in 1996 but lost to the incumbent, Lennart Meri.

²² The Institute operates under the Estonian Academy of Social Sciences, a Soviet-era creation that had been state-supported.

²³ In Mustamäe, a model program for teaching Estonian to Russian kindergartners was created. In Klooga, a community center was set up, where residents could meet to develop projects for local improvement. In Mustvee, Russians and Estonians began joining hands to increase tourism and improve the region's economy.

²⁴ For a thorough analysis of conflict prevention methods, see the 1997 report of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. ■



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

WORKS CITED

- Alongi, Maria. *Ethnic Conflict and European Security: Lessons from the Past and Implications for the Future*. Conference Report. Carlisle, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, 1996.
- Aasland, Aadne. "Russians in Latvia: Ethnic Identity and Ethnopolitical Change." Ph.D. Dissertation. Glasgow, Scotland: University of Glasgow, 1994.
- Ayres, R. William. "Mediating International Conflicts: Is Image Change Necessary?" *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 34, No. 4, November 1997.
- Boutros-Ghali, Boutros. *An Agenda for Peace*. New York: United Nations, 1992.
- Birmingham, Katherine. *The OSCE and Minority Issues*. The Hague: Foundation for Inter-Ethnic Relations, 1995.
- Bredt, Ellen May. "Estonia and the OSCE: A Remarkable Relationship." Masters Paper. London: University of London, 1997.
- Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict. "Preventing Deadly Conflict: Final Report." Washington, D.C.: Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1997.
- Chufrin, Gennady and Harold Saunders. "A Public Peace Process." In *Negotiation Journal*, April 1993, 155-77.
- Committee on International Relations, Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry. "Us and Them: The Psychology of Ethnonationalism." New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1987.
- Conflict Management Group and Harvard Negotiation Project. *Early Warning and Preventive Action in the CSCE: Defining the Role of the High Commissioner on National Minorities*. Cambridge, Mass.: Conflict Management Group, 1992.
- Council of Europe. *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and Explanatory Report*. Stasbourg: Council of Europe, 1995.
- de Jong, John H.A.L. *Proposal for the Required Level of Competence in Latvian for Naturalisation Purposes of the Joint Programme for the Integration of Noncitizens in Estonia and Latvia and the CDCC Project Language Learning for European Citizenship*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1995.
- Forced Migration Projects. *Estonia and Latvia: Citizenship, Language, and Conflict Prevention*. Special Report. New York: Soros Foundation, 1997.
- Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations 1996 Annual Report. The Hague: Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, March 1997, 14-15.
- Fukik, Ignar, and Aarend-Mihkel Rõuk. *Estonia: Free and Independent*. Tallinn: Estonian Encyclopedia Publishers, 1994.
- Harlig, Jeff. "National Consolidation vs. European Integration: The Language Issue in Slovakia." In *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 28, No.4, December 1997, 479-91.
- Huber, Konrad. *Averting Inter-Ethnic Conflict: An Analysis of the CSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in Estonia, January-July 1993*. Working Paper Series, Vol. 1, No. 2. Atlanta, Ga.: The Carter Center, 1994.
- Kamenska, Angelita. *The State Language in Latvia: Achievements, Problems, and Prospects*. Riga: Latvian Center for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies, 1995.
- Kionka, Riina, and Raivo Vetik. "Estonia and the Estonians." In Graham Smith, ed. *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*. New York: Longman, 1996.
- Lieven, Anatol. *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the Path to Independence*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

- Lund, Michael S. *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 1996.
- Neu, Joyce. "Observations of Citizenship Exams in Narva, Parnu, and Tallinn." Unpublished Reports. Atlanta, Ga.: The Carter Center, 1994-96.
- Packer, John. "Conflict Prevention by the OAU: The Relevance of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities." In A.A. Yusuf, ed. *African Yearbook of International Law*. The Netherlands: African Association of International Law, 1997, 279-91.
- Pullerits, Albert. *Estonia: Population, Cultural, and Economic Life*. Tallinn: 1937.
- Shorr, David. *The Citizenship and Alien Law Controversies in Estonia and Latvia*. Strengthening Democratic Institutions Project. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government, 1994.
- Taagepera, Rein. *Estonia: Return to Independence*. Boulder: Colo., Westview Press, 1993.
- Tompson, William. *Domestic Political Settlements in the Former U.S.S.R. in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States 1997*. London: Europa Publications Ltd., 1997.
- U.N. *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities*. Adopted by U.N. General Assembly resolution 47/135, Dec. 18, 1992.
- U.N. Development Program (UNDP). *Estonian Human Development Report 1995*. New York: UNDP, 1995.
- Volkan, Vamik.
—*Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1997.
—*Das Versagen der Diplomatie: Zur Psychoanalyse Nationaler, Ethischer, und Religiöser Konflikte. (The Failure of Diplomacy: The Psychoanalysis of National, Ethnic, and Religious Conflicts)*. Giessen: Psychosozial-Verlag, 1998a.
—"The Tree Model: Psychopolitical Dialogues and Promotion of Coexistence." In E. Weiner, ed. *Handbook for Interethnic Coexistence*. New York: The Abraham Fund, 1998b.
- Volkan, Vamik and Max Harris.
—"Negotiating a Peaceful Separation: A Psychopolitical Analysis of Current Relationships Between Russia and the Baltic Republics." *Mind and Human Interaction*, No. 4, 1992, 20-39.
—"Vaccinating the Political Process: A Second Psychopolitical Analysis of Relationships Between Russia and the Baltic States." *Mind and Human Interaction*, No. 4, 1993, 169-90.
- Young, Jim. "Variance Amidst Similarity: A Comparison of Latvian and Estonian Citizenship Policy." Student Paper. Durham, N.C.: Duke University, 1995.



APPENDICES

- A) Historical Background
- B) Settlement of Russians in Estonia
- C) Citizenship Status of Estonian Residents
- D) Open Estonia Foundation Survey
- E) The International Negotiation Network



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

APPENDIX A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Estonia is the northernmost of the three Baltic states, sharing its eastern border with Russia and its southern one with Latvia.¹ It covers 45,215 square kilometers, approximately the size of Denmark or the U.S. states of New Hampshire and Vermont combined. Of its roughly 1.5 million population, 65 percent are ethnic Estonians, 29 percent are Russian, and 6 percent have Ukrainian, Belarussian, Scandinavian, or other roots. Historically, Estonia has maintained close links to Finland, with its language from the same Finno-Ugric family. Also, the country is connected to both Finland and Sweden by the Lutheran religion.

Since the early Middle Ages, Estonia has been part of numerous foreign empires and spheres of influence. Vikings overran the territory in the ninth century. The German Teutonic Knights invaded in the 12th century to Christianize the region, and their descendants retained power as feudal barons for centuries. Later, the Danes exerted control over parts of Estonia, as did the Hanseatic League. Rule passed to Sweden in 1561 and to Russia in 1710.

The 19th century brought an era of national awakening. Despite attempts at revolution in 1905, Estonians remained under Russian rule when World War I began in 1914. Initially, Estonia stayed on the periphery of the war, but eventually, the Russian military mobilized a force of some 100,000 Estonians. Twelve-thousand Estonians died in the war.

When the Germans captured Riga in neighboring Latvia in 1917, Estonians feared an invasion. That autumn, Germany took Estonian islands west of the mainland and advanced on Estonia's capital, Tallinn. The Estonian Salvation Committee of the underground assembly announced the Republic of

Estonia on Feb. 24, 1918. Merely 24 hours before, German troops invaded. After Germany's capitulation to the Entente Powers in November, fighting erupted between the Bolshevik Red Army and Estonian forces.

A peace treaty was signed Feb. 2, 1920, in Tartu, Estonia, in which Soviet Russia recognized Estonia's independence unconditionally and for all time. The Republic of Estonia thus became part of the international community, joining the League of Nations in 1921. The Estonian Constitution established it as a democratic parliamentary republic, where the state assembly—the Riigikogu—exercised supreme legislative power. With independence, Estonian society and culture developed rapidly. The growing economy became reoriented toward the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Nordic countries.

In 1939, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union signed the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop pact that decreed the partition of Poland in exchange for Soviet control of the Baltic states. The U.S.S.R. occupied Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, annexing them in June 1940. Between the summers of 1940-41, the Soviets murdered or exiled thousands of Estonian intellectuals, farmers, military personnel, religious leaders, and others.

In 1941, the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union, thereby breaking the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Estonia again became a battleground. That year, Soviet and Estonian Communist authorities deported approximately 30,000 people, mostly former Estonian elite and peasantry, to Siberia or elsewhere in the U.S.S.R. Families were divided along battle lines. The Soviets re-established control in 1944, causing mass deportation of Estonians and settling of Russians in



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA



According to this sign in Tallinn, more than 20,000 people lost their homes and 463 lost their lives when Soviet air forces bombed the city in 1944.

Estonia. Soviet rule of the Baltic states, though not recognized by most Western states, remained intact until 1991, when Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania regained independence.

The more than 50 years of Soviet reign destroyed Estonia's economic and political integrity. With incorporation into the U.S.S.R., the small state became communist. As in other Soviet republics, state ownership dominated, and private entrepreneurship was practically nonexistent. The economy was based on labor inflow, mainly from Russia, and on strong trade and production links with the U.S.S.R. Estonia's economic base shifted from agriculture to heavy industry. A relatively well-developed infrastructure, combined with a skilled labor force, led to the establishment of fairly sophisticated industries, making Estonia one of the U.S.S.R.'s most advanced republics.

Soviet communism, particularly dominant until 1953, severely restricted basic rights and freedoms and suppressed political opponents. From 1953-78, local

officials gained some control inside Estonia, where democratic traditions of popular culture and everyday life continued. Estonians condemned abuses of power and offered support to victims.

Pressure for economic and political independence existed in Soviet Estonia, gaining impetus in the 1980s, when Mikhail Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika created an atmosphere for free expression. A law on economic autonomy, approved by the U.S.S.R.'s Supreme Soviet in 1989, paved the way for various reforms.

Unlike Romania's rebellion against a dreaded and powerful leader, Estonia directed its revolution against an occupying "nation," the Soviet Union. Because its leadership was not oppressive and was in tune with people's desire for independence, Estonia did not face a deadly political struggle in breaking away from the U.S.S.R. The bloodless event that led to Estonia's reindpendence aptly became known as the "Singing Revolution," due to its roots in a daylong rally at the 1988 Song Festival Grounds in Tallinn.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

A March 1991 referendum gave clear support for restoring Estonia as an independent republic. Thus, on Aug. 20, Estonia decided to re-establish independence on the basis of historical continuity of statehood. On Sept. 6, the Soviet Union recognized Estonia's independence as well as that of Latvia and Lithuania. Later that month, these three former League of Nations states became members of the United Nations.²

Compared to other post-communist states in Central and Eastern Europe, Estonia had to not only reform but also recreate its economic, political, and legal structures. A June 1992 referendum supported a new constitution that defined Estonia as a parliamentary democracy. The constitution provided for a 101-member unicameral legislature—the Riigikogu—with a prime minister as head of government, and a president as head of state. The first parliamentary and presidential elections in September 1992 were deemed free and fair. The 1995 elections—marked by the establishment of a genuine multiparty system—resulted in a change of government and peaceful transfer of power.

Despite frequent shifts in the government coalition, there was consensus on developing a liberal market economy. Because huge financial difficulties followed the first years of independence, few believed Estonia would become a viable economy, let alone one of the fastest and most successful reformers among the post-communist states.

After regaining independence, Estonians faced practical and psychological hardships related to their status as former Soviet citizens. Most problematic was the continued presence of thousands of Soviet troops. Other disputes concerned demarcating and administering a new border with Russia, transferring property and infrastructure previously under communist control, and deciding who could become a citizen. Estonians feared that Russians living in Estonia could become a “fifth column” preparing for eventual return of Russian domination. This perception of threat was

echoed in Estonia's physical environment, which had become highly contaminated due to the oil shale industry of the Soviet era.³ Ethnic “mafias” in drug trafficking, money laundering, and car theft also threatened Estonians' control over the land.

After years of subjugation, it seemed the newly free Estonians feared opening the floodgates to the Russians, especially while former Soviet troops remained on the ground and aggressive rhetoric from Russian ultranationalists—such as Vladimir Zhirinovsky—supported a hard line in the Baltics. ■

ENDNOTES

¹ For a more complete overview of the state of Estonia, see *Estonian Human Development Report*. New York: U.N. Development Program, 1995.

² Kionka, Riina and Raivo Vetik. “Estonia and the Estonians,” in Graham Smith, ed., *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*. New York: Longman, 1996.

³ Northeast Estonia was considered the most polluted area on the European continent, with dangerous toxins found in the air, water, and soil. Industrial and human waste flowed untreated into drinking water supplies, people lived near radioactive waste piles, and pollution-related health problems were common. In addition, many houses and buildings were run-down or boarded up. An estimated \$US4 billion would be needed to rectify Estonia's most serious environmental problems. The situation has improved somewhat in recent years, following the decline in industrial and agricultural production as well as an increase in environment-related investment.



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

APPENDIX B



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

APPENDIX C

THE CITIZENSHIP STATUS OF ESTONIAN RESIDENTS
(BEGINNING OF 1997)

Total Population as of Jan. 1, 1997	1,462,130
Estonian Citizen Passports Issued as of Jan. 1, 1997	956,876
Naturalized Citizens from May 1992 to Dec. 31, 1996	88,534
Residence Permits Issued to Stateless Persons as of Jan. 1, 1997	335,368
Applicants for Alien's Passport as of Feb. 3, 1997	133,646
Alien's Passports Printed or Issued as of Feb. 3, 1997	101,819
Citizens of Other States	Over 100,000

Sources: Statistical Office, The Baltic Times, May 1-7, 1997



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

APPENDIX D



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

APPENDIX E

THE INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATION NETWORK

The Carter Center's Conflict Resolution Program (CRP) created the International Negotiation Network (INN), a flexible, informal network of eminent people, conflict resolution practitioners, and diplomats. Through the INN, the CRP has coordinated third-party assistance, expert analysis and advice, workshops, media attention, and other means to facilitate constructive prevention or resolution of intranational conflicts worldwide. Two INN members, Harold Saunders and Vamik Volkan, developed and led the Estonia project. The INN is supported by grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Jimmy Carter, 39th President of the United States; Founder and Chair of The Carter Center; Chair, INN

Oscar Arias Sánchez, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; Former President of Costa Rica; Founder, Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress

Eileen Babbitt, Director, Program on International Negotiation and Conflict Resolution, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University

Tahseen Basheer, former Egyptian ambassador; Former Permanent Representative to the League of Arab States

Kevin Clements, Director, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, and Incoming Secretary-General, International Alert

Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Former U.N. Secretary-General

Hans Dietrich Genscher, Former Vice Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Germany

Tommy Koh, Executive Director, Asia-Europe Foundation; Former Singapore Ambassador to the United States

Christopher Mitchell, Professor, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University

Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria; Chair, Africa Leadership Forum

Lisbet Palme, Director of UNICEF, Sweden

Robert Pastor, Former Director, Latin American and Caribbean Program, The Carter Center; Goodrich C. White Professor of Political Science, Emory University

Shridath Ramphal, Former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations; Co-Chair, Commission on Global Governance

Barnett Rubin, Director, Center for Preventive Action, Council on Foreign Relations, New York

Kumar Rupesinghe, Former Secretary-General, International Alert

Harold Saunders, Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State; Director, International Programs, Kettering Foundation

Marie-Angélique Savané, Former Director, Africa Division, U.N. Population Fund

Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; Chair, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa; Former President, All Africa Conference of Churches; Robert W. Woodruff Visiting Professor of Theology, Emory University

Brian Urquhart, Former U.N. Under-Secretary General for Peacekeeping

William Ury, Director, Project on Preventing War, Program on Negotiation, Harvard University

Cyrus Vance, Former U.S. Secretary of State; U.N. Special Envoy to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Vamik Volkan, Director, Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction, University of Virginia

Peter Wallensteen, Professor, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, Sweden

Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate; Professor, Boston University

Andrew Young, Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations; Director, GoodWorks International

I. William Zartman, Jacob Blaustein Professor of International Organization and Conflict Resolution, The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University



DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGY FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF ESTONIA

ABOUT THE CARTER CENTER

The Carter Center strives to relieve suffering by advancing peace and health worldwide. With a fundamental commitment to human rights, the Center is guided by the principle that people, with the necessary skills, knowledge, and access to resources, can improve their own lives and the lives of others.

Founded in 1982 by Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter in partnership with Emory University, the nonprofit Center works to prevent and resolve conflicts, enhance freedom and democracy, and improve health. The Center collaborates with other organizations, public or private, in carrying out its mission. In this way, the Center has touched the lives of people in more than 65 countries.

Charitable contributions from individuals, foundations, corporations, and other donors support the Center's activities. Programs are directed by resident experts or fellows, some of whom

downtown Atlanta. Four circular pavilions house offices for the former president and first lady and most of the Center's program staff. The complex includes the Ivan Allen III Pavilion and the



PAUL DINGMAN

The Carter Center is located in a 35-acre park two miles east of downtown Atlanta.

teach at Emory University. They design and implement activities in cooperation with President and Mrs. Carter, networks of world leaders, and partners in the United States and abroad.

The Center is located in a 35-acre park two miles east of

nondenominational Cecil B. Day Chapel, other conference facilities, and administrative offices. Adjoining the Center is The Jimmy Carter Library and Museum, a repository for the records of the Carter administration, operated by the National Archives and Records Administration of the federal government and open to the public. The

Center and the Library and Museum are known collectively as The Carter Presidential Center.

More information about The Carter Center is available on the World Wide Web at: www.cartercenter.org. ■

THE CARTER CENTER ♦ ONE COPENHILL ♦ 453 FREEDOM PARKWAY
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30307 ♦ (404) 420-5100 ♦ FAX (404) 420-5145

WWW.CARTERCENTER.ORG