

# The Peacebuilders

*"Keeping the ICF Circle informed; Connecting with Community of Interreligious Peacebuilders"*

**Vol. 1, No. 1**

Bi-monthly E-Newsletter of the Interfaith Cooperation Forum  
of Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs

**July-August, 2018**

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## ICF sets School of Peace 2018 in Yogyakarta

The School of Peace will be held at Duta Wacana Christian University facilities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia from October 1, 2018 to November 29, 2018.

This arrangement is made possible with the gracious help of Rev. Yusak Tridarmanto of the Duta Wacana Faculty of Theology and Religion. ICF also solicited the assistance of the local Yogyakarta YMCA in terms of identifying participants within Indonesia, and possible resource persons on some themes to be taken up.

The School of Peace is a flagship program of Inter-

faith Cooperation Forum, the latter being a project of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY).

The expected participants will be coming from different faith or religious traditions at the grassroots level, where "grassroot" is understood as the ordinary people, or those working with ordinary people in their localities. A balance among women and men will also be considered. Because of the diversity of Asia, it is inevitable that the School of Peace will use English as the medium of the conversation.

The overarching objective



ICF Coordinator, Muriel Ore-villo-Montenegro is flanked to her right by Dr. Yosef, Judith Lim and Dorcas of Yogyakarta YMCA. To her left are Rev. Yusak Tridarmanto and Yemi-ma.

of the School of Peace is to equip young persons with necessary skills and knowledge so that they will be able to create a  
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## Timor Leste and Nepal will host thematic workshops

The Interfaith Cooperation Forum of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs will be sponsoring two thematic workshops and the School of Peace before the end of this year. The first workshop will be in Dili, Timor Lest

on August 27-31, 2018. The second workshop will be in Kathmandu, Nepal on September 10-14, 2018.

ICF and SoP Alumni work as partners in organizing the thematic workshops.

The thematic workshops are set up for five (5) days to delve into themes or issues that the hosts deem to be relevant in their respective contexts. Some of these themes were suggested during the meeting of some SoP alumni in  
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The overarching objective of the School of Peace is to equip young persons with necessary skills and knowledge so that they will be able to create a movement and a network of peacebuilders in Asia.

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movement and a network of peacebuilders in Asia. Used to run for three months, SoP 2018 will now run for two months. Reasons include the limitation of the budgetary allocation, and the difficulty of potential participants to leave their work or studies for a longer period.

Considering the goal and

vision that the participants will contribute to the peacebuilding efforts in Asia, a curriculum is constructed in a way that strikes a balance between the heart, mind/spirit, and action.

The SoP sessions will begin with an introduction of the nature, vision, mission and goals of YMCA. This will situate

the context why YMCA came out with a project called Interfaith Cooperation Forum, and why it considers SoP as a flagship program of ICF. The participants will share the realities of their localities, highlighting the situation of unpeace in such contexts. They will analyze the conflicts in their local communities, or  
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## Timor Leste and Nepal will host thematic workshops

Siem Reap in April 2018. During the workshop two or three main topics will be taken up. One day will be allocated for community visit. The last day will be spent for debriefing, reflections, and evaluation.

The thematic workshop in Dili, Timor Leste will

be held at ISMAIK. Leo Gamboa, the chair of the Timor Leste Forum is spearheading the preparations and arrangements. The theme chosen is Gender Justice and Nina Naoyen from Manado, Indonesia will be the facilitator. Two other topics are added: Human Rights and the Conventions on

the Rights of Women and Children to be facilitated by Joaquin Russo da Fonseca, who is a faculty member of the University of Timor Leste. The other topic is on Planning and Proposal Making and Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro will facilitate.

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The participants of the meeting in Siem Reap on April 24-28, 2018.

## Throwback: APAY-ICF and SoP Alumni met in Siem Reap

The Interfaith Cooperation Forum (ICF) of Asia-Pacific Alliance of YMCAs (APAY) held a meeting with 12 SoP Alumni Program Committee on April 24-25, 2018 in Siem Reap in Cambodia. This was followed by the review-workshop on Community Organizing April 26-28, 2018.

Nam Boo Won, General Secretary of APAY, Max Ediger, outgoing ICF Coordinator, Hem Sopharak, Part-time staff of ICF, and Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro, the incoming coordinator of ICF attended the meeting. Initial plans for thematic workshops and two SoPs were made but they were

subject to the willingness of each country's forum or local contacts to host the activity.

The trip to the "Floating Village" in Tonle Sap Chong Kneas was the jumping board for the review session on Community Organizing facilitated by Max Ediger. ✨

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national contexts. The workshop on Conflict Analysis will provide them tools to analyze conflicts in various levels. Other topics include theories on peacebuilding and conflict transformation to provide the participants with a framework of their endeavor in peace work. A big section is dedicated to understanding peace from dif-

ferent living religious traditions of Asia, namely, Hinduism, Buddhism, the Judeo-Christian tradition, Taoism, and indigenous spiritualities. This will broaden the participants' perspective towards developing and improving interfaith cooperation among peoples. Topics on the realities of un-peace include Human Rights, Gender Justice,

Health and Disability, Terrorism, Neoliberalism and Climate Injustice will be discussed. Other themes set are Non-Violent Communication, Peace Education, Peace Journalism, Trauma Healing, Organizing for Peace. The participants are expected to create plans for echo training in their respective localities. ☸ ☸ ☸



Source:  
<https://www.google.com.hk/>

## APAY-ICF says goodbye to Bruce Van Voorhis

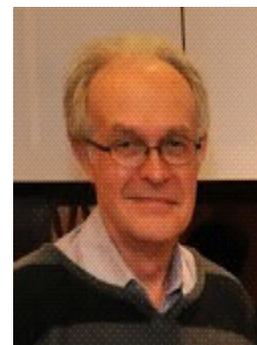
ICF gratefully acknowledges the services of Bruce Van Voorhis, the Hong Kong-based ICF coordinator since 2008. He was a missionary sent by the United Church of Christ, USA and served as ICF Coordinator since then. Bruce has also retired on 31st January 2018.

Bruce was a human rights activist and a journalist. He was associated with a host of organizations in Hong Kong as a volunteer. He contributed a lot in the field of human rights training in ICF.

Bruce was a man of letters and had vastly contributed in the field of

publications. He was responsible for editing several publications of APAY and ICF.

Thus, ICF & APAY acknowledge the great contribution of Bruce Van Voorhis to APAY-ICF work, and therefore wish him a safe and sound retired life. ☸ ☸ ☸



## Timor Leste and Nepal will host thematic workshops

In Kathmandu there are also three topics to be taken up during the workshop. These are Human Rights, Peacebuilding and Conflict Analysis, and Non-Violent Communication. An alumna of SoP, Bibek Kumar, is at the forefront of the preparations for the workshop. An

SoP Alumni, Shreeram Chaudhary, will facilitate the section on Human Rights. Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro will facilitate the workshop of Conflict Analysis and Peacebuilding, while a certified NVC facilitator, Amina Mambuy from Iligan, Philippines will facilitate the workshop on Non-Violent

Communication.

Hem Sopharak, part-time Program Officer of ICF will facilitate in team-building exercises, and co-facilitate with Bibek Kumar in debriefing after the community visit. He will also be in-charge of the closing ceremonies.

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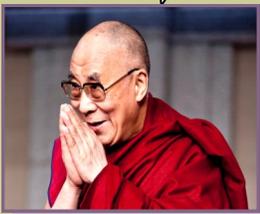
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It is necessary  
to combine  
knowledge born  
from study with  
sincere practice  
in our lives.  
These two must  
go together.



The Dalai Lama

**“Keeping the ICF Circle informed; Connecting with Community of Interreligious Peacebuilders”**

The Interfaith Cooperation Forum is a program of Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs. It values the significance of interreligious understanding and unity. Thus, it offers opportunities for study and appreciation of the different perspective of religions on peace, and discern the role of religion in peacebuilding. Yet, considering that unpeace is brought about by many factors, including the onslaught of neoliberal economic globalization, more people experience poverty, internally displaced people are increasing as communities are destroyed, native wisdom and values are overrun by Western and consumerist outlooks, patriarchy and racism persists, and climate change is now felt as the destruction of the Planet Earth seems unabated.

Peace is celebrated as a gift from the Divine, yet, we, the earthlings have the responsibility to make peace a reality. Although its contribution may just be like a drop of water into the lake, ICF seeks to equip young people of different religious traditions, especially from the marginalized communities of Asia and Pacific, to make waves of peacebuilding actions. ❧ ❧ ❧

**APAY and ICF Bid Farewell and Welcome to ICF Coordinators**



APAY-ICF bid farewell to Max Ediger as he retired from services at the end of February 2018. He served the main Coordinator of ICF since the time of its inception as a joint project of APAY and CCA to equip the youths of Asia in responding to the challenges of the post nine eleven era.

Interfaith Cooperation Forum gratefully acknowledges the long outstanding contribution of peace activist Max Ediger in forming ICF and upbringing this forum to the present day status with a network spread in 9 countries in Asia and having more than 115 active youth alumni who have been trained in this ICF flagship program the School of

Peace. ICF have another couple of hundred of alumni who have participated in various workshops organized during these days.

Max Ediger will still be associated with ICF as a resource person based in Cambodia. We wish him a happy and healthy retired life.

APAY has appointed Dr. Muriel Orevillo-Montenegro as the new coordinator of ICF. Dr. Muriel hails from the Philippines and has a rich experience in educational trainings related to peace and theology.

She was the first woman Dean of Silliman University Divinity School. More recently she was serving as the Coordinator of Justice and Peace Center at Silliman University, Dumaguete City in the Philippines. She has an illustrious education background, holds a Ph.D in Systematic Theology from Union Theological Seminary,

New York City and holds 3 Master Degrees, one in Divinity, (Silliman) and the others Sacred Theology & Philosophy (Union, NYC).

Dr. Muriel will be based in Hong Kong at the office of APAY while the Program Officer of ICF, Hem Sopharak will continue to be based in Cambodia at the ICF satellite office.

We welcome Dr. Muriel to APAY and look forward for have a wonderful working fellowship with her in Hong Kong. We hope and pray that she will be able to lead the ICF and add new dimensions in the activities of ICF.

We request all concerned to extend a helping hand to Dr. Muriel in discharging her responsibilities as the new coordinator of ICF. ❧ ❧ ❧

