

REPORT ON A TWO DAYS CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP ON:

“PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR POLICE IN ETHICS, PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS, HUMAN SECURITY, EARLY WARNING, AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF VIOLENCE AND RIOTS”



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1.0. BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

The recent riots in Kampala and the forthcoming political campaigns and elections in 2011 provide the context for critical reflection on how prepared the Uganda Police is to proactively handle violent situations, protect themselves, and protect human rights, human security and property of individuals and communities, especially the vulnerable persons. It was from this background that John Paul II Justice and Peace Centre and the East African institute of Governance and Conflict management, in collaboration with Uganda Police organized this workshop.

1.2. Purpose

The consultative workshop was organized mainly to analyze and assess the current situation in Uganda, and to propose strategies on how best to prepare the police to handle violent and rioting individuals and crowds.

1.3. Attendance

The workshop was attended by forty (40) participants. There was a good representation from the Civil Society organizations, with participants from Amnesty International, Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC), Uganda Law Society, Human Rights Network (HURINET), Foundation for Human Rights Initiatives (FHRI), Uganda Journalists Association, and Makerere University Students' Guild. Uganda Police was represented at all ranks of high command, with among others the Inspector General of Police Major General Kale Kayihura, and the Police Spokesperson Judith Nabakooba attending. The Germany Ambassador to Uganda also attended because the workshop was facilitated through the organizers' cooperation with the German based Association for Development Cooperation (AGEH).

2.0. OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP

2.1. Remarks from the IGP

While opening the workshop, the Inspector General of Police (IGP), Major General Kale Kayihura, thanked the organizers for realizing that public order management is crucial and he hoped the workshop was going to promote the integrity of police.

Citing the wrangles within the Muslim community in Uganda over the two rival Muftis which were solved amicably through facilitated dialogue (by his office), the IGP said it is possible to resolve conflicts through dialogue, although there were unfortunate incidences, such as the September riots in Buganda and riots over Mabira Forest, where dialogue was not given a chance. He said dialogue was the key conflict-resolution strategy being promoted by Uganda Police and he believed the workshop would equip the participants for it.

2.2. Remarks from the Germany Ambassador

H.E. Reinhard Buchholz, the Germany Ambassador to Uganda, expressed his hope that the workshop intended to build a strong coalition between the Ugandan Police Force and the population. He remarked that the basic rule is that the more repressive the police is, the more it disassociates itself from the population. He observed that by playing a vital role in the maintenance of law and order, police remains a source of moral confidence to all individuals who seek good life.

The ambassador described the Ugandan-German cooperation in peace-building processes, as well as conflict prevention and management as very vibrant. He said Germany has been a contributor to the Justice Law and Order (JLOS) basket fund, and will continue scaling up cooperation especially in Northern Uganda. He informed the participants that the German Government established since ten years from now a Civil Peace Service Program which mainly consists in sending Peace Experts into local Organizations (such as John Paul II Justice and Peace Centre) to assist them enhance their capacities in dealing with various challenges in the areas of conflict management. The program is implemented by local organizations in cooperation with two German Organizations, namely DED (German Development Service) and AGEH (Association for Development Cooperation), a Non-Governmental organization owned by the German Catholic Church. This consultative workshop, which was organized with assistance from AGEH, is a good example of the German engagement in peace and conflict resolution.

3.0. PHOTO REVIEW

A slide-show of various photos taken from a riotous situation was shown to all the participants, with the following guiding questions:

i) what do you see? ii) What do you think? iii) What should have been done differently? Using the methodology of brainstorming, the participants came up with the following results.

3.1. Analysis of the Riotous Situation

From the slideshow, the workshop participants saw:

- A vulnerable/delicate situation where lives and property were being destroyed.
- A situation of total unrest and tension in the city.
- That most of the people involved in the riots were youths.
- The participation of children in the riots.
- Injuries both on the side of the rioters as well as that of the police.

- A few ununiformed individuals beating up rioters.
- A family and several other seemingly peaceful people caught up in the riot.

From what they saw, the participants were able to make the following conclusions:

- There was a manifestation of a high degree of moral degeneration demonstrated in intentional destruction of the property and harming of innocent people.
- The situation indicated disrespect and contempt of police by rioters.
- There is a lot of anger that is continuing to pile in the hearts of some Ugandans.
- Pointing their guns to the sky demonstrated the discipline of the police force.
- There was poor involvement of the other stakeholders in calming the situation.
- The photo-review seemed to suggest that police was taken by surprise.

3.2. What could have been done differently?

- There should have been earlier police intelligence to predict such a situation. Even after erupting, the rioters should have been stopped early enough.
- Civilians should have communicated with police to help in redeeming the situation before degenerating into what it turned out to be.
- There should have been better information flow among the public media and police, for instance concerning safe passages for children coming from school.
- All peaceful channels of conflict resolution should have been given a chance.
- There should have been more involvement of other stakeholders. For instance Government hospitals could have sent in ambulances; and the Ministry of Works helped clear blocked roads.
- There should have been a better strategy by police to isolate the rioters and protect peaceful individuals that were not part of the riots but who were just caught up.

After this brainstorming, the participants were introduced to some non-violent investigation techniques, as a way forward to detect and prevent crime, by selected researcher.

NON-VIOLENT INVESTIGATION APPROACHES AND TECHNIQUES

The concept of non-violent investigation techniques refers to delicate inquiry into a situation without inflicting injury or any either physical or psychological harm to those involved.

4.1. Presentation

The following non-violent investigation approaches and techniques for crime prevention were given in a presentation by Mitala Kyeyune (from EAIGCM):

Symbiotic Statutory: This refers to the use of individuals familiar with the environment where the crime has been committed or is likely to be committed in the process of investigating a situation.

Content Analysis: This is the analysis of wordings, phrases, statements, and expressions in investigating a situation. This is also known as interrogation.

Kinesis: This involves studying body/object movements, such as where someone was positioned, or what direction he/she was facing, while the crime was being committed

Proxemics: This has to do with the utilization of space, such as identification of possible hideouts for criminals or where stolen property would be hidden.

Hooper: This involves the use of technologically modified gadgets in detecting crimes, such as the use of ICT cameras.

4.2. Emerging Issues from the Discussion

In the brainstorming session that followed, the police participants discovered that actually these non-violent techniques are what they were taught during their training, and they admitted that those who use violent means act on their own and their actions are punishable. However, there was a debate concerning whether non-violent techniques alone would be effective in a violent and militaristic society like Uganda, where some rioters' behavior could even be described as terrorism.

A specific concern about the Church's role was raised. It was agreed that since the Church has one of the biggest constituencies, and therefore should get more involved into peace-building processes. It was also noted that some Church leaders have been making provocative statements that could incite populations.

It came up that riot organizers incite people using different channels. One of such is to give youths money, alcohol or drugs (especially marijuana) and in the end these youths riot while the real organizers don't appear on the scene. It was suggested that a quick law needs to be put in place to hold such organizers accountable. It was also recommended that during such workshops, some of the known riot-organizers be identified and invited to participate.

The concept of "Forceful Peace", used by the presenter, triggered a debate as to whether peace can be forced. Police said they do not *force* order, but rather they *enforce* it, and peace being a product of order, it is expected to follow.

5.0. GROUP WORK

The participants were divided into discussion groups and were asked to:

1. *Identify early warning indicators for violence and crime in light of the forthcoming elections.*
2. *Identify strategies to strengthen community policing to prevent violence and crime.*
3. *Identify mechanisms for civil society and police collaboration.*
4. *Make proposals for strengthening professional and skills training for the police.*

5.1. Early Warnings and Indicators of Violence and Crime

The participants pointed to the current provocative statements in the media. Such statements have been uttered in relation to pertinent issues including: unresolved cultural issues (such as concerning federal in Buganda, *Obugabe* (kingship) in Ankole, kingship in Busoga, e.t.c.); queries about the electoral commission (appointment of commissioners, accuracy of the voters' register, e.t.c.); rampant corruption; and the land question (continued land evictions by investors, issues of acceptability of the land act, National Forest Authority and NEMA evicting people from certain areas, as well as land clashes in Kibaale, Kasese, Bulisa, e.t.c)

There has also been loss of confidence in the institution of parliament, and with bills, such as that on homosexuality, violence is likely to be triggered. This becomes more threatening with the high rate of unemployment among the youths and the increasing use of alcohol and drugs among the youth. With the absence of intensive civic education, there have been militant agitations such as *Nkobazambogo* demanding for federal, and boda boda cyclists demanding for 'freedom' from the laws by force. Internal wrangles within various political parties as well as suspected money laundering were also seen as threats to peace.

5.2. Strengthening Community policing for Prevention of Violence and Crime

It was agreed upon that police needs to give more sensitization to the community on the rights and responsibilities of every citizen, a process that should involve more use of IEC (Information Education and Communication). There should be categorization of stakeholders such as boda boda cyclists being engaged alone, the business community being sensitized alone, and so on. In addition, it was suggested that there should be creation and strengthening of police partnerships with other stakeholders in such peace-building processes and conflict resolution. Direct community involvement in crime prevention was also cited as a strategy that should be encouraged. Besides, there is need for increased visibility of police such as by increasing the number of motor and foot patrols in the communities.

5.3. Mechanisms for Civil Society and Police Collaboration

To begin with, it was agreed that the two parties (Civil Society and Police) must come out and correct the misconceptions they have about each other. Unfair accusations of each other and the game of pointing fingers are to be discouraged. The two parties are to encourage more open and direct forums, and they are to begin carrying out of joint community-mobilization programs (joint dialogues).

It was suggested that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should be brought closer to police by getting more involved in the training syllabus of police officers and in the daily police programs and activities, such as the way UTODA staff are being involved in traffic activities. Benchmark visits (on either side) were also pointed out as a strategy that could deepen their understanding of each other. In addition, there is need to develop a mechanism through which the two parties can easily share relevant information that is helpful for peace-building.

5.4. Priorities for Professional and Skills Training for the Police

The participants identified the need for organizing more training workshops in aspects such as international humanitarian law, human rights, conflict-resolution, proper use of force, ethics, public relations, customer care, e.t.c.. They also saw it as crucial to encourage refresher courses to reorient the police into new laws, especially that laws normally keep being modified.

It was also suggested that there is need for the Uganda Police to have more learning experiences from police forces elsewhere, through exchange programs or by hiring experts from other countries to come in and offer training in certain key areas. Citing the example of the training offered by ICRC, it was observed that the practice Training of Trainers (TOTs) could become very useful in achieving this. There is need to strengthen the existing Regional Police Centers, where such training activities could be implemented. It was also deemed essential to attract, motivate and retain professionals into the police force, such as doctors to conduct medical examination of victims and suspects.

6.0. WAY FORWARD

6.1. What needs to be urgently done?

What needs to be done urgently, according to the participants, includes:

- Ensuring that Civil Disturbance Management modules/packages are included on the police training syllabus.
- Heavily investing in civil rights' education so that the entire population can be aware on the rules regarding demonstrations. For instance, it is important for everyone to be aware that a peaceful demonstration is lawful and constitutional, while a riot is unlawful, criminal, and punishable.
- Training of the police force in election laws and offences. In addition, the participants emphasized the need for dissemination of legal documents such as copies of electoral laws, the penal code, the constitution of Uganda, e.t.c.
- More involvement of the media in peace-building processes. It was suggested that police could devise a strategy of having its programs aired by different radio/TV stations at the same time to target more listeners /viewers.
- Engaging political parties to follow the law, especially during the coming period of campaigns and elections.
- Developing a strategy to enable separation of rioters from peaceful individuals, in order to avoid innocent civilians becoming victims of circumstances. It is also crucial to develop a strategy of protecting the vulnerable such as children, patients, and people living with disabilities, in situations of violence.
- Studying the social problems that surround the people in order to gain a better understanding of the context in which violence and crime are erupting.
- Increasing information-sharing such as through building resource centers for police, where CSOs and academic institutions could keep submitting reports, documents and any other helpful information. The public could also use these centers to access information that police wishes to disseminate to the population in a bid to promote peace building processes.

6.2. Critical Actors to be engaged in the Peace-Building Process

Issues of peace are everybody's responsibility. Thus, the involvement of the following stakeholders was deemed crucial: religious organizations; NGOs; other state actors (judiciary, parliament, Ministries, the army, e.t.c); cultural institutions; communication companies; youth groups; the media; parents; educationists; academic and research institutions; opinion leaders; artistes (in art, music, movies, e.t.c); vulnerable Groups (such as OVCs and People Living With Disabilities); the international community; Local Authorities; and private security firms.

7. CLOSURE OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop was closed by the Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP), Julius Odwe, who explained the three major components of man (body, soul and spirit) and how these relate to behavior. He called the Uganda police force to seek a better understanding of the human being so that their work of keeping law and order can be done in the interest of the population. The DIGP emphasized that the police force and all the people of good will in this country should encourage and promote the use of proactive methods of conflict resolution if peace is to be achieved.