

CONTACT INFORMATION

PLEASE PROVIDE ALL NECESSARY CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION :

Name of Organization:

TradeArt Incorporated (TradeArt Abroad)

Name of Responsible person:

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INFORMATION REQUESTED

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. The questions are open-ended, thus allowing you to tackle the issues that you consider most important.
2. Your responses should address both successes and problems so that UNESCO, its Member States, and the UN System as such can learn from your experiences.

I

ACTIONS ACCOMPLISHED BY YOUR ORGANIZATION WITH REGARD TO PROMOTING A CULTURE OF PEACE

1. Please describe briefly the activities launched by your organization with a view to putting into practice the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace since the beginning of the International Decade (2001). You may find it helpful to comment on the following aspects:

- o Objectives
- o Beneficiaries
- o Location of activities
- o Resources
- o Results

TradeArt asked artists, writers and educators around the world to engage children and youths in workshops designed to teach the arts as ways to denounce war and to decry other social injustices. Selections from works sent to TradeArt will culminate in a book of art, poetry and prose to be delivered to world leaders. The book's aim is to show lawmakers

the impact of their decisions on the lives of all peoples as seen by children and youths, the forgotten victims in the wars between men.

2. What were the key difficulties encountered in your organization's activities for a culture of peace?

As heavy violence in Afghanistan, the Philippines, the Palestinian Territories, Pakistan and India was followed by the invasion of Iraq, volunteers eagerly sought ways to assist TradeArt, taking on even menial tasks. That made the difficulties TradeArt encountered even more disappointing.

When a Paris-based historian, sociologist and author of international renown accepted TradeArt's invitation to provide an expert's analysis of children's works, this organization was elated. Elation turned to disappointment within weeks of the start of project activities as TradeArt found itself hosted by an association whose directors were at the center of heated controversy with a succession of other groups and individuals. At the same time volunteers began sending children's works to TradeArt, its host association was already threatening to dissolve.

Faced with incessant false starts and delays by the Paris group, TradeArt was obligated to sever the partnership. While UN volunteers translated TradeArt's legal documents, others within the Paris community organized to form an affiliate association allowing TradeArt to continue working, to intercept mail addressed to the Paris association, and to restart the search for another writer.

3. Which of the eight areas of action listed on page 1 have been most important for your work and why do you consider them important?

Children and youths participating in the project *Save a world for me* selected one of the eight action areas based on his or her own interests and/or personal experiences. The majority of writings and drawings received to date focus on the war in Iraq, education, the environment and economic concerns.

II

GENERAL PROGRESS TOWARDS A CULTURE OF PEACE

4. Have you seen any progress towards a culture of peace (and its eight action areas) during the first five years of the International Decade (2001-2005)?

In mock defiance of citizens everywhere, presidents throughout the world began the decade by endorsing a global war without end. The declaration of a "war against terrorism" in response to the events on September 11, 2001, offered a pretext for overthrowing Saddam Hussein. Not having done so during the first Gulf War was an openly discussed regret of the Senior Bush administration, offering that as reason for the Senior Bush's loss to Bill Clinton.

The war against terrorism justified using Afghanistan as testing ground for the most destructive weaponry conceived to date, the use of missiles against civilians in the Palestinian Territories, deadly military force against unarmed foreigners unconscientiously killed while attempting to impede the violence, and incited mass murder from Chechnya to Spain to Indonesia... With a list of countries targeted for superpower aggression, the first five years of the International Decade seem to have offered a preview of a future culture of violent force, coercion and intolerance.

5. What do you consider to be the major obstacles for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence?

The ties between the petroleum and other natural resources industries, the weapons industry, and governments are too intricate. Each exists to support the others, owing their wealth to NATO Alliance countries' past race to dominate the earth. As such, the weight of balance leans too heavily on the side of war proponents. In the US, selling war is a staggering multibillion-dollar industry employing tens of thousands of workers to design and build weapons. Secrecy and manipulation of information is so well organized, the majority of Americans are unaware of their own complicity in the antagonism and destruction of the lives of peoples in other countries. Still, as other nations condemn the astronomical size of the US military budget, each one's own government is guilty of helping to build it by buying the weapons it produces. Some using those against their own populations. Nations constructing weapons for their own self-protection find themselves targeted for attack by NATO members.

In his argument before Congress for invading Iraq, Colin Powell offered one of the most flagrant examples of how the public can be manipulated by the government and the weapons industry. Mr. Powell spoke emphatically of *photos*

showing suspicious activities captured by American spy satellites over Iraq. The most obvious question that should have been posed before consenting to completely destroy that country was, if such photos did exist, why did Mr. Powell choose to offer as proof *computer-generated illustrations*, most likely designed in a Washington-area office, instead of the actual spy satellite photos?

On the far lighter side of the scale, those working to promote respect of the basic human rights of others are often within under-funded organizations, in competition for donations and the occasional free time of other volunteers. As long as the economic weight continues to weigh on the side of those whose egocentric ambitions are wealth, power and domination, and as long as citizens permit themselves to be manipulated by false information, which can be easily verified, a culture of peace and non-violence will remain unattainable.

6. Have you been able to develop any ways of measuring medium- or long-term progress as a result of your activities? If so, please specify.

The establishment of TradeArt Abroad offered unexpected opportunities that this organization is now developing. TradeArt Abroad is establishing relationships with artists and arts organizations in different countries. Continued volunteer participation in sustainable development projects designed by the association and increases in its membership will be obvious measures of progress.

III

PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION

7. To a great extent, the creation of a culture of peace depends on the development of partnerships and cooperation among various actors. Have you created such partnerships in the process of working for a culture of peace? If so, please describe.

Evidenced by the first half of the decade, peace is not within the hands of citizens; the minority who are in command of governments controls it. Despite overwhelming demonstrations in protest of government-ordered violence, the first five years of the decade have only offered encouragement to continue to threaten others.

Nonetheless, TradeArt established a partnership with UN Volunteers and with the Paris-based association that stopped operating. The project *Save a world for me* continues to receive response from artists, teachers and other volunteers located throughout the world. Other volunteers are engaged in developing projects with artists and arts organizations in Paris and in the US. TradeArt Abroad is also working to create sustainable development projects with artists in East Europe and in countries to which France maintains its colonial ties.

8. Are you aware of UNESCO's website on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (www.unesco.org/cp)? To what extent are its resources and tools (calendar of events, project database) useful for your organization?

The project *Save a world for me* was translated by visitors to the site and appears on websites in other languages. TradeArt has been contacted by schools and other organizations, and has received children's contributions because of UNESCO's website.

IV

COMMITMENT TOWARDS NEW INITIATIVES AND NEW DIRECTIONS FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE

9. Please list the new projects planned by your organization to promote a culture of peace in the next five years.

What was most frustrating about the failure of TradeArt's former host association was a stubborn unwillingness to accept common sense guidance (even an attempt by the WIPO), which may have saved the association from a senselessly long and costly dispute that ended in its own ruin. The chaotic circumstances leading to its failure, and sanctions against professors on two continents, offered an insider's understanding of a complicated list impeding sustainable development in some countries. The social status of the directors made the failure even more alarming. In

their roles as professors, noted authors, and government report writers, each is well positioned to pass on self-defeating behavior to future generations.

As teachers engaged in violent disputes to be in charge, or the first to write another study on already well-known issues (the water crisis in North Africa, for example), not once were *solutions* to any one of a number of crises even suggested. Meanwhile, persons living in impoverished nations risk their lives to escape to other countries in search of employment. Efforts need to be made to first teach the teachers, then to teach populations how to see and create employment opportunities.

With countless projects needed in developing nations, TradeArt is developing a feasibility study leading to a design to teach self-reliance and to create viable employment based on American models. With countless Americans and Europeans searching for international experience, and dozens of organizations like Habitat for Humanity, The Carter Center, and universities offering assistance to developing countries, building schools in rural villages, aiding fabricants to sell products at fair prices... are feasible tasks. TradeArt is thus working to recruit an international group of experienced and student volunteers to assist a local population on a model project. Efforts will serve as the subject of a documentary, whose aim is to offer a step-by-step guide for local community developers to create future projects.

10. Do you think there are any priority domains amongst the areas defined in the Programme of Action? If so, please specify.

Sustainable development is an urgent priority. Years of violent oppression, segregation, and unequal opportunities have left entire populations helpless in the face of impoverished conditions. Among certain populations, obtaining a PhD in a foreign country is not to have a higher education leading to a specific career, but sometimes simply a means to escape. As one nation's needs offer others' multinational corporations opportunities to further exploit its population with slave wages, if sustainable equitable economic development is not attained, the cycle of oppression and resistance will continue to lead to more violence.

11. Please describe briefly how you envisage the approaches to a culture of peace and the promotion thereof over the next five years.

TradeArt's mission is promoting the works of artists. Artists are key for promoting intercultural understanding. In the US, where the population is isolated from the rest of world, one is more susceptible to misinformation designed to promote the fear needed to justify war. Through the creation of sustainable development projects designed to increase international participation, TradeArt aims to promote intercultural understanding by working with artists in other countries and promoting their activities in Europe and in the US.