



**Minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Global Action to Prevent War – Australia**

Date:

Thursday 4 December 2003

Present:

Joe Camilleri (CIR, GAPW Australia Convener), Stuart Rees (CPACS, GAPW Australia Convener, chair), Joan Anderson (SGI Japan), Bronwyn Armytage (CPACS intern), Lynda-ann Blanchard (CPACS, notes), Elenie Poulos (UJA), Stella Cornelius (CRN), Gillian Deakin (MAPW), Giji Gya (MAPW), Chris Hamer (ARWCR), Samantha Lee (NCGC), Ken Macnab (CPACS), Adam Maine (CPACS intern), Claude Mostowik (PJC), Janelle Saffin (ICJ), Joanna Santa Barbara (IPPNW, Canada), Jack Santa Barbara (CPS, Canada), Bret Solomon (AI), Chaikin Soon (SGI Australia), Sue Wareham (MAPW), Iris Wielders (CPACS, notes), Hans van der Bent (SGI Australia)

Apologies:

Juan Carlos Brandt (UNIC), Jim Iffe (CHRE), Tim Marchant (CPACS), Mary O’Kane (CP), Annie Petitt (PIAC), Margaret Reynolds (UNAA), Rosalind Strong (UNIFEM), Roger Wescombe (NSW AGD)

2.30 – 3.30 pm Session One

Professor Joe Camilleri introduced the GAPW project to the workshop participants. (For more information see the GAPW working paper) Each of the participants was then asked to briefly introduce him/herself and their organisation. In addition, each of the participants mentioned an issue that they thought might be suitable to be taken up by the GAPW Australia group.

Professor Stuart Rees then summed up some of the themes that were mentioned during these introductions:

- Arms control – small arms as well as nuclear arms
- The role and reform of the United Nations system
- War as a health issue
- Focus on grass roots initiatives, skills and education

4 – 5.30 pm Session Two

Participants brainstormed on priorities and strategies for the Australian GAPW project. Some of the issues discussed were:

- Difficulties in getting the media to pick up the messages that we are trying to convey. Possible strategies to remedy this:
  - Strengthening alternative media
  - Set up a dialogue with friends within the media: finding journalists and editors that are sympathetic to our messages
  - Becoming more media aware: learning how to deal with the media
  - Media Peace Awards, such as the ones that are awarded by the United National Association of Australia every year
- How to translate the GAPW vision into an Australian view, placing GAPW into an Australian context:
  - Advocacy for schools/education in general
  - Working on PR – how to package the ‘product of non-violence’
  - Stressing the notion of ‘international’ citizenship
  - The importance of voicing alternative stories – to counter the profound insecurity that people have in this time of a ‘war on terrorism’
  - Contrast Australia’s foreign policy in the region with the actions of other Australian actors such as NGOs – e.g. the ‘The Role of Civil Society in Conflict Prevention’ project
  - Contrast the ‘normal’ package on security issues that is being put out by the Australian government with alternatives, such as a focus on non-violence and regional organisations, and challenge the government with regard to the UN – perhaps contact Gareth Evans about this?