

# Strategic Vision

## Creating Space for Conflict Transformation

### **Who We Are**

The Berghof Foundation is an independent, non-governmental and non-profit organisation, supporting conflict stakeholders and actors in their efforts to achieve sustainable peace through peacebuilding and conflict transformation. Established by Professor Georg Zundel in 1971, the Foundation is to this day owned by members of the Zundel family, who in their roles as shareholders and trustees are committed to the long-term development of the organisation. Based in Germany, the Foundation is run by a diverse team working closely with partners in selected regions. An experienced and international Board of Trustees supports its work.

### **Our Vision**

Our vision is a world in which people maintain peaceful relations and overcome violence as a means of political and social change. While we consider conflict to be an integral and often necessary part of political and social life, we believe that violence in conflict is not inevitable. We are convinced that protracted violent conflicts can be transformed into sustained collaboration, when spaces for conflict transformation allow drivers of change to prosper and constructively engage with each other.

### **Our Mission**

*Creating space for conflict transformation.* We work with like-minded partners in selected regions to enable conflict stakeholders and actors to develop non-violent responses in the face of conflict-related challenges. In doing so, we rely on the knowledge, skills and resources available in the areas of conflict research, peace support and peace education. By combining our regional experience with a thematic focus on cutting-edge issues we aim to be a learning organisation capable of supporting sustained efforts for conflict transformation.

### **Our Values**

Our engagement is based on the values of inclusivity, ownership and reflection, which guide our decisions:

*Inclusivity* means participation by those affected. It ensures that all relevant views and interests are addressed. Because it requires a willingness to engage, inclusivity contributes to the building of trust between actors and fosters a culture of peace and nonviolence.

*Ownership* means assuming responsibility. Just as we assume responsibility for our organisation, conflict stakeholders and actors must have the resources to assume responsibility for conflict-related challenges.

*Reflection* means welcoming opportunities for contemplating and seeing things from new perspectives. Realistic self-assessment lies at the heart of learning and innovation, both for us as an organisation and for conflict stakeholders and actors.

## **Our Approach**

Sustained conflict transformation is always the result of a collaborative effort. For that reason we work closely with like-minded partners to inspire the constructive engagement of others. We aspire to create spaces for conflict transformation which integrate knowledge, skills and resources in a shared process of reflective learning.

### **Building Capacities for Engagement**

Local needs and requests guide our engagement in selected regions. Receptive to all parties' interests, we want to create the conditions for conflict stakeholders and actors to safely and constructively engage with each other. In this, we offer our knowledge, skills and resources to build individual and institutional capacities. A targeted grant programme complements our activities. Building bridges between conflict stakeholders and actors, our support is always fair, empathetic and informed by our values.

### **Supporting Sustained Transformation**

There are neither linear blueprints for conflict transformation, nor quick fixes. Sustained transformation of violent conflicts means addressing systemic root causes, as well as “proxy” causes that emerge from the experience of war. Deconstructing social and political violence depends upon changing stereotyped mindsets, attitudes and behaviours. Providing effective support towards this end requires long-term commitment, as well as persistence despite repeated stalemates, backlashes and moments of reescalation.

### **Inspiring Reflective Learning**

Conflict transformation is a learning process, but it is also learning by doing. Reflective learning enables conflict stakeholders and actors to critically reassess their roles and policies. At the same time it is essential to develop and improve our work. Therefore we see ourselves as a learning organisation, providing a collaborative space for experts and partners to learn with and from each other.