**DIALOGUE IN NIGERIA ~ Models of engagement replicated in Ivory Coast**

**Step #8: Albino ~ Non-Albino Reconciliation Workshop in Yamoussoukro-Toumodi, northern Cote d'Ivoire**

**September 2014**

**The Need**

Adults and children with albinism suffer exclusion and humiliation, and sometimeskidnapping and ritual sacrifice due to superstition and inherited cultural practices. Especially around the capital city of Yamoussoukro, traditional funerals have included burying live albinos with the bodies of deceased chiefs. Today citizens with albinism live in great fear and have fled to hide in the area of Toumodi 60 kilometers from Yamoussoukro. [Read more about albinism — their crises, and hopeful, inclusive steps forward.]

**The Response**

Unprecedented trust-building and education is finally bringing albinos closer to traditional leaders while creating heart connections that help humanize and dignify everyone. They are listening to personal life stories and clarifying the medical condition and biological causes of albinism. This is increasing the probability of abandoning ancient superstitions of the shivisehs (chiefs) and some of their followers in the countryside, and creating a sustainable community and nation that includes everyone.

Careful preparation included the November 2013 First All-Day Albino ~ Non-Albino Dialogue Conference in Abidjan. Then in April 2014 Cote d'Ivoire television reported the Second All-Day Albino ~ Non-Albino Dialogue workshop 350 km. north in Bouake. They were part of a larger, citizen-driven peacebuilding wave in Cote d'Ivoire facilitated by the Abidjan-based United for Peace Against Conflict International (UFPACI) -- [http://ufpacidialogue.net](http://ufpacidialogue.net) -- and documented in text, photos, and video at [http://traubman.igc.org/vidnigeriaivorycoast.htm](http://traubman.igc.org/vidnigeriaivorycoast.htm)

The historic Third All-Day Albino ~ Non-Albino Dialogue workshop was Saturday, 06 September 2014 in the Community Civic Hall within the Mairie of Yamoussoukro -- the municipal administration headquarters. Fourteen days -- far more than expected -- of pre-conference, consent-building visits were required to overcome albinos' fears and moderate divided opinions among the traditional rulers of the Attiegouabo and Angodoa villages.

Laurene OURAGA AUDE of the UFPACI facilitation team greeted workshop participants at the headquarters of the Mairie of Yamoussoukro.
Each participant received a dialogue t-shirt gift before entering the conference hall at the Maire of Yamousoukro.

The traditional chiefs of Yamoussoukro sitting separately upon arrival into dialogue conference hall.

Representatives of the Ministry of Education and District Governor of Yamoussoukro sitting side by side.
Words of Welcome

OFFUH James, president of UFPACI and ATTOUNGBRE Kouassi Isaac, coordinator Albinos of Yamoussoukro and Toumodi

Gnamien Louis Patrice, executive secretary of UFPACI

Kouassi Frank, representing the Municipal Authority

Joseph N’GUESSAN representing a civil society group

Coulibaly Mamidou, president of the Albinos of Cote d’Ivoire

Nnan Konan N’GUESSAN, head of the Yamoussoukro chiefs' delegation
NGORAN Aristide engaging the participants with music.

UFPACI facilitator OFFUH James showing through graphics effective communication by improving conscious listening to transform relationships and re-direct history.

"Teach Respect for All."

"Your listening attitude determines the level of mutual understanding," explains OFFUH, and "All here, We are One Humanity One Spirit One Earth"
ATTOUNGBRE Kouassi Isaac explains in detail the general problems of the albinos and thanks UFPACI for organizing this event for the first time in the history of Yamoussoukro to dignify the albinos.

One after the other, citizens with albinism tell their individual stories of their pain of being stigmatized and excluded.

Albino recipients of gifted protective sunglasses and hats
Newly interconnected albino and non-albino citizens of Cote d'Ivoire.

Delegations of (from left) Bouake, Toumoudi, and Yamoussoukro

Chef of Yamoussoukro and Toumoudi with COULIBALY Mamidou, President Association Albinos of Cote d’Ivoire and OFFUH James, President of UFPACI
Face-to-Face Sustained Dialogue: An experience of communication excellence
1) Allows each person to share her or his life's narrative and relate to others.
2) Each person experiences a new quality of listening-to-learn as well as being heard, while discovering that "an enemy is one whose story we have not heard.
3) Both listener and speaker are dignified.

Perspective Squares Experience
1) Participants discover that others have diverse perceptions and views of life.
2) There is more than one way, my way, to see a situation.
3) People see 16, 17, 18, 40 and other numbers of squares.

Masks and Culture Experience
1) See how one's culture shapes and influences — encourages and inhibits — personal responses to life.
2) Increase self-awareness and closeness to one another by opening a window to oneself and common challenges universally faced in all cultures.
After experiencing a new way of communicating, participants respond to what had meaning during the quality listening with his or her partner.

Nanan Tan Okra said: "Albinos are our children. We shall protect them. We are glad about the teachings and training on Sustained Dialogue.

Miss Rosen Andre: "I am glad about today. I believe we are free now. We can safely move around to wherever we wish."
“I have a dream that one day in Africa, people with albinism will take their rightful place throughout every level of society, and that the days of discrimination against persons with albinism will be a faint memory!”

~ Peter Ash  
Founder, Under The Same Sun
This October 2014 experience was sponsored and facilitated by
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Jewish-Palestinian Living Room Dialogue - California USA

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Facilitator Guidelines for exercises seen above are at
http://traubman.igc.org/campacts.pdf

The larger Cote d'Ivoire peacebuilding story is on the Web at
http://traubman.igc.org/vidnigeriaivorycoast.htm

This document is on the Web at
http://traubman.igc.org/vidnigeriaivorycoast04.pdf

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