



Sven Toth/Paros Pictures

# crisis action

Annual Report (June 2006 – May 2007)

with Accounts

## Year overview

When I started this role a year ago I knew that to be effective Crisis Action had to work internationally. Gone were the days when civil society could be constrained by the silos of state boundaries.

Twelve months later we have established Crisis Actions in Germany and France, a hub office in Brussels and a temporary office in Portugal for the EU presidency (July-Dec 07). This growth has been achieved thanks to the support of partners and funders who have continued to back us because the Crisis Action model has been shown to work.

Our role, as a professional facilitator of impact orientated campaigns around armed conflict, not only adds value but also impact to our partners' work. On both of our major campaigns during the last year - Iran and Darfur - we have helped our partners influence the debate and change policy.

Our partner base – the foundation for all our work - has also increased three fold during the last year with new aid agencies, human rights groups,

think tanks and faith groups joining us.

This growth in reach and partners means that Crisis Action is now well placed to have even more impact during the next twelve months.

I'm confident that together we can make the voice of civil society a new super power when it comes to decisions of war and peace.



**Brendan Cox**  
**Executive Director**

## Our current partners include:

Aegis Trust

Amnesty International UK

British American Security Information Council (BASIC)

CAAT

CAFOD

CARE International

Christian Aid

Christian Solidarity Worldwide

The Council for Arab British Understanding

Church of England  
(International Office)

Foreign Policy Centre

Friends of the Earth UK

Greenpeace

Human Rights Watch

International Action Network  
on Small Arms (IANSA)

International Crisis Group

International Rescue Committee

Iraq Body Count

## Ways of working

**"Crisis Action's great added value is its ability to draw on the different strengths of its partner organisations and mould them into effective and strategic advocacy campaigns. Its campaigning on Darfur in Europe has been particularly impressive, and we at Crisis Group are strong supporters of its work."** Gareth Evans, President and CEO, International Crisis Group

During our recent growth, Crisis Action has enshrined ways of working designed to ensure that our expansion increases the value we add to our national partners while minimising transaction costs.

In order to respond quickly and maximise the benefits of our international network, we decided to structure Crisis Action as a united international organisation. However, in order to be responsive to our national partners and exert optimal impact on national governments, each office has a large degree of autonomy in what it does, how it does it and what conflicts it focuses on.

This manifests itself most clearly in our prioritisation process. Each national office pursues two priorities simultaneously; one international and one national.

The international priority is selected following consultation by all offices and with all of our international partners. The national priority is formed on the basis of national consultations with national partners. We hope this split will ensure that we make best use of the additional leverage that our international network provides while maintaining the national relevance and impact that is essential to our work.

In all locations, we will continue to provide professional, politically astute and impact orientated support for campaigns on armed conflict.

Medact  
The Mothers Union  
Muslim Aid  
The Muslim Council of Britain  
Oxfam  
Oxford Research Group  
Peace Brigades International UK  
PeaceDirect  
People & Planet  
QPSW  
Rene Cassin

Saferworld  
Save the Children  
Sudanese Organisation Against  
Torture (SOAT)  
Tearfund  
United Nations Association  
Waging Peace  
War on Want  
Welfare Association  
World Jewish Relief

## Darfur

**"Crisis Action enables diverse organisations to work together on a common cause. Their initiative strives to mobilize action worldwide; to resist staying silent and to help their many partners take a collective stand that we see has real influence over government policy."** Saif Ahmad, Chief Executive, Muslim Aid

**"Our co-operation with Crisis Action on Darfur is very strong, and very important for our European level advocacy work on this region, enhancing intelligence sharing, capacity, and consistency of message with other NGOs."** Susi Dennison, Executive Officer Common Foreign and Security Policy/External Relations, Amnesty International

**"Crisis Action was instrumental in bringing together for the first time in Germany different NGOs and student groups working on Darfur."** Marianne Heuwagen, Berlin Director, Human Rights Watch Germany

Over the past year, the Darfur crisis has been our international priority. Crisis Action has supported diverse actions designed to draw attention to the crisis and advance our partners' policy recommendations. Our strategy has helped change European and international policy towards the crisis and has been partly responsible for ensuring it has remained near the top of the international political agenda.

### High-level advocacy

During the last year Crisis Action has:

- Set up and coordinated diverse groups of NGOs who share information, analysis and strategy on the crisis in monthly strategy meetings. This has included supporting groups of NGOs in Germany, the UK and France and has resulted in:

- The development of common agendas and messages ensuring civil society is talking with one voice.
- Gaining direct access for our partners to the most senior government targets: prime ministers, foreign ministers, UN/EU special representatives and development ministers.
- Coordinated lobbying of key international ambassadors e.g. Chinese and Egyptian.

- Facilitated joint strategies between those NGOs trying to influence the EU's General Affairs and External Relations Council. This has resulted in:

- Private meetings between our partners and key ambassadors to the Political and Security Committee.
- Dozens of coordinated lobby letters including over a hundred different signatories and hitting a range of key targets.
- Two advertising campaigns in a dozen European countries ahead of key decisions on European policy on Darfur.
- Celebrity campaigns ranging from joint letters from the likes of Jurgen Habermas, Harold Pinter, Vaclav Havel, Seamus Heaney, Umberto Eco and Bernard Henri-Levy to statements from George Clooney, Matt Damon, Elton John, Mick Jagger and others.

- Set up regular Director level meetings between the key NGOs leading civil society's advocacy, providing an opportunity to identify common moments for concerted and collective action.

- Reached out to broaden the constituencies engaged in the crisis. This resulted in:

- Engagement of non-traditional groups such as church groups, student groups and women's groups.
- High profile interfaith prayers for Darfur bringing together Muslim, Christian and Jewish groups.
- Setting up and supporting groups of our Muslim partners and other Muslim organisations to get involved in advocacy around the Darfur crisis.



**"Protests in 50 cities to mark Sunday's 'Day for Darfur' have pushed the crisis to the top of the agenda as world leaders gather for this week's annual session."** - *The Times*, 20th September 2006

**"Thanks to our collaboration with Crisis Action, the Day for Darfur we organized in Italy on 16 September was a great success. We hope to continue to work together to gain greater attention for the crisis in Darfur from the Italian government."** Antonella Napoli, President, Italians for Darfur

**"'BLOOD' flowed from a huge hourglass today as thousands gathered opposite Downing Street for an international day of action marking the fourth anniversary of the start of the conflict in Darfur. Over 10,000 hourglasses were being turned over by activists around the world during Global Day for Darfur events."** *The Sun*, 29th April 2007

**"Crisis Action's networking and analysis has enabled Action contre la Faim to refine its approach by meeting other experts, broadening its perspective as well as increasing dialogue on key themes."**

Anne Garella, Advocacy Officer, Action Contre la Faim

## Global Mobilisation

In the past, one of the critical gaps in civil society campaigning on 'forgotten conflicts' has been the lack of effective popular mobilisation. Working with others, Crisis Action has helped build a global movement – the Globe for Darfur – effectively demonstrating public concern over the Darfur crisis in a way that has never happened before.

Crisis Action coordinates the 'Globe for Darfur' group. This group of more than fifty NGOs has coordinated three Global Days for Darfur, mobilising public demonstrations in over fifty countries around the world on each occasion.

The three days so far have focussed on calls for:

- The deployment of UN Peacekeepers;
- Respect for women's rights and end to the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war; and
- The need for more sustained international pressure on the four-year anniversary of the conflict.

Crisis Action has coordinated international groups working on these days, helping to ensure that outreach, messaging, media and lobbying are effectively coordinated. The global media coverage these events have provoked has in turn helped drive political progress.

These three days have given global civil society a rallying point in their efforts and have helped ensure that Darfur, even four years in, has not become a forgotten crisis.



## Informing Partner Analysis

Crisis Action has facilitated regular roundtable meetings for our partners, bringing together experts inside and outside of the sector to discuss key policy issues connected to the crisis. These have included:

**China** – Scrutinising the crucial role China plays in influencing Sudanese policy and how to lobby them effectively.

**No Fly Zone (NFZ)** – Looking at the feasibility and repercussions of monitoring and enforcing such a policy.

**Targeted sanctions** – Analysing the logistics and efficacy of enforcing an arms embargo, asset freezes and travel bans against individuals, etc.

## Iran

**"Crisis Action's work on Iran has been professional, responsible and politically astute. By illustrating that military action would be disastrous, and that there was scope for negotiation, Crisis Action helped change the public debate. Crisis Action is a rare beast; able to harness the expertise and influence of practitioners, analysts and civil society groups to engage both in writing and face-to-face with the realities of politics and to make an impact."** Sir Richard Dalton, former UK Ambassador to Iran

**"A wide coalition of foreign policy thinktanks, former US generals, and faith groups, will today sound a much needed counter blast to the argument growing in Washington and Israel that if Iran can not be persuaded to suspend uranium enrichment voluntarily, its bomb making plans should be terminated by force ... their voice should be heard."** Guardian Leader, 5 February 2007

### Iran Action Group

In spring 2007, fears of a US or Israeli-led military attack against Iran intensified. Crisis Action brought partners together as part of the 'Iran Action Group' to monitor the risk of military action and launch a collective campaign. The strategy for the campaign centred on building public pressure against military action and thereby closing off the political space needed for governments to support any future military action.

The campaign generated serious momentum in the media and provided the first platform for civil society organisations and respected commentators to warn against the use of military force well ahead of its possible use. In doing so, the Iran Action Group helped change the terms of the public debate.

### Coalition Building

Crisis Action built a diverse coalition of 17 civil society organisations – including NGOs, Unions, faith and student groups – to lead the public campaign. This centred on 'Time to Talk', a joint agency report that provided a systematic analysis of the possible consequences of military action and pushed for direct diplomatic engagement between US and Iran. The report was translated into Hebrew, Farsi and Arabic and made available on [www.crisisiran.com](http://www.crisisiran.com). It was used as the focus of a media campaign to build public pressure against military action.

In collaboration with partners, Crisis Action:

- Designed political and media strategies for the Time to Talk Coalition;
- Drafted the report: 'Time to Talk: the case for diplomatic solutions on Iran';
- Secured expert spokespeople for the report including leading analysts and Sir Richard Dalton, former UK Ambassador to Iran;
- Released a letter by prominent US military figures, warning of the dangers of military action, to prepare the media agenda ahead of the report launch;
- Secured the backing of prominent Jewish, Muslim and Christian leaders in an open letter to the press.

An independent evaluation of the report found that the Iran campaign had proved Crisis Action to be an 'effective coordination agent with a high degree of political astuteness and advocacy expertise.'



The report made headline news and received extensive international coverage. Two days after the release of Time to Talk, the UK Prime Minister Tony Blair made his strongest ever statement on the potential pitfalls of military action: **"I can't think that it would be right to take military action against Iran ... What is important is to pursue the political, diplomatic channel. I think it is the only way that we are going to get a sensible solution to the Iranian issue."** Tony Blair interviewed for the BBC, 22 February 2007

**"By coordinating our work on Iran with them and their partner NGOs, we have been able to work with development organisations, trade unions, religious groups, and others with whom we previously had limited contact. They really have shown that by working together, civil society groups can have a genuine impact on policy-making and public debate that goes far beyond our influence as individual organisations."** *John Sloboda, Executive Director, Oxford Research Group*

**"Through dynamic advocacy and incomparable facilitation, Crisis Action has made a serious contribution to transatlantic cooperation on Iran. In doing so, they have increased the impact of the work done by civil society organisations on an issue of global importance."** *Carah Ong, Center for Arms Control and Non-proliferation, Washington DC*

## Expert Analysis

To consolidate the impact of Time to Talk, the Iran Action Group coordinated a series of papers providing expert analysis on specific consequences of military action:

- In 'Would Air-strikes Work?' published by the Oxford Research Group, Frank Barnaby and Hans Blix argued that rather than setting back Iran's nuclear programme, military strikes would likely hasten Iranian progress towards a nuclear bomb.
- In 'From war of words to words of war,' a Chatham House publication, Yossi Meckleberg argued that military action would be the worst possible option for Israel.

Both reports received considerable media coverage, including in the US and Israel.

## High-Level Advocacy

Building on pressure exerted through the public campaign, Crisis Action facilitated a series of high-level advocacy opportunities for partners:

- Meetings with German, Israeli, Iranian, UK and US foreign ministries;
- Meeting with the Iranian Ambassador to the IAEA;
- Advocacy meeting with No. 10 advisors on Iran

In order to multiply the impact of the campaign across the Atlantic, Crisis Action developed relationships with US advocacy groups active on Iran. Together with US partners, Crisis Action:

- Developed common messaging around the need for direct negotiations between US and Iran
- Provided for the use of 'Time to Talk' in congressional briefings and its distribution on Capitol Hill;
- Ensured coverage in US media and participated in a 'rapid response' media project to counter misinformation on Iran.

Crisis Action continues to work with partners to provide regular analysis on the Iran crisis, engage in advocacy behind the scenes and investigate possible policy solutions to the nuclear file. Over the coming months, Crisis Action will help coordinate publication of the remaining expert papers in the Iran series.



## Lebanon

**"Aid agencies, which often remain silent on contentious political issues, have been some of the most vocal critics of Mr Blair's Middle East policy since the start of the war in Lebanon."**

*David Fickling, Guardian, 3rd August 2006*

**"Crisis Action came into its own during the Lebanon war. Its light touch yet reliable, creative and professional coordination allowed Save the Children to amplify our advocacy through coalition when it was appropriate whilst at the same time not constraining us when we needed to tread our own path. In such a highly political environment, it provided a perfect vehicle for bringing disparate voices together and resonate the public mood."** *Martin Kirk, Public Affairs Advisor, Save the Children*

### Lebanon "Ceasefire Now"

July 2006 saw the explosion of conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon.

Crisis Action became the hub for NGOs working on the crisis in the Middle East. We coordinated a group of agencies, faith groups, trade unions and human rights organisations working to pressure world leaders to publicly back an immediate ceasefire. In a three week period we:

- Set up a group of organisations working on the crisis and negotiated common policy objectives.
- Prompted, wrote and press launched a joint call for a ceasefire by all of the main aid agencies.
- Launched a joint petition in the UK backed by national press adverts, which secured over 35,000 names in less than a week.
- Set up website ([www.ceasefiretoday.org](http://www.ceasefiretoday.org)) and coordinated contact of British MPs to establish and publicise their position on the conflict. We contacted every MP and over 150 Labour MPs (including some members of the government) said they opposed the Prime Minister's policy – enough to wipe out the government's majority in the House of Commons five times over.
- Facilitated a joint press conference in Beirut calling for a ceasefire.
- Ran full-page adverts calling for the recall of parliament.

Partners engaged in ad hoc alliances on individual pieces of work that enabled Crisis Action to respond quickly and effectively to a rapidly changing situation.



Martin Bell- former MP and war correspondent- with representatives from Care International, Muslim Council of Britain, Save the Children and Oxfam outside the British Houses of Parliament



## Other Conflicts

**"By organizing a Somalia Round Table early in the year, Crisis Action managed to kick start policy and human rights work on Somalia and helped coordinating efforts. It is with the help of Crisis Action that information is shared, policy is formulated and implemented."** Annette Weber, Research Associate, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik

### Conflict Analysis

As part of our ongoing prioritisation process, Crisis action has held a series of roundtable meetings to assess where Crisis Action can add value as well as inform partners' analysis on conflict.

Round tables held so far have addressed:

- Afghanistan
- Iraq
- Somalia
- Sri Lanka

In the case of Sri Lanka and Somalia, this resulted in joint advocacy actions and lobby meetings with government ministers holding those portfolios. Following participation in the Iraq roundtable, several partners submitted evidence to the Iraq Commission (June 2007).

### Occupied Palestinian Territory

In June 2007, Hamas seized control of the security apparatus in Gaza. The subsequent isolation of Gaza led to an increasingly dire humanitarian situation and exacerbated divisions between Palestinians. Partners requested that Crisis Action help coordinate a collective response to the misguided 'West-Bank first' approach of the international community.

#### Crisis Action:

- Coordinated a joint agency letter, signed by 15 leading NGOs from 9 EU member states, sent to all 27 EU foreign ministers; and
- Arranged a director-level meeting for partners with Tony Blair ahead of his first Middle East tour as the newly appointed Quartet representative.



## Rationale – Why does Crisis Action exist?

**"Crisis Action may be small but it adds big value to our work on armed conflict, particularly by bringing together a wide range of organisations to inform the public and put concerted pressure on decision-makers."** *Barbara Stocking, Director, Oxfam*

1. Armed conflict is one of the most difficult policy issues to influence in the world. Decisions concerning war and peace are among the biggest any government has to take. They are complex, multifaceted and often multilateral decisions. Any single organisation working alone will struggle to change policy. Only by working together – drawing on the strengths, analysis and political constituencies of a wide range of organisations – can we consistently have impact.

2. There are few organisations that specialise in armed conflict. Most organisations – whether aid agency or human rights group – work on it as one of a host of other issues. This means limited expertise and resources are devoted to it and few, if any, organisations have capacity alone to launch the sustained campaigns needed to have impact. Pooling knowledge and resources is therefore vital to mobilising an effective strategy that different organisations can contribute to without feeling they have to take on the campaign alone.

3. The risk of campaigning on armed conflict is high. Organisations may face risks both to their staff and to their reputation. Working collectively reduces

this risk to individual organisations and can thus embolden them to get involved or to contribute to a strategy in a way that they would otherwise not.

4. Working in traditional coalitions, particularly on such controversial issues, often involves high transaction costs for little added value. Too often the outcome produced represents a lowest common denominator as everyone is forced to go at the pace of the slowest. Crisis Action is pioneering a new form of flexible coalition where we work with coalitions of the willing on an opt-in basis. This enables rapid response and robust positions.

5. Our partners all have different agendas on different conflicts and thus sometimes struggle to bring together coalitions on their own. Crisis Action tries to be a neutral arbiter who can bring together diverse organisations on a common cause, rather than pursuing its own separate agenda. Furthermore by working solely behind the scenes we can avoid being seen as a competing organisation. By putting our energy into multiplying the impact of civil society organisations rather than replicating work already happening Crisis Action can add value far in excess of its size.

## Board of Directors

**Nick Grono** (Chair) is Vice-President for Advocacy and Operations for the International Crisis Group, based in Brussels. He is a lawyer by background and previously worked for the Australian government as chief of staff to the Attorney-General.

**Paul Ingram** (Chair 06/07) is a Senior Analyst at the British American Security Information Council. He has 12 years' experience working as a researcher and project leader at Oxford Research Group and has published articles on European security, non-proliferation and international arms trade issues.

**Lotte Leicht** is EU Director of Human Rights Watch. She has worked extensively on conflict crises including Bosnia and Darfur.

**Sarah Mulley** is the Coordinator of the UK Aid Network, working with UK NGOs to make their research, policy, and advocacy work on aid more effective. She previously spent several years researching decision-making in international institutions and conducting policy work for a range of NGOs, think tanks and government bodies.

**Nicola Reindorp** was until recently the head of Oxfam International in New York. She specialises in humanitarian advocacy. She sits on the board in a personal capacity.

## Financial statements 2006-07

### Statement of Activities for the year ended 31 May 2007

<b>INCOME</b>	2007	2006
	£	£
Donations and trust funding	139,927	52,899
Members	27,340	5,450
Miscellaneous	56	0
Bank interest	1,235	98
<b>Total</b>	<b>168,558</b>	<b>58,447</b>
 <b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Salaries & national insurance	62,230	38,126
Consultants	11,658	0
Pension	1,760	0
Rent, rates & insurance	7,987	6,109
Telephone & office expenses	2,200	0
Events	<b>9,138</b>	0
Reports and printing	3,501	655
Staff training & recruitment	5,368	0
IT fees	1,098	0
IT equipment	1,754	1,289
Other equipment	50	0
General expenses	54	0
Travel & subsistence	7,999	0
Audit	1,600	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>116,397</b>	<b>46,179</b>
Surplus for the year	52,161	12,268
Taxation	277	0
Excess of income over expenditure	51,884	12,268
Accumulated fund at beginning of year	15,831	3,563
<b>Accumulated Fund 31 May</b>	<b>67,715</b>	<b>15,831</b>

### Balance sheet as at 31 May 2007

Debtors	5,578	0
Current assets – cash in bank	194,674	17,596
Total assets	<u>200,252</u>	<u>17,596</u>
General creditors	(132,534)	(15,831)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b><u>67,718</u></b>	<b><u>15,831</u></b>
Represented by:		
Share capital	3	0
Accumulated fund at beginning of year	15,831	3,563
Excess of income over expenditure	51,884	12,268
<b>Total funds at 31 May</b>	<b><u>67,718</u></b>	<b><u>15,831</u></b>

Crisis Action would like to thank the following organisations and individuals for their generous support in 2006-07: Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Network for Social Change, Poldham Puckham Charitable Foundation, Roddick Foundation, Pears Foundation, The Save Darfur Coalition, Cordaid, Tinsley Foundation, Morris Bradley, Lynda and David Hughes.

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We are pleased to thank the following for their contribution to Crisis Action's work over the course of this year: Chris Anker, Daniel Bacall, Nick Boucher, Maha Ghazale, Matthew Hann, Michelle Hubert, Deborah Micheletti, Sara Refai, Andrew Russel, Marcus Skinner, Clementine Smith.

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## Crisis Action

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We welcome enquires from organisations and individuals who share our objectives and who may wish to become Crisis Action partners. Please contact us for more information.

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Design by [www.lumpylemon.co.uk](http://www.lumpylemon.co.uk)