

Campaign to Establish a  
Canadian Department of Peace  
in collaboration with the Civilian Peace Service Canada

MY REFLECTIONS AS THE WINNER OF THE FIRST  
WOMEN BUILDING PEACE AWARD

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CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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## DREAMING BETTER

### To dream better, we must believe

Several days passed before I was able to grasp the true meaning of the Women Building Peace Award. I had been feeling overwhelmed with emotion since the telephone call came informing me that I had won. Now, I understand the greater meaning that this award represents for me. Here are some of my reflections. The award has also motivated me to pursue a number of projects that have occupied my thoughts for a long time.

This award allows me to dream better. It raises my consciousness about the choices made by the many women who, like me, work passionately to bring peace to our lives. Whether we are peace practitioners, mothers, spouses, daughters, sisters or neighbours, choosing to be non-judgmental and compassionate, although difficult at times, remains one of the most noble choices we can make: it helps to build a better world. Despite the countless examples of violence in all its forms, I have always believed that every human being has the ability to choose the best of what he or she can offer. To dream better, we must believe this!

### To dream better, we must become aware of our collective responsibility to build a better world

Whether in Canada or in other parts of the world, I have seen that the most noble power is found in the heart of each person when he or she becomes aware of his or her responsibility for learning and reconciling with himself or herself in order to achieve a mission of lasting peace. As a humanist, I have always believed that people carry within them the ability to resolve conflicts, including ones they have created, by becoming aware of their own needs and the needs of others. Dreaming better means becoming aware of our collective responsibility to build a better world!

### A bridge between two great dreams: my projects for the future

I am now letting myself dream. Several of my dreams keep coming back – taking part in the resolution of an armed conflict to end a war, preventing another war, and working with the Dalai Lama. But I have another dream that is just as persistent: that my children, who inspire me so much, share my goal of seeking a better world.

To build a bridge between these two great dreams, here are some projects that I am working on now. As you will see, these require collaboration, enthusiasm and especially much preparation, research and perseverance.

- 1) Finish creating the Devenirmeilleur.ca website in collaboration with the Civilian Peace Service Canada, the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution, Luc Albert and MarieClaude Picard
- 2) Write a book entitled Devenirmeilleur.ca
- 3) Start a foundation to support people's ability for becoming better people and thus contributing to peace in the world
- 4) Finish my doctorate in the area of identity transformation, peacekeeping, and the ability to become a better person
- 5) Continue to give training/talks in Canada and elsewhere on peaceful strategies for peacekeeping
- 6) Host a radio program on peaceful resolution of conflicts in the workplace, in the family, and eventually on the international stage
- 7) Write a play about conflict resolution and peacekeeping
- 8) Promote the Civilian Peace Service Canada, the Campaign to Establish a Canadian Department of Peace, and the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution.

My hope is to live long enough, stay healthy and focused to complete them all and enjoyed the journey; thinking and feeling that I may have, with others, contributed to betterment in the world!

*Nicole Charron*

*Winner of the Women Building Peace Award 2009*