ANNUAL REPORT
2013

CENTER FOR CIVILIANS IN CONFLICT
RECOGNIZE. PREVENT. PROTECT. AMEND.
Letter from the Chairman of the Board

Dear friends,

This year we marked our tenth anniversary.

As I reflect on the last decade, I am reminded what a unique space Center for Civilians in Conflict occupies in the world. What began as one woman’s tireless effort to help civilians harmed by US bullets and bombs has become a highly respected go-to group on preventing and addressing civilian harm in war the world over.

Yet this milestone is not one of completion, but of building momentum. With every success that helps war victims or saves lives comes more opportunity, more access to those in power, more credibility to be heard in all the right places. I assure you that our eyes remain fixed on the countless civilians in horrific circumstances. Our hearts as well.

The creative and compassionate drive that moves this organization is both a pleasure and an inspiration for those of us honored to devote our time and resources to its goals.

The time for civilian protection—and the Center’s work to ensure it—is now. Thank you for standing with us.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Anil Soni
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
Center for Civilians in Conflict
Letter from the Executive Director

We’re celebrating victories.

African Union forces in Somalia adopted a new way of understanding their impact on the civilian population and of doing better in the future. The Afghan president created an office to monitor civilian harm occurring across the country. The United Nations prioritized reducing civilian harm in its peacekeeping mandate for the Democratic Republic of Congo. Peacekeepers in Mali created the first “civilian risk mitigation advisor” position, which will report to the force commander.

We were there every step of the way—creating the tools, pushing the policy, convincing the people making the decisions that change was both necessary and possible.

These groundbreaking changes to warfare may not have happened without an organization like ours, dedicated to working directly with warring parties to change their minds and actions.

We’ve been pioneering this direct approach to change for years. And we will keep innovating to make sure we are saving the most lives possible and ensuring dignity for all war victims.

An African Union official told us: “I think that very soon you will be able to look back and know that you have changed the mission, even if it was not easy, and that a difference is being made in people’s lives.”

In this age of measuring impact, we are confident in ours.

Thank you for joining us.

Sincerely,

Sarah Holewinski
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Center for Civilians in Conflict
MALI

We convinced the UN to create a “civilian risk mitigation advisor” position at force headquarters—the first such position to exist for a peacekeeping mission. Our office in Bamako will be open throughout 2014.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

We convinced the United Nations to include language on mitigating risk to civilians in the Force Intervention Brigade’s mandate. This is the first time a peacekeeping mandate recognizes the risk to civilians from its own actions.

SYRIA

We analyzed the ramifications—good or bad—of military intervention on the population and requested specific planning to reduce civilian harm from nations considering intervention. We offered policy solutions to overlooked issues including the risks of unexploded ordnance to Syrian towns and the need to plan now for assistance to war victims.

SOMALIA

The African Union adopted a Civilian Casualty Tracking, Analysis, and Response Cell that we developed and advocated for. This tool will collect and analyze data on civilian casualties to help forces save lives and respond to civilian harm.
AFGHANISTAN
We provided the government with detailed blueprints on how to avoid civilians in military engagements and how to respond properly to civilian casualties. President Karzai adopted several of the recommendations, including an office that tracks incidents of civilian harm.

PAKISTAN
In the province of Balochistan, Pakistan the provincial governor signed into law a program to assist victims of terrorist attacks, which we helped draft.

NEPAL
We documented the failure of the Nepalese government to meet the needs of civilian conflict victims with Harvard Law School’s Human Rights Clinic and recommended practical solutions.

MYANMAR
We briefed senior government and military officials on civilian protection in conflict. The Center was among the first non-governmental organizations to be invited to do so.
OUR MISSION

Center for Civilians in Conflict works to make warring parties more responsible to civilians before, during, and after armed conflict. We are advocates who believe no civilian caught in conflict should be ignored, and advisors who provide practical solutions to prevent and respond to civilian harm.

The organization was founded as Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC) in 2003 by Marla Ruzicka, a courageous humanitarian killed by a suicide bomber in 2005 while advocating for Iraqi families.

OUR VISION

For warring parties to recognize the imperative to prevent civilian harm, protect civilians caught on the battlefield, and make amends for the harm they do cause.

HOW WE WORK

Our work is a comprehensive package of field-based research, the development of pragmatic solutions to problems of civilian harm, and high-level advocacy to change both minds and the behaviors that cause civilian harm. Knitting these efforts together, the Center’s ultimate goal is to create a new global mindset around the ethical and strategic importance of preventing and responding to civilian harm.

We measure our success in the short term by the improved well-being of civilians caught in a conflict and, in the longer term, by improved policies, procedures, and mindsets among warring parties, peacetime policymakers, and international organizations.
Afghanistan

As international forces turn over military operations to Afghan forces, we’re offering the Afghan government solutions to prevent and respond to potential civilian casualties. After interviewing nearly 200 people, we identified specific problems with the Afghan government’s response to civilian harm and took our results to Afghan officials. We urged reforms like improved civilian casualty tracking and proper investigations into civilian harm caused by Afghan forces. Finally, we made our case to the Afghan government to strengthen assistance for civilians suffering conflict losses. President Karzai adopted several of the recommendations, including an office that tracks incidents of civilian harm. We will continue to work with the Afghan government to ensure they have the tools to prevent and respond to civilian harm during and after the transition to Afghan forces.

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT: AFGHANISTAN

“....The United States will leave behind a complicated legacy in Afghanistan, one that will be debated long into the future. If Marla were here, I suspect it’s people like Arifa she’d be concerned about. Afghanistan doesn’t have a support system in place to help people like her, and US and allied-nation efforts haven’t gone nearly far enough to help the many thousands like her. Arifa told us, ‘I still pray for security of my people and this nation.... I don’t want [foreign forces] to be leaving this country with a tainted future.’”

-Excerpted from the article “Marla Ruzicka’s Heroism” by Sarah Holewinski in the October 7, 2013 issue of The Nation.

A report released Monday accuses Afghanistan’s army and police of failing to address civilian casualties as the country’s newly built forces assume responsibility for security during NATO’s military withdrawal. The Center for Civilians in Conflict, a Washington-based research organization, said in its report that ‘the capacity of the Afghan government and security forces to prevent and respond appropriately to civilian casualties is woefully underdeveloped.’

Military Policy and Practice

The Center’s military expertise and dialogue with warring parties is central to our success and unique in the human rights field. In addition to our specific work with military forces in Somalia, Mali, and Afghanistan, Center staff briefed military officers at the Pentagon, NATO, African Union, and the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the importance of avoiding and responding to incidents of civilian harm and tools to better reduce and respond to incidents when they occur. A Defense Legal Policy Board—called together by the US Secretary of Defense—endorsed our recommendations on preventing and responding to civilian harm within US military operations. We advised on civilian harm training at the US Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, and have a standing invitation to teach senior international military officers at the Defense Institute for International Law Studies (DIILS), where civilian harm mitigation will now finally be part of the curriculum. We published a detailed argument for militaries to track and analyze civilian harm in the peer-reviewed Stability: International Journal of Security and Development.

Now the [Afghan] government needs to take the lessons learned by international forces and apply them to its own forces, starting with tracking civilian harm and adapting tactics to better avoid civilians in the first place.

United Nations

The Center works with international institutions, including the United Nations, to build global agreement around preventing and responding to civilian harm. The UN, in particular, plays a key role in conflicts around the world. We engaged with UN officials on the peacekeeping missions for Mali and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). We successfully advocated for the first UN peacekeeping mandate to include reducing the risk to civilians before, during, and after military operations. In Mali, we successfully advocated for a civilian risk advisor position to be created to help the force commander understand the impact of UN peacekeeping operations on the civilian population. We hope the prioritization of minimizing civilian harm in DRC and Mali will set precedent for future interventions.

The 2013 UN Secretary-General’s report on civilians in armed conflict highlighted “civilian casualty tracking” by warring parties, which is a concept we have both developed in conflict zones and championed within the international community. The Secretary-General recommended that parties to a conflict and peacekeeping missions with offensive mandates implement civilian casualty tracking systems for their “proven utility” to inform “military strategy to reduce harm to civilians.” This high-level recognition of warring party responsibility to civilians is essential to raising conduct in war to a higher standard.

Mali

We expanded our work in 2013 to encompass United Nations Peacekeeping operations, including Mali. Our Bamako-based staff worked with UN and Malian forces on identifying ways to avoid civilian harm.

Thanks in part to our work, the United Nations is set to appoint its first senior advisor to the force commander (head of the military mission) specifically focused on minimizing harm to civilians from peacekeeping operations. This progressive development in peacekeeping should be an example to other missions and we will press for it to be widely replicated.

“Over the last year, Malians have faced death, injuries, looting, displacement, fear. The last thing they need is a military accidentally harming the people while trying to keep the peace. Understanding the importance of civilian protection is not as easy as teaching someone how to shoot straight but it’s just as important, if not more so.”
—Marla Keenan, Rolling Stone, August 16, 2013.

French and Malian forces patrol the streets of Gao, Mali.
April 2013
Photo by Thomas Martinez
Syria

Center staff traveled to Syria and through refugee camps in neighboring countries to talk with civilians who’d fled the violence. Syrians raised concerns that were not widely reported: the dangers posed by unexploded ordnance and the need to plan for assistance for civilians who have been harmed. The Center brought these issues—and practical steps to address them—to the media and policymakers in the US, UK, and United Nations, as well as senior Syrian opposition officials.

With no end to the conflict in sight, the Center played a unique role in analyzing how military intervention would affect civilians still in Syria, for better or worse. In cooperation with the American Society of International Law (ASIL), the Center convened a roundtable of knowledgeable government officials, military planners, humanitarian and protection experts, and lawyers to consider potential fallout from military intervention in Syria specifically through a lens of concern for civilians trying to survive in Syria.

As some nations began supplying the opposition with weapons and other aid, we offered White House officials and other policymakers practical solutions for matching those efforts with tangible commitments to civilian protection and good security practices.

Cluster bombs are munitions designed to explode in the air over a target, releasing hundreds of bomblets or submunitions over an area the size of a football field. In Hazano, Syria, unexploded cluster munitions are still buried under the mud in the fields, functioning like landmines. Locals don’t have even the basic material resources to put up signs warning of unexploded ordnance. Ahmed, the village head, told the Center, “This mined field is very dangerous for the children, but we don’t have the resources to warn everyone of the dangers. If the children come to play here they will die.”
Children play near a damaged building in Bab Tabane, a neighborhood in Tripoli, Lebanon. Bab Tabane is intersected by Syria Street, an area that has seen pitched gun battles between Sunnis and Alawis, as a product of the conflict in Syria.

Photo by Nicole Tung
Amends & Post Harm Assistance

The Center was founded on the belief that civilians suffering losses such as death, injury, and property damage deserve recognition and assistance—what we call amends—from the warring party that caused the harm. At its core, making amends to civilians is a gesture of respect to victims. We press for warring parties to make amends and for governments to assist civilians post harm through livelihood assistance and rehabilitation programs. This effort to dignify civilian losses is a key part of all of our country programmatic work.

How much is a life worth, exactly? In 2013, we worked with the University of Amsterdam International Law Clinic to extensively map programs worldwide designed to help victims of violence. This “value of life” report compared dozens of past and current programs for war victims. This is the first time information on so many programs appears in one place. It will serve as a resource for governments and civil society working to help countless civilians suffering tragic losses.

Nepal

The Center spent three years with Harvard Law School’s Human Rights Clinic analyzing the Government of Nepal’s relief programs for conflict victims. Together, we provided practical recommendations to the Nepalese policymakers for improving their efforts to help civilians recover from the decade-long civil war.

Somalia

2013 saw important advances for our work in Somalia to reduce civilian harm. We started the year by deploying a team of experts to Mogadishu to support African Union Forces in creating a tool to understand the impact on civilians and improve combat operations. Called a “Civilian Casualty Tracking, Analysis, and Response Cell,” this tool is the first of its kind for an African military and only the third in the world.

This cell is a major component of the civilian protection policy we developed in Somalia in 2011, and which was approved by the African Union. It’s an innovative effort, touted by the UN Secretary-General in his report on civilian protection, and one we believe will keep Somalis safer.
Pakistan

The Center provided technical guidance to Pakistani civil society on a new government assistance program for victims of violence. The program was approved in 2013 by the governor of Balochistan and is now law, meaning victims of terrorism there will have access to medical and monetary assistance. This law is an important first step to codify the recognition of conflict victims in Pakistan. We believe it can set precedent for similar laws in other Pakistani provinces and possibly even other conflicts around the world.

US Policy in Armed Conflict

The Center has always leveraged American global influence to help set higher standards for civilian protection and harm response and 2013 was no exception. We pressed for—and will continue pressing for—creating a central office in the Pentagon to focus on the civilian in war. This office would focus on reducing civilian harm in armed conflicts in which the US is engaged, including those where it is training local forces or operating drones.

In the respected journal Foreign Affairs, we made our case that the US military not lose the lessons it learned about civilian harm in Afghanistan over the past decade. Those hard won efforts to save lives and dignify losses should be made permanent policy at the Pentagon.

DRONES

The Center is at the forefront of thinking through the strategic, ethical, and tactical challenges of unmanned aerial vehicle (“drone”) use in lethal operations. We are the only human rights group developing pragmatic solutions that would ensure armed drones operate with as few risks to civilians as possible, just as all weapons should. Specifically, we call for greater transparency, to shift operations out of the CIA, training on civilian protection for pilots, and assistance for civilian harm (a concept noted by CIA director John Brennan). A former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff cited our drone recommendations as “thoughtful and useable” in Senate Testimony. We also served on the Council on Foreign Relations Board of Advisors for an analysis of US Drone Policy.

“… What has and hasn’t worked to address civilian harm should guide future operations, including drone strikes. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel would do well to create an office on civilian harm mitigation at the Pentagon so that future mistakes are prevented.”

### Statement of Financial Position Fiscal Year 2012

#### ASSETS

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#### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

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**TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY**  

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### Statement of Activities

#### INCOME

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*Center for Civilians in Conflict produces financial statements on the accrual basis, recognizing income as it is pledged. In 2013, the Center received several multiple year grant awards which are funds committed for a future purpose.*
### Statement of Activities  
*continued*

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<th>Fundraising</th>
<th>Country Operations</th>
<th>Military Engagement</th>
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% of Total Expenditure:
- Management 5.5%
- Fundraising 14%
- Country Operations 66%
- Military Engagement 7.4%
- Amends 7.1%

*Center 2013 financial reports were independently audited and copies of the full audit are on file and available by request.*
SUPPORTERS

FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS
John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
Oak Foundation
Open Society Foundations
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
The Countess Moira Charitable Foundation
Trellis Charitable Fund

PROJECT SUPPORTERS
Chris Hondros Fund (Photography)
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Mali)
HMG Conflict Pool Funding, British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Somalia)
The Connect U.S. Fund (Syria)
The United Nations Support Office for AMISOM (Somalia)

CORPORATE SUPPORT
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP
craigslist Charitable Fund
Leonie Group

GIFTS IN KIND
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP
Article 3 Advisors
Bonnie Docherty
International Human Rights Clinic, Harvard Law School
University of California, Irvine School of Law’s International Justice Clinic

MAJOR GIFTS
Anil Soni
Anne Heath Widmark
Aryeh Neier
Audun Huslid
Christina Asquith
Compton Foundation Discretionary Fund
Darian W. Swig
David and Anita Keller
David Quigley
Frances Bertagnolli
Griff Norquist
ING Matching Gifts Program
Ivan Watson
Kristèle Younès
Megan Hull
Melissa Dulski and Aydin Mohtashamian
Monique Weil
Nancy Hechinger
Nion T. McEvoy
Open Society Institute Matching Gifts Program
Peggy and Lee Zeigler
Robert Palmer
Russell Dyk
Sabra Field
Sarah Han
Scott Paul
Sue Richards
Susan and Peter Osnos
Tom Lansner
Tom Wedell
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Liz Lucas Baker, chief communications officer
Valerie Richards Kirkpatrick, development officer
Emily Erfani, office manager
Silvia Chiarelli, Mali Project Lead
Trevor Keck, Afghanistan Fellow
Nicolette Boehland, Harvard Law School Fellow

2013 INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS
Julia Bizer
Ilana Blum
Kellie Brandt
Elisabeth D’Auchamp
Andrew Haag
Jolene Hansell
Jaime Hawthorne
Caroline Kavit
Ellen Pocinski
Arwa Shobaki
Surina Surina
Jacob Whiteford
Siyuan Xie

The Center extends special thanks to the many civilians who spoke with us, even in the midst of personal tragedies. We also thank our consultants, who provided valuable services and contributions to our work around the world.

Center for Civilians in Conflict was founded as Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict (CIVIC) in 2003 by Marla Ruzicka, a young humanitarian who recognized the need for an organization focused on the plight of civilians in war. Following Marla’s death from a suicide bomb in Baghdad in April 2005, her colleagues, friends, and family knew that she had created a unique space in the advocacy community that should not be left vacant. The Center continues to grow, building on Marla’s foundation.
Families queue for food at a feeding point in BadBado camp for Internally Displaced People in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Photo by Kate Holt

The Center is one of the few organizations that war-makers actually listen to.

—Ozy.com, October, 2013

ABOVE
Ankona Maiga in her temporary home at a refugee camp in Sevarae, in northern Mali.

Photo by Thomas Martinez

THE COVER
Families queue for food at a feeding point in BadBado camp for Internally Displaced People in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Photo by Kate Holt
About Center for Civilians in Conflict

Center for Civilians in Conflict works to make warring parties more responsible to civilians before, during, and after armed conflict. We are advocates who believe no civilian caught in conflict should be ignored, and advisors who provide practical solutions to prevent and respond to civilian harm.

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