

PEACE
ISLANDS
INSTITUTE

We are proud and thrilled to announce that IDC is growing, expanding and therefore it has needed to be reorganized. IDC has a new name now: Peace Islands Institute. So, IDC will serve as an Institute that will have different platforms. Peace Islands Institute, a NJ organization, will open branches in the neighboring states.

In addition to programs that IDC has organized so far, Peace Islands Institute will support academic programs and researches on issues like democracy, human rights, women issues, community development. In this sense, Peace Islands Institute will continue to serve wider community as a dialogue agent.

Why Peace Islands as the new name? Peace Islands is a phrase frequently used by our honorary president Mr. Fethullah Gulen. According to him, each family, each school, each dormitory, each community service organization must be a place of peace -peace island- a safe harbor, for us all, especially for young generation and they must serve as an agent of peacebuilding.

Although Gulen used this phrase in plural form, it was Fr. Tom Mitchel who used it first time. Here is our new name Peace Islands Institute's story in Fr. Michel's words:

"The city of Zamboanga, at the tip of the southernmost peninsula on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines, is about 50% Christian and 50 Muslim. In recent years, it has been the scene of intermittent fighting, snipers, kidnapping, and bloodshed caused sometimes by the rebels, sometimes by bandits, and at other times, by the military. Thus the traveler who takes the narrow road out of Zamboanga and up the coast can be excused for being a bit nervous, looking out the window for any possible trouble. After about ten miles, the car turns a corner and you are confronted with a large sign, reading: "Welcome to the Filipino-Turkish School of Tolerance," and the traveler entering the compound discovers a little **island of peace**, tolerance, and excellent education, as Muslim and Christian teachers together conduct high-quality education for over a thousand Muslim and Christian children. This, to me, is an excellent example of our theme, "the contribution of interreligious dialogue to the building of peace." (quoted from <http://www.thomasmichel.us/>)

We are going to announce soon our new logo, where we are opening new branches and what new programs we are going to launch.

Regards,
Peace Islands Institute
(Former IDC)