



Parliament passes the International Catalan Institute for Peace Bill - creating a pioneering body in Spain for mediation in international conflicts

The ICIP will mediate in international conflicts and will give Catalonia an active role as an agent of peace in the world.

The new organisation, a pioneer in Spain, will seek to promote peace through research, information and action and hopes to become a leading international centre.

The ICIP board, which will be free of government control, will decide its future location and set out its plan of work.

28th November 2007

The Catalan Parliament has today passed the International Catalan Institute for Peace (ICIP) Bill, which authorises the creation of an independent organisation devoted to promoting the culture of peace, mediation in conflicts, research and training. This is a pioneering body in Spain, set up in response to the desire to make Catalonia an internationally recognised participant in peace initiatives, taking as models other leading public centres, such as the SIPRI in Sweden, the TAPRI in Finland and the USIP in the United States.

The main aim of the ICIP is to “make available to Catalonia, the international community and all the peoples and individuals in the world an instrument which, while continuing the tradition of fostering and building peace, promotes the values and the culture of peace, security, disarmament and the peaceful resolution of conflict and social tension, to achieve the abolition of war as a means of resolving conflict”.

The Institute will be dedicated to promoting the culture of peace, mediation in conflicts, support for social organisations and movements, scientific research in the field, advising governments and training experts in conflict resolution. It has been created in response to demands from the Catalan peace movement, and in accordance with the terms of the Statute of Autonomy (art. 51) and the Act to Promote Peace (2003), which requested the Executive to present to Parliament a project for the creation of an organisation devoted to the promotion of peace.

The ICIP has the support of the Catalan Council for the Promotion of Peace, which approved the project unanimously. This new organisation has been set up under the auspices of the Generalitat Office for the Promotion of Peace and Human Rights (Department of the Interior, Institutional Relations and Participation).



Functions

The Law assigns the following functions to the ICIP:

- a) Empirical, theoretical and applied research on peace, either directly or through support given to existing research centres.
- b) Technical training of specialists in *in situ* intervention in peace processes.
- c) Informing about and fostering the culture of peace, educating and raising awareness among the public about this culture, working closely with the Generalitat of Catalonia departments which are most directly involved, teaching centres, universities and non-governmental organisations.
- d) Conducting research into and providing information about the history, thinking and activities of the peace movement in Catalonia.
- e) Monitoring the current status of peace and armed conflicts, together with the Catalan Council for the Promotion of Peace.
- f) Acting as an observer, facilitator, mediator and peace-builder in violent international or internationalised conflicts.
- g) Providing support and consultation facilities for organisations, initiatives, campaigns and other activities which need it, including the promotion of activities in the fields of training, research and action committed to building and keeping peace which are already being undertaken by social and peace movements, by public administrations, international organisations, universities and research centres.
- h) Acting as consultants to Parliament, the Generalitat and other public bodies concerning their policies and activities in the interests of peace.
- i) Establishing relations with similar international institutions and networks.

Organisation

The ICIP will be governed and administered by its Governing Board, president and director.

The Governing Board is the supreme body for governing, managing and administering the ICIP. It will consist of 12 members, 9 chosen by Parliament and 3 appointed by the Generalitat government.



Generalitat of Catalonia
Department of the Interior
Institutional Relations and Participation

Parliament will choose 9 members from 12 - 20 names put forward by the Catalan Council for the Promotion of Peace. They must be individuals of recognised standing, as experts or because of their links with organised civil groups in the field of peace, with experience in research, public international law, international relations, the non-violent resolution of conflict, the promotion of peace, and respect for democracy and human rights.

The Board will appoint the president and director and select the members of the International Advisory Council. It will also draw up an annual plan of activities and a strategic plan, which will be presented to Parliament.

The ICIP will be independent in its organisation and functions. In the appointment of members to the ICIP's governing and administrative bodies every effort will be made to ensure balanced geographical representation and a balance between the sexes.

The president will be appointed by the Governing Board from the members chosen by Parliament. The president cannot remain in office for more than two consecutive terms.

The director will be appointed by the Governing Board on the recommendation of the president. Individuals with relevant professional experience will take part in a competitive selection procedure to fill the post.

The International Advisory Council will be formed of fourteen members chosen by the Governing Board after consultation with the Catalan Council for the Promotion of Peace. Seven members will be chosen among professionals and academics with international experience in the fields of peace research and action, and the non-violent resolution of conflict. The remaining seven will be selected from individuals who have attained prestige and popular recognition as promoters of peace, disarmament and the non-violent resolution of conflict.

The Council will issue reports on the ICIP's strategic plan and annual programme of activities.

Finance

For its functioning the ICIP will have at its disposal the amounts allocated to it in the Generalitat budget; amounts made available through agreements reached with other public and private bodies; subsidies, transfers and other income from public sources; financial aid, donations and other income from private sources, etc.

The ICIP will deal with the government through the department responsible for matters related to the promotion of peace.



Generalitat of Catalonia
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Time frame and location

Within six months of the law being passed the Government will initiate the process of implementing it. The future Governing Board will decide the location of the ICIP's premises. Provisionally, the ICIP will begin its activities from the premises located at Gran Via 658 in Barcelona.

Government and NGOs draw up the Institute's road map

While the law was going through Parliament, the Generalitat Office for the Promotion of Peace and Human Rights (under whose auspices the ICIP was created), the Catalan Council for the Promotion of Peace, experts in the culture of peace and federations of NGOs working with human rights, peace and development have started work on an agenda for the future Institute. Since March regular meetings have been held to draw up the new body's road map.

Sessions have focused on the issues which the future Institute will have to tackle:

- The new peace, human rights and security agenda.
- Ethno-political and identity-related conflicts.
- Humanitarian action: the obligation to protect and the right to non-interference.
- War and economy.
- The role of women in building peace.
- Education for peace.
- Terrorism in the post cold-war era.
- New tools for resolving and transforming conflict.

To continue work on the ICIP agenda, a conference on peace research will be held in Barcelona on November 29 and 30. This will provide a meeting point for research centres in the field of peace from all parts of Spain.