

REPORT FROM FRIENDS OF ORPHANS ON COUNTDOWN TO PEACE DAY FORUM 2015 HELD AT SHERATON HOTEL IN KAMPALA, UGANDA. JUNE 30TH 2015.



The above photos were taken from the Countdown to Peace Day Forum 2015 in Kampala

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It is a great honor and privilege, for me to thank the Peace One Day, for the enormous work done to ensure that Countdown to Peace Day Forum 2015 was successful.

I also owe a great appreciation to Friends of Orphans (FRO) and the entire staff for the support afforded and for granting me the opportunity to explore and experience countdown to peace day forum culture and ideas. This forum has greatly impacted both my social and peace building skills.

I am honored and proud to be part of the team who attended the countdown to peace day forum held on the 30th June 2015 at Sheraton Hotel in Kampala, Uganda.

The peace day forum has been very fruitful and enjoyable it has added an added value to my professional journey. I have achieved so much than I expected to have achieved in just one day. I consider it a journey where I have learnt lessons and gathered experience which I shall be using in brining stability, peace and harmony among communities. It was such an amazing experience.

I got to learn a lot about Peace One Day programs and activities, how the community can benefit from the peace day and how we can collaborate to further maximize the benefit of peace day.



Orach Charles

I am in the process of organizing a meeting with other Friends of Orphans staff to share with them what I have learned from the countdown to peace day forum 2015. This way the entire staff of FRO will be able to benefit from what I have learned. There is excitement already from other staff about the meeting.

From participatory and interactive group discussions that we had a lot of new ideas were generated: experiences and lesson learned were shared including success stories which could be replicated in other communities.

I enjoyed every single session as people from different backgrounds, religion and personalities talked of how they have been working tirelessly towards peace building and other activities that bring people together in different communities. The penalties were well selected full of amazing people and very inspiring. They are doing great work in their daily life to bring peace to the world. I was specifically and personally touched and inspired by the work of Ochen Victor the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize nominee whose story and work is compelling, amazing and inspiring. I love the idea that there is no reason for not standing together and reconciliation, bringing victims as partners in peace building process rather than making them witnesses in peace building process. We had a lot of very interesting and productive one on one discussion with Victor, we are arranging a meeting to see how we could work in collaboration to bring peace in Northern Uganda.

For orphans growing up in Northern Uganda as I did the future has never looked brighter without humanitarian organizations like Friends of Orphans coming up to assist. In Friends of Orphans we have realized that the voices of women and children in conflict management and resolution are largely ignored yet women and children bear the most burdens in times of conflict. Friends of

Orphans have created a forum for women and children to express their views on peace building and conflict management leading to reconciliation. In this forum for dialogue different peace actors/women and children share their experience. These way new ideas are generated to improve on the intervention mechanism of stakeholders in peace building work, by emphasizing the importance of making women and children partners in peace building and conflict management leading to reconciliation rather than being witness in the peace building process. This has created a positive transition in reducing gender based violence and acceptance of the returned child mothers, former child soldiers and abductees within their homes and communities. Peace one day is an important day to Friends of orphans. Being one of the few organizations that have worked tirelessly to make sure that peace is restored in northern Uganda. We have done a number of activities towards peace building and conflict management in Uganda. Am really glad that am part of that because it feels good to do something that bring positive change in the community making it a better place to live.



Friends of Orphans Founder Ricky Richard holding cards for peace, join the rest of the world in South Korea in advocating for peace around the world.

Peace is needed everywhere in our daily life, I wish to call upon everybody to be an ambassador for peace because peace building is a responsibility for everyone. I considered *war* as the greatest enemy of the human race. It destroys kills and impoverishes the people who live within it.

It has been a day of renewed intervention and great wealth of learning in my professional journey. Though the time was short, but it has given me new lens to see the world from another standpoint and has also given me the strengths and vision to cultivate new strategies in peace building, conflict management and resolution.

With love, peace and respect
Orach Charles