CONCEPT PAPER
(PROSPECTUS)

ESTABLISHING A CENTER FOR
INTERACTIVE MANAGEMENT
ON THE ISLAND
OF CRETE

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PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to present preliminary thinking about setting up on the Island of Crete a new organization called the Center for Interactive Management.

The primary purpose of establishing this Center in Crete is to locate it strategically in the general vicinity of the Middle East to provide a Center for fulfilling three functions:

- Assisting to resolve ongoing or emerging conflicts among nations or groups in the general vicinity of the Middle East

- Providing a source of consulting assistance for management development, organizational development, and long range planning to organizations and nations in the vicinity of the Middle East

- Providing training opportunities in interactive planning and management for professionals and managers in the Middle East region.

History shows that the Middle East is a source of continuing controversies that have not been dealt with very well. Previous attempts to resolve these have often been unproductive, and certainly have not been based in the best available research and scientific information relevant to resolution of conflict.

Moreover, many of the nations in this area are now experiencing an unusual level of income which offers the bright
hope that there could be a period of very constructive national development that could open up new vistas for this whole area.
SYMBOLISM AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Symbolism is very important to the countries in the Middle East. If the proposed new organization is to be effective there, it is vital that it be regarded from a symbolic point of view from the very beginning of consideration.

It is critical, for example, that this new organization be established in an area that could be regarded as relatively neutral to all the nations in the area. The Island of Crete seems to be about the best possible place to locate it from this point of view. Crete does not hold offensive connotations. It is not located in a nation that has a history of conflict with its neighbors and which would be regarded with suspicion by some or many of them.

It is important that financial support be made available from nations in the Middle East, yet it is important also that no nation from that region be in a position to control the survival of this new organization, because if it were the organization would be perceived or accused of not being neutral in working with parties to a dispute. For this reason, it is important that the organization be officially sponsored by a relatively neutral nation. Greece is a nation that fills this description as well as any nation in the Middle East area. Nevertheless it is unrealistic to expect Greece to provide much financial support, as there is relatively little incentive for it to do so, and it would not be a major user of the services of the Center. On the other hand, its ability to serve as a symbolic sponsor of
the Center is high because of its long tradition of thinking, its historic links with civilized behavior, its contributions to philosophy, and its relatively good relations with neighbors in the Middle East, compared to other nations in that area.

Of all the nations in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia is far and away the most appropriate major financial sponsor of this activity. From this set of nations, Saudi Arabia has shown moderation, maturity, responsibility, and an interest in long-range national development based on consensus. Moreover, Saudi Arabia has a strong interest in helping to maintain a harmonious Middle East environment. At the same time, Saudi Arabia has already demonstrated a strong willingness to help its neighbors, without imposing any major constraints upon them.

Nevertheless, because of the symbolism, it would be necessary that Saudi Arabia provide financial support for the startup with no continuing strings attached. Only initial approval of the quality of the conceptualization and the plan for construction and operation of this new Center should be within the province of Saudi Arabia. To do more than this would be to undermine the long-term position of the new Center as a neutral party.
Therefore the basic startup concept is this:

- That Greece would provide free to the Center a nice facility on Crete, where ready access to the Center would be available to visitors from all the Middle East nations who would want to be served by this Center. The facilities should provide full accommodations for groups coming there to work on conflict resolution or for general management training or organizational development activities.

- That Saudi Arabia would provide operational costs for all the salaries and operations of the Center for a five-year period.

- That after five years, the Center would become fully self-supporting or, if it is unable to do this, that continuation of the Center would depend on its ability to obtain new funding commitments of an endowment nature. Greece would under no circumstances be obligated to provide any new funds.
BASIC OPERATING PRINCIPLE

The basic operating principle of the Center shall be to provide the absolute maximum conditions conducive to getting agreement on complex issues from groups.

A full statement of what conditions are appropriate, and how they would be maximized in this Center will become part of the second draft of this Prospectus.
SPECIAL BENEFITS OF THE CENTER

The Center would be neutral. It would have no vested interest in the outcomes of meetings. However it would have a strong interest in making meetings productive and useful for the participants.

The Center would be staffed with persons experienced in doing the tasks that would accompany its mission, and who have a testable and verifiable record of success, not only in inventing processes that produce consensus efficiently, but also in carrying out such processes in a wide variety of applications around the world.

The Center would stress high quality in all its work and practices. This would reflect not only the natural inclination and experience of Center staff, but also the security stemming from five-year advance funding and the resultant ability to carry out work in an environment that is not burdened with fund raising.

Not only would the staff of the Center be neutral, but the location on neutral turf would help avoid the problems of getting people in conflict to meet at either's own home grounds.
WHO WOULD BE SERVED

It is expected that any country, organization, or group would be served by the Center, as long as they exhibit a willingness to work together in harmony. It is hoped that a procedure could be established where the relevant governments would be willing to guarantee every effort to help the Center maintain a friendly, open environment for work, and to take punitive action against any of their nationals who cause trouble at or for the Center.

A procedure would be worked out for assigning priority to work to which each nation would be signatory, so that no client would feel any sense of discrimination.
WHAT SERVICES AND PRODUCTS WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE

The services or product would all be developed in participation with the clients. The Center would provide the processes and facilitation. The clients would provide the hard work and effort to develop results. Here are examples of the products and services:

- Issue resolution
- Research reports
- Strategic and operational plans for nations, groups, and organizations
- Proposals
- Designs
- Regional analyses
- Alternatives, carefully designed, to resolve issues