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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PEACE TEAMS HEAD TO CLEVELAND FOR REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

Lansing, Michigan; July 18, 2016: As Donald Trump and his newly tapped VP candidate Mike Pence arrive in Ohio for the Republican National convention, [Meta Peace Team](#) (MPT) and [D.C. Peace Team](#) (DCPT) members have made the journey to Cleveland create empathy between opposing persons and to help defuse potentially violent confrontations anticipated outside the Quicken Loans Arena, host site of the convention, and the surrounding areas where convention activities will take place.

The two Peace Teams – Members of the [Shanti Sena Network](#) - offer non-partisan, unarmed civilian peacekeeping. Their role includes protecting all from getting hurt. They use some of the same kinds of nonviolent intervention skills that Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. have used successfully. Years of experience by Peace Team members allows them to work alongside each other as they strive to prevent anyone in attendance from getting hurt, while fully supporting everyone's right to free speech and cultivating empathy.

As the conference demonstration parades began, a police officer on a bike was moving along the yellow line on the street while the protestors marched in the street. He was continually using his back tire to bump a young African-American woman and saying "Get to the right!" She replied, "I hear you, I heard you," – becoming more and more anxious and irritated, though the officer kept bumping her. Immediately upon witnessing this exchange, a Peace Team member walked up to the two and caught the officer's eye. The Team member put out his hand out to suggest the police officer stop, to which he rode off. The woman was able to regain her composure and return to the march.

Later, a white man in a car passing the marchers started to yell and gesture obscenely. The driver was traveling slowly, and a Peace Team member stopped and faced the man. They looked at him without animosity but with an air of confidence and their arms to the side. The driver looked at the Peace Team member and stopped his obscene hand gesture. The Team member let the marchers all pass behind him while he faced the driver. The driver calmed down, stopped yelling, and just drove off.

In both these instances, the Peace Team members' early interventions were successful in preventing the interactions from escalating into something more heated and potentially violent.

Meta Peace Team was founded in 1993 to create a nonviolent alternative to militarism through empowered peacemaking. MPT seeks a just world grounded in nonviolence and respect for the sacred interconnectedness of all life, and trains individuals in active nonviolence and violence de-escalation tactics. At the invitation of those involved, MPT deploys trained teams into war zones and places of conflict (both domestically and internationally) to reduce violence. It also educates the public to the vision and practice of active nonviolence. MPT has deployed peace teams into areas of potential violence around the country and around the world.

D.C. Peace Teams (DCPT) commits to cultivating the virtue of nonviolent peacemaking and key corresponding practices. They empower ordinary civilians to increasingly serve their communities, particularly as nonviolent peacekeepers and - by extension - as peacemakers and peacebuilders. DCPT provides training in nonviolent communication and intervention, peace education, restorative justice, conflict transformation, and unarmed civilian protection.

Both Meta Peace Team and D.C. Peace Team are members of the [Shanti Sena Network](#), modeled after Gandhi's original idea of a Peace Army.