

# *Many to Many*

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*“Many to Many” under the aegis of Operation Peace Through Unity is a communicating link between “we, the peoples” of all nations, races, creeds and ideologies offering in the spirit of the preamble of the United Nations Charter an instrument for the furthering of better relationships based on deepening mutual understanding and the aspiration to promote unity and cooperation beyond all differences.*

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## ***I. The Responsibility to Protect***

Perhaps one of the strongest, most deep-rooted and instinctual urges that the human and animal kingdoms have in common is the impulse to protect and defend itself, its offspring, its territory, possession or position against any real or perceived danger.

Such a basic defence mechanism can help maintain a respectful balance between different species within a common habitat and secure the survival of all. But when this inherent instinct is fuelled by fear, prejudice and greed, it can also develop into a mindset and a habitual reaction to any situation, which may well prove to be the greatest danger to the survival of our own species and the habitat we share with others.

From defending itself with sticks and stones, to the first handmade weaponry, humanity is now investing multi-trillions of dollars and using natural resources and human ingenuity in the production of deadly weapons of mass destruction. This enterprise, controlled and perpetuated by a powerful military, industrial and legislative conglomerate, will - like other entities - go to great length to protect its own interests.

At the 2005 World Summit, the United Nations member states unanimously committed themselves to implement, in cooperation with the international community, the recommendations contained in the Responsibility to Protect proposal. But the realisation of these recommendations is meeting with a wide and diverse variety of issues and obstacles, such as: the violation of state sovereignty, the principles of non interference and non intervention in internal affairs, and even the possible deliberate misuse of the responsibility to protect. A 'trust deficit' between peoples, cultures and nations is making cooperation on the issue of protection difficult. And while this dialogue and discussion goes on, atrocious acts of violence, ethnic cleansing and genocide continue unabated; the tools of destruction readily provided for the warlords by the weapon business.

This situation is showing with heartbreaking clarity that the dismantling of the ancient mindset can only be achieved through the patient and persistent, clearheaded and incorruptible process of replacing it with another mindset, anchored in the heart of human beings. When we take ownership of the truth that each human being is born free and equal '*and endowed with reason and conscience, and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood*' (article 1 of Univ. Declaration of Human Rights), the world's peoples will be, and are, uniting in their millions upon millions in a commitment to contribute to the creation of this inclusive and compassionate mindset. And, as the indispensable energy of the woman is being freed from the yoke of past subservience and slavery, it will join and complete the brotherhood of humankind - and thus make possible the coming into being of a new humanity.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed and adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 and now translated into more than 350 languages and dialects, is a pledge to cooperate for the development of friendly relationships between all peoples and nations, and work together for '*the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want*'.

*"It is impossible to place limits upon such unity", says a Teacher of Ancient Wisdom, "for its basis will be love".*

Love will ensure the survival of the human being and guide it toward infinity.

**II. THE 10<sup>TH</sup> SUMMIT OF NOBEL PEACE LAUREATES,**  
***Breaking Down Walls and Building Bridges***  
***Berlin 9-11 November 2009***

At this Summit, which coincided with the German Capital's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the fall of the Berlin wall, the Nobel Peace laureates were considering how the different walls, whether religious, ideological or economical, that divide humanity could possibly be dismantled and be replaced with bridges of understanding, communication and cooperation.

The text of the final Statement from the Summit, adopted by the Nobel Laureates and other invitees, calls on the international community to break down:

**National, international, personal and institutional walls that stand in the way of a nuclear weapons free world, by**

- ! *Achieving a paradigm shift from counter-productive and excessive militarization to collective security based on cooperative initiatives to address global threats,*
- ! *Fully implementing the non-proliferation and disarmament obligations under the NPT, and all other international agreements on nuclear weapons by all members of the international community,*
- ! *Negotiating a new convention for the universal and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons,*
- ! *Supporting the successful conclusion of the initiative of President Obama and President Medvedev of adopting a new agreement on nuclear disarmament and its successful implementation,*
- ! *Supporting the UN Secretary-General's five-point plan\* on nuclear disarmament,*
- ! *Addressing the root causes of regional and global conflicts to assure that the security of all states can be safeguarded without nuclear weapons.*

**Walls between rich and poor, by**

- ! *mobilizing all necessary national and international resources to achieve the full implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and by*
- ! *using the current financial crisis to construct a new global economic system that will be fair for all humankind.*

**Walls between cultural, religious, and ethnic communities, by**

- ! *calling on the UN General Assembly to convene an international conference on minority rights, with a view to strengthening protections of the rights of religious, cultural and linguistic minorities.*

**Walls that stand in the way of the crucial need to combat climate change, by**

- ! *ensuring the success of the upcoming Copenhagen conference in securing firm international commitment to effective global action, and by*
- ! *assuring sustainable development that will enable mankind to live in harmony with the fragile global environment and with each other.*

**Walls between generations, by**

- ! *involving youth and youth-led organizations effectively in the decisions concerning their future, and by*

! *ensuring active dialogue and communication between generations to achieve inter-generational justice.*

The Summit also calls on all people to show love, compassion and toleration in all relationships and recommit to the Charter for a World Without Violence, which articulates the Nobel Laureates' vision for a world with peace and justice.

<http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/sg5point.shtml>

<http://www.nobelpeace-summits.org/final-statement-2/>

### **III. GLOBAL ALLIANCE SUMMIT AND THE UNITED NATIONS**

By Anne Creter

OPTU Alternate UN Representative & Global Alliance United Nations Liaison

November 12, 2009

The fourth **Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace (GA)** Summit took place in Costa Rica from 12-27 September 2009. The GA ([www.mfp-dop.org](http://www.mfp-dop.org)) comprises organizations, citizens and government officials from 35+ countries who work together to establish governmental structures that support a culture of peace. After the GA's 2005 formation in the United Kingdom, I attended their second and third Summits (Canada, 2006 and Japan, 2007). I was thrilled this year to be able to make Costa Rica too (see Communique at end). Even more thrilling though was actually co-presenting there on the topic of "**Cooperation Between the NGO's and the United Nations**" with world-renowned UN expert Pat Mische, Ph.D. We were indeed witness to history too, for the Costa Rican government sponsored this Summit, making it our first one with governmental sanction. Plus, in perfect timing right before it began, the Costa Rican government passed legislation creating the third "Ministry of Peace and Justice" in the world (Solomon Islands & Nepal being the other two). What an auspicious beginning!

The Summit was skilfully organized to include both a pre and post-summit option (post summit being a unique tour of beautiful Costa Rica!). The pre-summit option was to attend the transformational Academy for Peace 40-hour BePeace foundations course at the Razur Foundation International host headquarters in Santa Ana, outside San Jose. It was inspiring to have so many new people involved, breathing new life into the GA ... especially the youth from nearby United Nations University for Peace and all the Unity Church folks. We spent the entire week deeply engaged with each other, becoming more proficient in Nonviolent Communication and HeartMath (plus the power of these two modalities combined). We were so primed by the time the Summit began that we communally radiated a unifying inner peace, more ready than ever to change the world!

The Summit was all about taking the Global Alliance to new heights through organization and action. And THAT it did! We were guided through a masterful "Appreciative Inquiry" process with the structure of a well thought out Global Alliance "*Next Steps Forward Participant Workbook*" that enabled us to do the hard work. We were privileged to have been led by expert facilitator David Cooperrider, the man who actually developed Appreciative Inquiry (who donated his time for free because he believes so much in our cause!). Amazingly creative results ensued from all the many working groups which are being earnestly followed up on now. A new and improved website should be up soon too ... which will explain everything -- so stay tuned ([www.gasummit.org](http://www.gasummit.org)).

Government Day followed the Appreciative Inquiry when Dr. Pat Mische and I did our UN piece. We were thrilled this fell on September 21, the International Day of Peace! In our collaboration, Pat (NGO UN Representative for Global Education Associate) presented an overview of UN history, providing personal insight from her many years experience there. She cited inspiring examples of NGO's effectuating real progress at the UN. I then told the story of our worldwide NGO "people's" movement to pass a UN Resolution in the General Assembly promoting governmental infrastructures for peace. Our motto is *"think globally, act locally... and act globally too"*.

My power point was entitled: **The Global People's Movement for a United Nations Resolution Promoting Ministries and Departments of Peace**. It showed our evolution since its humble beginning in 2006 as a "wild and crazy idea" that emerged independently in both the U.S. and New Zealand after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Alliance Summit in Canada. My purpose was to introduce the draft Resolution we crafted, plus illustrate photo-journalistically the well-seasoned grassroots civil society "peoples" seed-planting movement that has developed behind it. We were grateful that copies of our most current sample UN Resolution (last revised the day before my departure) had thoughtfully been placed in all the packets. This draft document and the UN strategic plan being developed should appear on the Summit website soon ([www.gasummit.org](http://www.gasummit.org)). Please be sure to check them out and join us. My main points were as follows:

- 1) Our movement consists of many diverse coalitions, from local to global, interfacing in New York at United Nations headquarters within the NGO community. It is led by the "Culture of Peace Working Group" of the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns – NY (CSVGC-NY), co-chaired by Iris Spellings and me, both of the New Zealand based NGO, *Operation Peace Through Unity (OPTU)*.
- 2) The draft Resolution went through many stages of development -- though the combined efforts of separate forces in an on-going participatory process that included the wise guidance of UN "culture of peace" expert Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury. The current document is still a work in progress, yet viable enough now to be sufficiently used to hopefully engage UN Ambassadors to our cause.
- 3) Among other things, the Resolution asks the Secretary-General to **"actively encourage all UN member states to build the culture of peace architecture nationally and in collaboration with the community of nations, by creating structures across national governments to direct peace-building policies and programmes; and that these structures be in the form of ministries or departments of peace to help manifest what is envisioned in the UN Declaration and Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace.**
- 4) It also **"invites the Secretary-General to create a link within the UN system to facilitate coordination with the national ministries and departments of peace, in collaborative efforts to promote the culture of peace."**
- 5) Our next task will be to educate and inform Ambassadors about the Resolution in the hopes of locating champions willing to introduce it in the General Assembly.

Our UN remarks were well-received. The audience burst into applause when I read the slide containing these wise words from my NGO (OPTU) head, Gita Brooke:

*"The brain is not the key. But the heart which is seeing, feeling and loving God in all - is the key. For years we have laboured with the wording of the resolution and consulted widely; we have torn it apart and put it together – again and again; and maybe the time has come to trust*

*that it is now a living entity in its own right, with a heart beat that can be heard – when one listens.”*

Gita’s heartening words were so apt for this group, many of whom had spent the entire previous week at the BePeace course learning the HeartMath way of connecting directly to their hearts. Thus, at the end it seemed only natural that a revitalized **Global Alliance United Nations Strategic Planning Team** of volunteers would emerge to replace the former “Global Alliance UN Working Group” (which had been loosely organized two years ago at the Japan GA Summit). To my sheer satisfaction, this is just what happened! If you want to join us, please email [annecrets@aol.com](mailto:annecrets@aol.com). Everyone’s help is needed all over the world & at all levels to move the Resolution forward as the UN Culture of Peace Decade ends in 2010.

May Peace Prevail on Earth!

*\* This report was prepared for my UN NGO, Operation Peace Through Unity (OPTU) Draft UN Resolution will be on their website too ([www.peacethroughunity.info](http://www.peacethroughunity.info))*

#### ***IV. Global Alliance for Ministries & Departments of Peace COMMUNIQUÉ September 21, 2009***

##### **4th Global Alliance Summit for Ministries and Departments of Peace San José, Costa Rica, September 17-21, 2009**

The 4th Global Alliance (GA) Summit was a resounding success with 200 participants attending from more than 40 countries, enhanced by a live streaming video link to the world. The Summit was inspired by Costa Rica's declaration, earlier this month, of a Minister of Justice and Peace, making it the third country in the world to have such a Ministry. The President of Costa Rica, Dr. Oscar Arias, addressed the opening of the Summit, and told us that: “The task is only just starting; the creation of a Ministry for Peace...is not the final achievement, merely the making of a road to achieve sustainable order that would allow resolution of human conflicts without violence.”

The mission of the GA is to support the establishment of Ministries and Departments of Peace in all nations. The Summit, in order to prepare itself to work with governments to build national infrastructures for peace, heard from experts in the fields of: Unarmed Civilian Peace Services and Youth Engagement in Peacebuilding; Academies for Peace, Restorative Justice Practices; Peace Economics; Innovation in the Use of Media; Nuclear and General Disarmament; Civil Society and Government Cooperation; and, Networking with the UN and Business.

The GA also established strategic direction and an action plan for its next phase and formed a dynamic Leadership Council, with membership from 6 continents, to carry its mission forward, partner with other international sister organizations and plan its next Summit. Rita Marie Johnson of the Rasur Foundation in Costa Rica, Summit convener, summed up the achievement of the Summit, stating, “The GA members embodied peace as they took a quantum leap toward national peace infrastructures by presenting a detailed picture of hope for the world. We know what to do and we will do it – together in the name of peace.”

102 delegates from 21 countries attended the 4-day Summit. Countries represented were: **Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan,**

**Netherlands, New Zealand, Palestine, Romania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, and Venezuela.**

21 Additional Country Participants Attended Learning Day, September 20, 2009: Countries: **Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Scotland, Sweden, Trinidad & Tobago and Turkey.**

The Summit concluded with a determination to witness the formation of at least 2 more Ministries or Departments of Peace by the time of the next Summit to be held in 2011. [www.gasummit.org](http://www.gasummit.org)

## ***V. THE CHARTER FOR COMPASSION***

When Karen Armstrong, author of numerous books on comparative religion, won the TED Prize (February 2008), she concluded her address by sharing a wish: “*I wish*”, she said, “*that you would help with the creation, launch and propagation of A Charter for Compassion, crafted by a group of leading inspirational thinkers from the three Abrahamic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and based on the fundamental principles of universal justice and respect*”.

Since then the writing of the Charter has been open to people of all faiths, nationalities, and backgrounds; networks of partnerships began to build between peoples and organizations throughout the world, and in February 2009 some 150.000 people from over 180 countries had offered their contributions to the text. These were then handed over to a group of high-level religious leaders and thinkers, who drafted the wording of the document, and 12 November the Charter for Compassion was launched:

### ***A call to bring the world together...***

***The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.***

***It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others – even our enemies – is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.***

***We therefore call upon all men and women – to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion – to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate – to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures – to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity – to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings – even those regarded as enemies.***

***We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down***

*political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.* <http://charterforcompassion.org/> or [OdysseyNetworks.org](http://OdysseyNetworks.org)

***VI. Wanganui International Day of Peace Celebration at Quaker Settlement  
Sunday 20 September 2009***

***Reconciliation Truth and Bridge Building***

*Susan Anderson, Coordinator, Wanganui Restorative Justice Trust.* [wjrt@xtra.co.nz](mailto:wjrt@xtra.co.nz)

**Restorative Justice: not a soft option**

Traditionally victims of crime have been left out of the justice process. Whilst victims had no voice in the system and were left with stereotypes to fill their thoughts about offenders it also meant that offenders were not given the opportunity to hear about the impact of their actions on the people involved and the community. Although victims used to be described as “the forgotten actors in criminal justice”, they have, through the pathway of Restorative Justice, been elevated to the status of being central players at the heart of criminal justice considerations in many countries throughout the world. In New Zealand Restorative Justice is widely available for adult offenders in most Courts and the Sentencing Act 2002 requires the outcome of any Restorative Justice process to be taken into account by Judges when sentencing.

Restorative Justice offers a very different paradigm from mainstream criminal justice in that it looks at crime in the broader context, offers victims active involvement in their case and requires that offenders be held directly accountable to the person and / or the community. This process not only acknowledges the needs of the victim of crime it also endeavours to empower more people by addressing the needs of communities and offenders. Success within this concept is based on how well harm is repaired or prevented rather than how many offenders are incarcerated or convicted.

Restorative Justice is about restoring relationships not only with strangers but also with family or friends who have been the victims of crime. This voluntary process asks three broad questions; what happened and whose been hurt or harmed, who has the crime impacted on and what are their needs and finally what can be done to make things right. We can therefore align this pragmatic way of dealing with conflict with the theme of today’s panel discussion; *Reconciliation, Truth and Bridge Building*. To illustrate this further I will share with you a story of *Reconciliation, Truth and Bridge Building*.

This story begins on the sports field where two young men who are known to each other were playing for opposing teams. In the heat of the competition and rivalry one made a racist comment to the other. He thought nothing more about this at the time. The other young man however, was deeply affected by the nature of the comment and remained extremely angry long after the game had finished.

After midnight the two young men met unexpectedly in a social context. The young man was still angry and lashed out in what was an unprovoked assault on the one who made the comments earlier in the day. He was subsequently arrested and charged with assault. After entering a guilty plea in Court the matter was referred to Restorative Justice. Individual interviews were held to ascertain whether both parties were willing to come together to resolve the issue. They acknowledged that their paths would cross again in the future and therefore this process seemed



like an appropriate way to enable them to make amends and move on with their lives. The pre-conference interview process also encompassed meeting with the families who had also been deeply affected in some way by what had happened.

At the conference the offender talked openly and truthfully about the event that underpinned the assault, his seething anger about the comment and about not being able to let it go. Although he found the comments unacceptable he admitted that what he had done was wrong and that there were other ways in which he could have dealt with the matter. He acknowledged the shame, humiliation and disappointment that he had brought upon his family and said that he was so ashamed he wanted to hide. In addition he was also experiencing loss of respect and isolation from his peer group who were making damaging and hurtful comments about his behaviour. He accepted full responsibility and offered an apology firstly to the victim, and then to the other people present and accepted that he had no right to deal with the situation in that manner.

The victim listened as the story unfolded, accepted the apology and offered his own apology, conceding that he had contributed to the incident. At this point the negative feelings that the offender had brought to the conference were noticeably transformed into positive emotions. A sense of community began to develop where everyone started to respect each other and work together to make amends and restore the relationship. The young men shook hands and gave each other a man hug.

Out of sorrow can come joy and this was indeed one of those moments when both parties admitted a wrong doing. The young men and their families were pleased to have been given the opportunity to have a conversation about the incident and enter into the process of reconciliation, truth and bridge building.

Restorative Justice has the ability to humanise the criminal justice process for victims and offenders and many of them welcome the chance as did these young men, to engage in dialogue. As this story illustrates, Restorative Justice is not a soft option as it takes courage for both parties to come face-to-face and participate in a unique transformative experience where victims play an active role in holding the offender accountable whilst also having their emotional and informational needs met.

The challenge is to translate this story not only into our communities and our everyday lives and but also into the global environment so that everyone can be given the opportunity to enter into meaningful dialogue in order to resolve conflict at many levels. Although Restorative Justice is no magic bullet it has the potential to give victims and offenders more of what they want and if managed sensitively has the ability to be a significant tool in the resolution of conflict.

*For further information on Restorative Justice:*

[www.rja.org.nz](http://www.rja.org.nz) [www.restorativejustice.org.uk](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk) [www.criminologyresearch.govt.au](http://www.criminologyresearch.govt.au)

Susan Anderson was one of five panel speakers who introduced different aspects to the theme Reconciliation, Truth and Bridgebuilding, and how it relates in practical ways to life within the local/global community. The other panel members were: Key note speaker, Professor Kevin Clements, Director of the newly established New Zealand Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies; Rosslyn Noonan, Chief Human Rights Commissioner; Antony Vallyon, UNANZ National President; and Nancy Tuaine, Manager of the Whanganui River Maori Trust Board. A report on the Wanganui 2009 International Day of Peace events, which stretched over three days, will be appearing on OPTU's website: [www.peacethroughunity.info](http://www.peacethroughunity.info)  
*On 23 September, Professor Clements gave the inaugural lecture at Otago University, entitled: 'Enlarging the Boundaries of Compassion: Opportunities & Challenges for Peace Research in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. Available at [www.peacetrust.org.nz](http://www.peacetrust.org.nz)*

## **VII. STATE OF WORLD POPULATION 2009**

### ***Facing a changing world: women, population and climate***

In her foreword to the 2009 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) report Executive Director, Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, argues that climate change is much more than an issues of energy efficiency or industrial carbon emissions: *“it is also an issue of population dynamics, poverty and gender equity”*. It is about how climate change will affect women, men, boys and girls within each nation and around the world; how individual behavior can undermine or contribute to the global effort to address climate change. Therefore: *“A Copenhagen agreement that helps people to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and adapt to climate change by harnessing the insight and creativity of women and men would launch a genuinely effective long-term global strategy to deal with climate change”*.

Thoraya Ahmed Obaid points out that halting climate change will require a fresh, more equitable and sustainable approach to the way we live, produce and consume, and *“reining in the runaway greenhouse effect responsible for extreme weather and rising seas may therefore require a new definition of ‘progress’ and a new development paradigm.”*

The forthcoming Copenhagen Climate Change negotiations will take a course *‘that will move the world’s governments either forward or merely sideways in tackling one of the most challenging problem human beings have ever faced’*, says the UNFPA Executive Director, emphasizing that the most effective solutions to climate change will be those that *‘come from the bottom up, that are base on communities’ knowledge of their immediate environment, that empower – not victimize or overburden – those who must adapt to a new world, and that do not create a new dependency relationship between developed and developing countries.’*

***“The only lasting solution will be one that puts people at its centre”***, she stressed.

UNFPA is a development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity and helps reduce poverty all of which are relevant to climate change. The foreword in the 2009 report reminds the world that populations policies have evolved from a top-down focus on demographic change to a people-centered approach based on human rights and informed choice, something that those who *“invoke ‘population control’ as a response to climate change fail to grasp”*. At the 1994 International Conference on Populations and Development the world’s governments agreed that human rights and gender equality should guide all population weand development-related programmes, including those aimed at protecting the environment.

According to the UNFPA Executive Director, the 2009 report will show that women have the power to mobilize against climate change, but *‘this potential can be realised only through policies that empower them.’* Furthermore, the report also shows the required support that would allow women to fully contribute to adaptation, mitigation and building resilience to climate change.

<http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2009/en/>

*“Today we are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking, so that humanity stops threatening its life-support system. We are called to assist the earth to heal her wounds and in the process heal our own—indeed, to embrace the whole creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder.”*

Wangari Maathai

## ***VIII. The Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 - 2009***

While this legally binding international convention on the human rights for all children, ratified today by 193 States, has done much in the past 20 years to change the way children are being treated throughout the world, much more remains to be done.

UNICEF's special edition of its yearly report 'State of the World's Children' points to some progress, such as a 28 per cent drop in annual mortality of children under 5 (now an estimated 8.8 million); improved water sources for 1.6 billion people, and an increase in primary-school children in class to around 84 per cent (with gender gap narrowing). But *'it is unacceptable'* says UNICEF Executive Director, Ann M. Veneman, *'that children are still dying from preventable causes, like pneumonia, malaria, measles and malnutrition'*. And the problem of violence against children is *'particularly alarming'*, with up to an estimated 1.5 billion youngsters suffering annually from abuse.

Dan Seymour, Chief of the Gender and Rights Unit of UNICEF's Policy and Practice Division says that, although it cannot be claimed that the rights of children has been fulfilled, the Convention is providing everyone *'with an essential foundation to play our part in changing what needs to be changed.'* Adding, *'Like all powerful ideas, the CRC reflects a demand for deep and profound change in the way the world treats its children'*.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, continues to remind the world community of what remains to be done. <http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/whatyoucando.htm>

*"The Convention demands a revolution that places children at the heart of human development"*, says Dan Seymour.

## ***IX. THE GREAT INVOCATION***

From the point of Light within the Mind of God  
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.  
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God  
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men  
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known  
Let purpose guide the little wills of men –  
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men  
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out  
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the plan on Earth.

## ***X. 2009 Week of Spirituality, Values and Global Concern "The Spirit of the UN: Global Peace Through Reconciliation" & The Culture of Peace Working Group Questionnaire***

This year marked the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Week of Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, 26-30 October sponsored by The Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns–New York (CSVGC-NY). It was held at the United Nations (UN) and various venues close by due to the current building renovations

underway at the UN. A calendar of events that took place throughout the week can be found at the following website: [www.csvgc-ny.org](http://www.csvgc-ny.org)

In lieu of holding a seminar with speakers this year, the Culture of Peace Working Group (CofPWG) chose to *listen* by creating a questionnaire around the week's theme: "Global Peace Through Reconciliation".

The dissemination of questionnaires and an invitation to fill them out was beautifully woven into each of the nine programs created by the other eleven CSVGC Working Groups, which took place throughout the week. As a result, over 400 questionnaires were distributed with a favorable return rate of 25%, which exceeds the norm for survey returns; and more are still coming in, which were sent via email to various networks. The information gathered from the questionnaires is anticipated to prove extremely helpful to the CofPWG--especially the individual comments. It is the hope that these findings will shed light on the next logical steps that would bring forth what is envisioned in the monumental 1999 *Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace*. This is especially timely to consider now as we conclude the *International Decade for a Culture of Peace & Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2000-2010)* and look ahead to plan the next decade.

In the interest of obtaining a wider a group of responses, the return date for the questionnaires has been extended through the end of 2009. The CofPWG is pleased to extend a warm invitation to all *Many to Many* readers to participate and hopes you will be inspired to voice your thoughts!

Dear Participant,

We invite you to participate in the following United Nations non-governmental organization (NGO) committee questionnaire being given to a random sample of world citizens. Its purpose is to explore the concept of *Global Peace Through Reconciliation*, the theme of the 2009 "Week of Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns", honoring the *International Year of Reconciliation*, and the *Decade of the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)*.

For your confidentiality, no personal identifying data is necessary. Your responses will be reported anonymously. As a valued member of civil society, we need to hear from you. Please express yourself freely. Your answers will help us determine the best way forward.

We encourage you to make copies of the questionnaire and to pass them on within your networks for broader worldwide circulation. Kindly return per by mail to: CSVGC-NY, Culture of Peace Working Group, 321 Dean St. #12, Brooklyn, New York 11217 USA, or scan and return by email to: [optu-ny@earthlink.net](mailto:optu-ny@earthlink.net). Please direct any questions you have to Anne Creter at [annecrets@aol.com](mailto:annecrets@aol.com) . Thank you for sharing your valuable time!

Sincerely,

The NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns-NY, Culture of Peace Working Group

"A key role in the promotion of a culture of peace belongs to parents, teachers, politicians, journalists, religious bodies and groups, intellectuals, those engaged in scientific, philosophical and creative artistic activities, health and humanitarian workers, social workers, managers at various levels as well as to non-governmental organizations." *UN Declaration & Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace- Article 8*

## **XI. GLOBAL PEACE THROUGH RECONCILIATION Questionnaire**

-  
-  
-  
Nationality/Citizenship: \_\_\_\_\_ Country of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
-  
-  
Education: \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M F  
-

-  
-  
PLEASE CIRCLE THE ANSWER THAT DESCRIBES YOUR OPINION ABOUT EACH STATEMENT. TO FURTHER EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS, PLEASE COMMENT AFTER EACH STATEMENT AND AT THE END OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.  
-  
-

1) Global peace through reconciliation is possible.

-  
-  
strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree  
-

2) Peace is a fundamental human right.

-  
-  
strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree  
-

3) Peace is more than the absence of violence.

-  
-  
strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree  
-

4) Spirituality is an important component in creating peace through reconciliation.

-  
-  
strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree  
-

5) I understand the concept of the “culture of peace.”

-  
-  
yes    somewhat    no    unsure  
-

6) I spend some time each day in a regular practice that brings peace.

-  
-  
(Meditation, prayer, contemplation, study, other—please specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
-

yes    somewhat    no    unsure  
-

7) Ordinary people, working hand in hand with peacekeepers and politicians, are the key to the process of creating a true and lasting peace.

-  
-  
strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree  
-

8) I am aware of the worldwide movement to create ministries or departments of peace within governments.

-  
-  
yes    somewhat    no    unsure  
-

9) Building governmental structures (i.e., peace architecture, such as ministries or departments of peace)—that support the development of reconciliation processes—will promote global peace.

-  
-  
strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree  
-

10) The activities of my national government are adequate to support peacebuilding efforts for reconciliation processes leading to global peace.

-  
-  
strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree  
-

11) I think the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a

**Culture of Peace needs more media coverage.**

- strongly agree    agree    neutral    disagree    strongly disagree

**12) I believe my country should create a department or ministry of peace.**

- very much    yes    somewhat    no    unsure    my country already has one

**13) I favor the UN General Assembly passing a Resolution encouraging Member States to create ministries or departments of peace.**

- very much    yes    somewhat    no    unsure

**14) I favor creating a designated office for the Culture of Peace within the Peacebuliding Commission of the UN.**

- very much    yes    somewhat    no    unsure

**15) What are your feelings about the current state of peace in the world?**

**16) In your opinion, tell us how true and lasting peace would be possible? What qualities/ characteristics/ practices are essential?**

**17) Further Comments:**

**Thank you! We are grateful for your participation.**

Please return this form by scanning and emailing to [optu-ny@earthlink.net](mailto:optu-ny@earthlink.net) or mail to CSVGC–NY, Culture of Peace Working Group, 321 Dean St., #12, Brooklyn, New York 11217 USA

The NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values & Global Concerns–NY Culture of Peace Working Group