

# *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. *Newness*

Although it has been said that ‘there’s nothing new under the sun’, human beings - and no doubt the lives of the other kingdoms also – are frequently experiencing the exhilarating and uplifting sense of newness. From childhood to old age the instant joy that newness can bring may cover a whole range of experiences, from a new toy to a sudden revelation, insight or expansion; such experiences – such soul-bursts or life-fire - are immeasurable by any material methods of measurement.

However, the sense of newness can be fleeting and the wonderment dim with time; the enthrallment of the first tentative steps of a child, or even the first ‘giant step for mankind’ on the moon, will eventually fade into a cherished memory from the past.

There are however other, potentially more lasting, qualities to the sense of newness. The vision and hope, rising from a world shattered by war, of the creation of a freer, fairer and more peaceful world for future generations - as enshrined in the United Nations Charter - has somehow survived the test of time. No amount of abuse or cynicism, or corrupt behavior of member states, has been able to extinguish the fire of the vision of the Charter. And each year has seen the birth of new resolutions, declarations and treaties, all agreed upon by member nations, mapping out how to create a world system, which will have the welfare and wellbeing of humanity as well as the planetary environment at heart.

But why does the beauty and spirit of the Charter and the documents and guidelines with which we agree appear so lacklustre? Why is the world still in such a state of conflict and disarray? Where is the new world envisioned and so longed for?

Perhaps the old mindset has taken the vision as far as it can. Like seeds, the hopes and dreams; blueprints and guidelines for a new world may have needed a season of gestation; a time for sinking into the nurturing depth of the human heart and here take root and summon quality and substance, before growing and coming into full expression in the Aquarian Age.

The time has surely come for the long awaited new mindset to emerge in all its newness and resolve. Like the men and women during the world war, who gave what it took to stand up against and overcome a totalitarian might, we today shall likewise need to give what it takes to discard the present hard core materialism and realize the vision of a free, just and peaceful global neighbourhood. The mind, infused with heart fire, is well equipped for transforming and renewing all relationships, and for building the structures, bridges and networks of the future world community.

We should not be discouraged by slow growing. Immediate results are not necessarily a sign of success, nor lack thereof a sign of failure. The heart qualities of patience and perseverance will ensure the development of the fullest possible potential of each and all within the planetary whole.

When the human society resembles more an enlightened, living and breathing organism than an organization, maybe we shall become more aware of newness within all seasons and all ages? As conscious parts of the evolving whole, each thrill of newness will reverberate throughout the entire body of humanity and keep its heart forever young.

Says Master Morya: *“This is the dawn of the accomplishment of unity. The waning moon prepares for the coming of the new moon. Is not an infant upon it?”*

## **II. INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF YOUTH:**

### ***Dialogue & Mutual Understanding***

*(12 August 2010 – 11 August 2011)*

*The following address was delivered by Brierley Penn and Georgia Ramsden, students from Wanganui High School, at the United Nations Association of New Zealand, Wanganui Branch, New Year Brunch, 14 February 2010:*

“It was once said that “*The deepest definition of youth is life as yet untouched by tragedy.*” This being the international year of youth, we need to consider and embrace both the rights and responsibilities of youth in our societies today. What we as youth have to offer to society is very different from the voices and actions taken by our members of Parliament, and others who hold similar leadership positions today. Often the more idealistic views of youth may be dismissed as naïve, or impractical, and in doing this, we lose a great wealth of knowledge and revolutionary thinking. We therefore believe that in this International Year of Youth a two pronged approach needs to be brought to our thinking and our actions, whereby both what society can offer to the youth, and what the youth can offer to society must be considered.

So often, when youth become involved in youth government and youth councils, we are asked for our views on youth issues, such as youth recruitment into gangs and organising youth events, such as raves. People often neglect to ask our opinion on things that are perceived to be “adult problems”. They seem to think that only when we reach 18 years of age, and start voting do our views count.

It’s not about segregating the youth and finding the youth perspective on youth issues, it’s about finding the youth perspective on all issues. As the future leaders of our society, we care about the environment, we care that will have to support the baby boomers as well as recover from the recession, we care about the possibility of Iran obtaining nuclear weapons and we care about international stability. It is of some concern to us that when youth are brought into discussion on such issues, such as the youth delegation which New Zealand recently sent to the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change, it is as more of a token gesture, rather than actually as a real measure of youth participation. Of course, there are instances where youths are actually involved in making positive, practical change, but all too often, the voice of youth can get swept away in a tide of corporate and political influence.

So, what are actually the benefits of a youth voice? Often they can hold less of a bias, as we are less likely to be drawn by corporate incentives, or the promise of votes, and so can step back from an issue, and consider what we believe to be morally right, with a more simplistic approach. Put simply, our opinions are more often based on morals, rather than practicalities.

However, more importantly, the greatest benefit of involving the youth in the discussions of today, is that it is we who are going to have to bear the consequences of decisions made in the present day. Surely this in turn, should mean that the youth have a right to make an impact upon the decisions which will affect them, more than any other group? However, the flip side of this, is that admittedly so often youth have a tendency to get caught up in their own little bubbles, where issues such as world peace come secondary to the newest Xbox game, Paris Hilton’s latest exploits or simply who was wearing what at the party last weekend. The thing is, that most of these people would have valuable opinions to share on the ‘bigger issues’, however they’re never really invited to share them, or to break free of their own bubbles. We believe that this means that both those of us who are aware of these issues, and also of course, the adults who interact with these youth, their teachers and their parents, have something of a responsibility to share and to instruct on world events. For instance, never once in our entire school lives have we been sat down in a classroom and been taught about what’s happening right now. We’ve been taught about what has happened in the past, whether that be 500 years ago, or 50 years ago, and we’ve been told what we can learn from this, however the actual events of the present day are often neglected. Our education system really leaves it to the students themselves to remain politically and socially aware and active, and let’s face it, often youth just aren’t that

personally motivated. It can be difficult to find the time to sit down and read the Dominion every day, and for so many teenagers the incentive to find this time just isn't there. We believe this is a huge gap in our education system, whereby students can be rewarded with five excellence credits for learning how to hit a golf ball, but receive no recognised reward for knowing about the situation in Iran, in North Korea or in the Middle East.

School is the perfect medium through which we can teach people about the rights and responsibilities involved with being a human being in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As Franklin D. Roosevelt once told us, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future." At the moment, we are failing to do this, by failing in so many cases to create a culture amongst our youth whereby people care about what's going on in the big, wide world. Make no mistake, some of us do care, but particularly in this technological age, on the whole, society's values have become more weighted towards the self, rather than the community. Personal success, rather than social responsibility. What our youth believe, understand and are willing to act upon today, will form the basis of the values of our entire society in fifty years time.

In this international year of youth we have a great opportunity to engage in poignant discussion with teenagers throughout the world, not only to gauge their opinion on issues, but also to help them to form these opinions themselves, and to realise that what they have to say actually matters. Each generation has their own unique characteristics and quirks, some good, some not so good, but through dialogue and understanding we can hope to create a future using the best of what each generation has to offer.

Now, we've talked a lot about what youth has to offer in terms of dialogue, and predominantly we've discussed youth in first world countries. The main reason for this is that we feel that our needs and contributions are often overlooked. Compared to child soldiers and children dying of starvation the need to incorporate teaching about the Millennium Development Goal's into our curriculum can often pale into significance, and on face value, perhaps there's good reason for this. However, it is important to recognise that it is through this teaching of our youth that future generations can come to solve the problems of less fortunate children throughout the world. Of course, that's not to say that we should forget about these problems now by any means, but rather the United Nations needs to adopt a dual focus, so that these problems can be dealt with both in the present and into the future.

**Brierley Penn** – [bmpenn@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bmpenn@xtra.co.nz) **Georgia Ramsden** – [pramsden@clear.net.nz](mailto:pramsden@clear.net.nz)

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Under the theme '*Dialogue and Mutual Understanding*', the **International Year of Youth** aims at encouraging understanding across generations.

Nicola Shepherd, United Nations Programme on Youth, says that '*the International Year is about advancing the full and effective participation of youth in all aspects of society*', and '*we encourage all sectors of society to work in partnership with youth and youth organizations to better understand their needs and concerns and to recognize the contributions that they can make to society*'.

Among the international events that will take place throughout the year are:

- *the Fifth World Youth Congress in Istanbul, Turkey (from 31 July to 13 August), which will focus on youth and sustainable development in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);*
- *the World Conference for Youth in Mexico City (from 24 to 27 August), also with MDG focus; and*
- *the Youth Olympic Games in Singapore (from 14 to 26 August), which aims to inspire youth around the world to 'embrace, embody and express the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect.'*

For further information, contact Nicola Shepherd, United Nations Programme on Youth [youth@un.org](mailto:youth@un.org) or visit <http://www.un.org/youth>

### ***III. “MY ROLE IN CREATING A PEACEFUL WORLD”*** **2010 International Essay Contest for Young People**

This contest was organized by the Goi Peace Foundation, Japan, and UNESCO. It asks young people to write their essay as a response to the questions:

*what is your vision of a peaceful and harmonious world? And  
what can you and the young people of the world do to realize that vision?*

The entries must be submitted before 30 June 2010 to the International Essay Contest, c/o The Goi Peace Foundation 1-4-5 Hirakawacho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093 Japan – email: [essay@goipeace.or.jp](mailto:essay@goipeace.or.jp)

The **Goi Peace Foundation** is an organization committed to building peace. Through cultural and educational programmes its objectives are to enhance peace and respect for life and to raise awareness among young people on the role they could play in this area.

The winner will be announced November 2010 on the Goi Peace Foundation and UNESCO websites (<http://www.goipeace.or.jp/> and <http://www.unesco.org/youth>). For contest details see websites.

### ***IV THE IMPORTANCE OF BIODIVERSITY*** **Rene Wadlow\***

The loss of biological diversity stands alongside climate change as one of the most pressing areas of global policy – one of the crucial challenges of our time. Rich diversity is being lost at a greatly accelerated rate because of human activities. This impoverishes us all and weakens the capacity of the living systems on which humanity depends to resist growing threats such as climate change.

Biological diversity – or biodiversity – is the term given to the variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms. The biodiversity we see today is the fruit of years of evolution, shaped by natural processes and, increasingly, by the influence of humans. It forms the web of life of which we are an integral part and upon which we depend.

Humans are part of this complex web of life on which they depend for their evolution and growth both physically and spiritually. They now have the power to damage the ecological balance on a large scale or to prevent further destruction and preserving ecosystems for future generations.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, government officials pledged to reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2020 as part of a contribution to the reduction of poverty, as seventy per cent of the world’s poor live in rural areas, and biodiversity loss poses current and future dangers for them. In many cultures, trees are very important in the everyday life of people. This is the ‘subsistence forestry’ practiced by a vast majority of people. In subsistence forestry, trees and tree products are used for fuel, food, medicine, dyes, fodder, house and fence poles and

agricultural implements. In many societies, before taking anything from a tree, an offering is given, thus making an exchange.

However these 2002 commitments were not translated into policies and little was done to raise public awareness or action. Thus, the United Nations General Assembly, in Resolution 61/203, has proclaimed 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity. The resolution, marking the UN Convention on Biodiversity, was passed prior to the holding of the December 2009 Copenhagen Climate Conference which highlighted the interactions between global vegetation and climate, the negative effects of deforestation on climate, the importance of vegetation feedbacks on global warming and the extent to which forests create their own micro-climate influence.

The International Year of Biodiversity offers an excellent opportunity to increase understanding of the vital role that biodiversity plays in sustaining life on Earth and to draw attention to what people can do all over the planet to safeguard this irreplaceable natural wealth and to reduce biodiversity loss.

Obviously, there are many different aspects to the protection of biodiversity, measures which need to be taken within the UN system, by national governments and by local authorities. However, individual action is necessary and important. **World Citizens** have encouraged the planting of a tree both individually and as a group effort. Each planting can be accompanied by the thoughts, emotions and words considered appropriate. Each tree is a living symbol of respect for nature and a positive contribution to world citizenship.

For more information on UN activities, see the UN website for the International Year of Biodiversity: [www.cbd.int/2010](http://www.cbd.int/2010).

! Rene Wadlow, Representative to the United Nations, Geneva, Association of World Citizens

## ***V. Metamorphosis?***

The following quote is from the Policy Statement by Achim Steiner, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at the Opening of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its 11<sup>th</sup> Special Session, Bali, 24 February 2010:

*“In 2009 several world leaders called for more fundamental reform of the United Nations environmental processes and architecture. What might that mean? Minister Borloo recently described the future of France’s environmental policy as not being a choice between evolution or revolution but a metamorphosis.*

*This is perhaps an intriguing concept in the UN International Year of Biodiversity, given the dictionary definition:*

*‘Metamorphosis is a biological process by which an animal physically develop involving a conspicuous and relatively abrupt change in the animal’s structure’*

*I mention this transformational analogy in the light of the debate we will have here this week...”*

Full text: <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=612&ArticleID=6474&l=en&t=long>

## ***VI. 2010 –The International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures***

As the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World draws to a close, the three different themes for Year 2010: Biodiversity; Youth, Dialogue and Mutual Understanding, and Rapprochement of Cultures, will ensure that the work continues for the healing and restoration of relationships, between generations, cultures and religions, and with our planetary environment.

The UN General Assembly resolution (A/RES.62/90) reaffirms the ‘*solemn commitment of all States to fulfill their obligations to promote universal respect for, and observance and protection of, all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all..*’ and ‘*...recommends that, during the course of the year, appropriate events be organized on interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, inter alia, a high-level dialogue and/or informal interactive hearings with civil society.*’

One of the principal aims of the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures will be to demonstrate the benefits of cultural diversity and the importance of interaction and cooperation between cultures.

UNESCO stresses that ‘*as cultures encompass not only the arts and humanities, but also lifestyles, different ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs, the protection and promotion of their rich diversity invites us to rise to new challenges at the local national, regional and international levels*’. In order to correct ‘*flawed cultural representations, values and stereotypes*’ there is the need for ‘*integrating the principles of dialogue and mutual knowledge in all policies, particularly education, science, culture and communication policies*’.

At the February launch of the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures an international panel of prominent political, intellectual and religious people from all the world’s regions were asked to reflect on and ‘*reinvent the construction of peace founded on justice, respect for human rights, gender equality and solidarity in the context of globalisation, and the challenges it poses, such as climate change, management of resources and ethical and economic issues, to which we must respond by consistently using the strength and impact of dialogue*’ .

UNESCO would like to know about any activities that are being planned by groups or individuals for celebrating the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures and their commitment to promote interaction and cooperation between cultures.

Contact: UNESCO Headquarters, 7, place de Fontenoy 75352 Paris 07 SP France.  
E-mail: [bpi@unesco.org](mailto:bpi@unesco.org) website: [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

## ***VII. “Pragmatic Utopianism”***

When Betty Reardon, acknowledged worldwide as a founder of peace education, received the 2009 Sean MacBride Peace Prize from the International Peace Bureau, she accepted it on behalf of ‘the global community of peace educators’. She gave credit to inspirational peace trail blazers from the past, such as Bertha von Sutner, a Nobel laureate (1905) and tireless champion for peace, who attended the first Hague Peace Conference and who’s anti-war novel “Lay Down Your Arms”

(1892) became a bestseller; Sean MacBride, Nobel laureate (1974); and the International Peace Bureau (IPB), also a Nobel laureate (1910).

These three, she said, have demonstrated a leadership within movements which inspired the increasing support from the broader public for issues at the core of the realisation of our common humanity: *“the repudiation of violence and the realisation of universal human dignity; the convergence of the human rights and peace movements, manifested as gender equality and general and complete disarmament, respectively the social and structural transformations from which can emerge the practical possibilities for a culture of peace, the common aspiration of pragmatic utopians”*.

Broad public participation – participatory partnership joining leadership and citizenry – is an essential quality of pragmatic utopianism, says Betty Reardon. Pragmatic utopianism takes fully into account the many obstacles that stand in the way of the change required.

And: ***‘it challenges, with reasoned and evidence-based analysis the greatest obstacle of all, the prevailing political realism that refuses to see the positive possibilities for peace that could free us from the thrall of the armed conflict that continues to pour out our blood and treasure to feed the power lust that garbs itself as world leadership’***.

Betty Reardon firmly believes that in order to grasp the meaning of general and complete disarmament, a broad conceptual scope will be needed and is adamant that general and complete disarmament under international law will mean far more than the reduction of national arms to a level which will make international armed combat impossible. It will mean, she says: *‘creating the institutions to substitute non-violent means of conflict resolution for armed combat, such as legal procedures, mediation and negotiation; establishing some forms of policing to assure that the norms of non-violence and universal human rights will be observed.’* But even more importantly, she continues, ***‘it means changes in the structural and personal human relationships that provoke conflict and violence. In short, it calls us to incorporate a commitment to bring forth a culture of peace that is the expression of universal respect for human dignity of the sort implied by the value of diversity, as a human as well as an environmental value that demands just distribution as a means to achieve the diversity, an equal chance at survival and fulfilment by all Earth’s people and all the living elements of the biosphere. It means placing a higher value on life than on power, the highest value of our current highly armed global gender order.’***

*The content of this article, highlighting Betty Reardon’s thoughts on ‘pragmatic utopianism’, was taken from text in the “acceptance remarks by Betty Reardon at the awarding of the MacBride Peace Prize”, 14 November 2009, appearing on <http://www.peace-ed-campaign.org/newsletter/archives/current.html>*

Further links:

The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:

<http://www.haguepeace.org/resources/HagueAgendaPeace+Justice4The21stCentury.pdf>

International Institute on Peace Education (IIPE): <http://www.i-i-p-e.org/>

National Peace Academy: [www.nationalpeaceacademy.us](http://www.nationalpeaceacademy.us)

Global Campaign for Peace Education (GCPE): [www.peace-ed-campaign.org](http://www.peace-ed-campaign.org)

“Lay Down Your Arms” by Bertha von Sutner:

<http://www.archive.org/details/laydownyourarmsa00suttuoft>

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### ***VIII. World Oneness Day Petition***

The petition appeals to the United Nations to declare an international day that recognizes the oneness of humanity and the interconnectedness of all life -- a day that commemorates and strengthens the ideals of oneness and compassion within and among all nations and peoples.

The petition was initiated by **Humanity's Team**, an international grassroots spiritual movement active in more than 90 countries. Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Dalai Lama envoy Sonam Tenzin are among the petition's notable signers. Humanity's Team, in collaboration with other groups, plans on May 20 to deliver the petition, signed by some 50,000 people and with preliminary U.N. Member State support, to U.N. General Assembly President Ali Treki.

To sign, go to the petition's "landing page" on the Humanity's Team Web site: [www.humanitysteam.org/sai/oneness-petition/what-is-it](http://www.humanitysteam.org/sai/oneness-petition/what-is-it). From there, you can click on the "Sign the Petition" link, which takes you to the petition text and a sign-up area: [www.humanitysteam.org/onenessdaypetition](http://www.humanitysteam.org/onenessdaypetition).

We also invite you to forward the links to colleagues, friends and others on your e-mail list. If you wish to get more involved with this sacred activist project or with other Humanity's Team work, please write to Gerry Harrington at [gerry.harrington@humanitysteam.org](mailto:gerry.harrington@humanitysteam.org).

### ***IX. "RETHINKING POVERTY"***

Report on the World Social Situation 2010

The Report stresses that the time has come to rethink the way we understand poverty. It is time to assess how poverty is measured and the policies used to address it; and *"a more comprehensive strategy to reduce poverty, that puts decent jobs at the centre of development strategies, is needed to improve the lives of current and future generations"*. With only 5 years remaining to meet the Millennium Development Goal it is necessary to halve extreme poverty and *'to reflect on how the world is measuring progress on reducing poverty'*.

Among the issues that the Report wishes to raise is that the *'experience of poverty is multifaceted, multi-dimensional, and volatile'* and that therefore *'money income measurements'* can be misleading; and it offers some questions which need answering, such as: Should those living on less than a dollar a day, but with access to publicly provided education, health care, transportation and housing, be considered poor (less than \$1.25 per day)? Or, should those getting more than \$1.25 per day, but who pay fees for education and health services, etc. be considered non-poor? And, while education is seen as a vital pathway out of poverty, the parents who are sending their children to school - instead of contributing to the costs of living - could make the family be considered poor, and the parents, who send their children to work, non-poor.

At the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen 1995, poverty eradication was seen as *'an ethical, political and economic imperative'*. The 2010 Report on the World Social Situation affirms the urgent need for *'a strategic shift away from the market fundamentalist thinking, policies and practices of recent decades, towards more sustainable development- and equity-oriented policies, appropriate to national conditions and circumstances'*. The most important lesson, according to the Report, is *'that governments need to play a developmental role, integrating economic and social policies that support inclusive output and employment growth, while attacking inequality and promoting justice'*.

## ***X. Reviewing the UN Peacebuilding Architecture***

In his remarks to the informal consultation on the 2010 review of the UN peacebuilding architecture, held at the UN Headquarters February this year, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reminded the meeting of the vision which led to the establishing of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). The clear goal, specified at the 2005 World Summit by world leaders, was ‘*to help countries emerging from conflict make an irreversible transition from war to sustainable peace*’. The new peacebuilding architecture was designed ‘*to bring all key stakeholders to the table, and to keep them engaged for as long as it took to set a country on the path towards peace and prosperity*’.

The Secretary-General urged the meeting to look at achievements as well as how to address and overcome weaknesses and challenges, because ‘*the peacebuilding architecture is an invaluable platform; let us ensure it has the tools and political support to perform its vital functions*’.

Dr. Peter Wittig, UN Permanent Representative of Germany and Chair of the PBC, said in his statement that ‘*our goal should be to live up to the expectations of societies and populations emerging from conflict and improving the contribution of the PBC to building hope for a better future*’ and ‘*the 2010 Review gives us an opportunity to reinvigorate the vision behind the Peacebuilding Commission*’. Dr. Wittig went on to identify several areas which could enhance the collective peacebuilding efforts in the future, such as:

- strengthening the role of the Organisational Committee of the PBC in setting overarching policies and contributing to the strategic coordination within in UN System;
- PBC should play the central role in bringing cohesion between political, security, development and humanitarian actors. PBC’s partnership with International Financial Institutions, regional and sub-regional organisations as well as civil society is crucial;
- PBC should provide a framework for mutual accountability;
- A more structured relationship, including increased interaction, between the Security Council and the PBC is needed; and
- PBC should reflect on how to become more flexible, less cumbersome in dealing with country-specific situations; how to monitor progress more effectively, and how to develop exit strategies

Dr. Wittig concluded his statement by stressing the following ‘key point’: “***In 2010 we have to reinvigorate the vision behind the PBC. We have to follow up on the report on ‘peacebuilding in the aftermath of conflict’ and on Security Council Resolution 1889 – Women in Peacebuilding. We have to establish a closer cooperation with the World Bank and the IMF, and with the African Union and the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding.***”

***“Effective peacebuilding is a central function of the United Nations, and the PBC role – and ultimately its relevance – will be measured by its capability to deliver”***

<http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/>

## ***XI. Share your Contribution to the “Culture of Peace” Decade***



The United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) is coming to a close. How much progress has been made during this Decade in fulfilling its mandate of promoting a culture of Peace?

The UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/64/80 on “Culture of Peace” adopted by consensus on 7 December 2009 in its operative paragraph 17 has requested “the Secretary-General to submit to the General assembly at its sixty-fifth session a summary report on the activities carried out in the past ten years by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and other United Nations entities, member States and civil society, including non-governmental organisations, to promote and implement the Programme of Action.”

A civil society initiative with David Adams, former UNESCO Director as the coordinator, has been undertaken to prepare our own culture of peace ten-year report to be made available to the UN member-states in the General Assembly and all other partners including the media. This report is also aimed at making our contribution to the preparation of the report requested of the UN Secretary-General in the resolution 64/80.

**You are invited to visit <http://decade-culture-of-peace.org/> to complete their easy online questionnaire to tell the world how your group has contributed towards advancing the culture of peace.**

The submissions can be made in five different languages: English, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Russian. ***Please note that the deadline is 30 April.***

## ***XII. GENDER EQUALITY ARCHITECTURE***

It has been a long, hard and thorny road toward universal implementation of the rights and freedoms of women and children. But the persistent work of women within groups and civil society organisations throughout the world, and within the UN system, has steadily brought greater awareness as well as some progress on the many issues concerning gender equality.

The UN Charter, the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the MDGs, and untold other documents, initiatives and campaigns have created a momentum behind the gender equality and empowerment of women, which resulted in a landmark resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly, 14 September 2009 (A/63/311). This resolution calls for the establishment of a new UN

entity that would merge the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

On 6 January 2010 the UN Secretary-General submitted his Report: “Comprehensive proposal for the composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women” to the UN General Assembly (A/64/588). The mission statement of the proposed composite gender entity says:

*“Grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the composite entity will work for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. Placing women’s rights at the centre of all its efforts, the composite entity will lead and coordinate United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world. It will provide strong and coherent leadership in priorities and efforts, building effective partnerships with civil society and other relevant actors.”*

The composite entity will apply the lessons of coherence, efficiency and effectiveness emerging from good practices at all levels, and provide capacity to meet the need for:

- a strong voice for women and girls at the global regional and local levels;
- better support for Members as they enhance the normative and policy environment for accelerating progress towards full equality for women and girls, both globally and locally;
- assistance for national partners as they respond to critical gaps and challenges, by leading the United Nations system in developing countries and implementing innovative and catalytic initiatives;
- an enhanced UN response to country-defined needs and priorities of women and girls, including the development of national capacity, by leading the United Nations system to work in a more effective, collaborative and coherent way

The composite entity will be led by an Under-Secretary-General, who will ensure the necessary authority and leadership, and who will be a member of all senior UN decision-making bodies.

The UN Secretary-General has urged the General Assembly to adopt, ‘without delay’, the resolution which asks for this new entity to be created. [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

***“Until women and girls are liberated from poverty and injustice, all our goals – peace, security, sustainable development – stand in jeopardy.”***

Ban Ki-moon, 3 March 2010

### ***XIII. CLIMATE CHANGE***

As the sense of disappointment becomes less acute, the world community is taking stock of what was and was not achieved at the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change, December 2009.

One hundred and nineteen world leaders, the largest gathering of heads of state and government in UN’s history, attended the gathering which concluded with a majority of countries, some of the biggest and richest and some of the smallest and most vulnerable, agreeing on the ‘Copenhagen Accord’.

While this accord may be a far cry from what the world community had hoped for, industrialised countries agreed to commit to implement, individually or jointly, *'quantified economy-wide emissions target for 2020, to be listed in the accord before 31 January 2010'*. Several developing countries also agreed to list their voluntary pledges before this date. By 1 February 2010 the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) had received national pledges to cut and limit greenhouse gases by 2020 from 55 countries accounting for 78 per cent of global emissions from energy use.

The leaders acknowledged that these pledges may not be sufficient to keep the global temperature rise below 2 degrees or less, and therefore called for a review of the accord by 2015.

The accord also shows the intent of world leaders to take immediate action on mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, reducing emission from deforestation in developing countries and capacity building. It was agreed to establish the "Copenhagen Green Climate Fund" to support immediate action on climate change, with a collective commitment by developed countries toward this fund reaching \$30 billion within the next three years. Regarding long-term finance, developed countries agreed jointly to raise \$100 billion a year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries. The UNFCCC Executive Director, pointed to the fact that this accord was *'a letter of intent'*; so now the challenge is *'to turn what we agreed politically in Copenhagen into something real, measurable and verifiable'*.

At the **11<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the UN Environment Programme's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum** (Bali, February 2010), the comprehensive and wide-ranging *'Nusa Dua Declaration'*, was agreed in the closing session by world environment ministers. In this statement the ministers agree that the planet is confronted by a *'multiple global environmental and development crises related to food, energy, freshwater, biodiversity, climate and finance, the effects of which are felt across the globe and have serious implications for the achievement of the MDGs'*.

There is an urgent need for an overall management of the global environment, but the present *'governance architecture'* has been allowed to become too *'complex and fragmented'*. Changes are needed, says the statement, for moving towards a global environmental governance architecture *'that will better facilitate the ability of countries to respond to current and future challenges, and to capture emerging opportunities'*.

As a first redeeming step the governments agreed, at an extraordinary meeting during the week, on more cooperative action in the areas of chemicals, hazardous wastes and human health through the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary and Executive Director of UN Environment Programme, remarked that *'the ministers responsible for the environment, meeting just a month after the climate change conference in Copenhagen, have spoken with a clear, united and unequivocal voice'*, and added, *'faced with the continued erosion of the natural environment, the persistent and emerging challenges of chemical pollution and wastes and the overarching challenge of issues such as climate change, the status quo is not an option and change is urgently needed'*.

Governments also agreed to begin preparations for the landmark conference to be held in Brazil 2012, called Rio plus 20, through *'further defining, promoting and implementing the concept of the green economy in addressing the Rio+20 theme of the green economy, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication'*.

The Nusa Dua Declaration, the first by world environment ministers since they met in Sweden (in Malmö 2000), will be passed on to the UN General Assembly. ([www.unep.org/gc/gccss-xi/](http://www.unep.org/gc/gccss-xi/))

### ***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.