

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. Sustainable Energy for All

At the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi (January 2011), the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon referred to the UN theme for year 2012 - the '*International Year for Sustainable Energy for All*' - and stressed the urgent need for "a global clean energy revolution". Ban Ki-moon also said he was convinced that the world is on the brink of an exciting, sustainable future in which people everywhere '*should be able to enjoy the health, educational and social benefits that modern energy sources offer*'. He further made a passionate appeal to people everywhere '*to invest wisely*' and '*to get our priorities right*'.

So, as the energy is leaving our exhausted and unsustainable societal systems, and nature is straining to meet the impossible demands upon it, we are all asked to take a good, hard, look at our priorities and consider investing wisely in the future of humanity and the habitat we share with other creatures and beings.

Leading up to the second World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, June 2012) the world community has been and is discussing the many interconnected issues at hand and preparing a vast variety of papers and proposals on matters concerning sustainability. Ever since the 1992 Summit a growing number of experts, politicians, economists, international corporations and environmentalists are, with varying degree of sincerity, seeking to find solutions to the many deficiencies besetting our world and how some of the most drastic consequences of Climate Change can be avoided.

The terms sustainable development, sustainable use and sustainable growth that have often been used interchangeably, are now becoming more clearly defined, and sustainable growth found to be a misleading contradiction in terms - belonging perhaps to the time when conjurers could persuade people to believe that indefinite 'borrowing' would make all worldly pursuits of happiness come true.

As preparations for the forthcoming Summit on Sustainable Development are continuing with the aim of achieving the best, most meaningful outcome for our world, people everywhere are also taking time to look beyond the immediate and urgent matters of sustainable life and living, and seeking more clarity on the lingering question in our minds on, what is the role of the human being within the greater scheme of things. And what is the origin of the opposing forces within us that can drive us to acts of self-destructive cruelty as well as to selfless goodness? The ardent explorer and recorder of the evolutionary history of all known forms of life; the investigative experimenter and apprentice manipulator of energies; the self-conscious human being who is capable of making well considered choices and decisions, seems to have reached a point of indecision. Standing at the midway point humanity is anxiously weighing its options.

But the Elders among us urge that this is the era for spiritual action, and are calling on all human beings throughout the world to come together in support of life and light. An ancient scripture speaks of the Light that shines beyond all things on Earth; beyond even the highest, the very highest, Heaven. And this, says the scripture, is the Light that shines within each human being. This Light, issuing forth from beyond creation, is driving and guiding the evolutionary journey of all toward the ultimate destination.

Let us, says a Wisdom Teacher, '*hasten to invoke the heart for service to the New World*'. A New World in which new and ancient - and timeless - energy sources will ensure that every single human being is enjoying all the benefits that these can bring - if we put our mind, heart and soul into making it so.

II. Water is the bloodstream of the Green Economy

“*Water is the bloodstream of the green economy*” is the opening sentence of the Statement to the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20 Summit) prepared by the World Water Week, held in Stockholm 21-27 August.

The World Water Week is an annual meeting place for the planet’s most urgent water-related issues, organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI). It brings together some 2,500 experts, practitioners, decision makers and business innovators from around the world to ‘exchange ideas, foster new thinking and develop solution’. SIWI is a policy institute, committed to contributing to the international efforts to combat the increasing water crisis besetting the world through developing and promoting ‘knowledge-integrated policies towards sustainable use of the world’s water resources leading to sustainable development and poverty eradication’ (www.siwi.org)

The Stockholm Statement stresses that ‘water, energy, and food are interlinked and interdependent; that securing them is central to alleviating poverty and to creating a climate resilient and robust green economy. These issues must be addressed *‘in an integrated, holistic manner that values the natural environment recognises the carrying capacity of the planet’*. Action must be taken at all levels to address inequities ‘especially for the ‘bottom billion’ who live in slums and impoverished rural areas and survive without access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, sufficient food and energy services’. Universal access to water and sanitation services is a human right the Statement reminds the Rio+20 Summit.

The one-page Statement calls on local, municipal, and national governments and all major groups participating at the Rio+20 Summit to commit to achieving the following intervening targets by 2010:

- 20% increase in total food supply-chain efficiency; reduce losses and waste from field to fork;
- 20% increase in water efficiency in agriculture; more nutrition and crop per drop;
- 20% increase in water use efficiency in energy production; more KWh per drop;
- 20% increase in the quantity of water reused; and
- 20% decrease in water pollution.

It also calls for all governments to commit to investing in safe drinking water and sanitation services and hygiene education for its people; that current measurements of economic performance are expanded to include indicators on environmental and social sustainability, and that economic and social incentives are created to promote water use efficiency and protect freshwater ecosystems. (www.worldwaterweek.org)

The Stockholm Statement has been supported by UN-Water, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and endorsed by a number of international organisations, including: Conservation International, International Water Management Institute, IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, Stakeholder Forum, Stockholm International Water Institute, Wateraid and Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), among others.

During the World Water Week a ‘Mayors Panel’ discussed the many water related issues of their cities and agreed that *‘cities are dynamic magnets for growth, migration, innovation, culture,*

finance, pollution and consumption'. By 2050 urban residents will account for 80% of all people on the planet, outnumbering the entire population of today.

They conceded that: *“all of the challenges and opportunities involved in urban growth fall upon the shoulders of one person more than any other: the mayor”*.

The mayors' panel offered the opportunity for community leaders to share concerns and seek solutions to the many problems of urban living. Among the issues discussed were the need for increased focus on water issues, and how urban planners, tasked with the assignment to integrate water into their development strategies, could best fulfil their brief.

The participating mayors shared best practices and smart solutions as well as the concerns and challenges faced by the individual local leader. Recent tsunamis, hurricanes and floods had highlighted the need to re-assess how local governments can work to integrate strategies to better adapt to climate change.

At the World Water Week the following eye-opening “water footprint facts & figures” were offered:

- *10-20,000 litres of water are used to produce 21 kg of beef;*
- *8,000 litres of water are used to produce a pair of leather shoes;*
- *2,900 litres of water are used to produce a cotton shirt;*
- *140 litres of water are used to produce 1 cup of black coffee without sugar;*
- *200 litres of water are used to produce the sugar in 1 can of cola;*
- *70 % of existing global freshwater is withdrawn for irrigation in agriculture; and*
- *Food demand is estimated to double by 2050.*

In a public statement at the Stockholm World Water Week, Alexander Müller, Assistant Director-General for Natural Resources of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), made it clear that *“Agriculture is by far the largest consumer of water; greening the economy through agriculture has the largest scope for achieving food security and improving the livelihood of rural people. Sustainable agriculture creates green jobs and increases resource efficiency.”* We are all aware of the challenges facing all planetary life and the need to respond, he said and added: *“We have no more excuses to delay the action required”*. (www.fao.org)

The following quote by Li Lifeng, Director of WWF's global freshwater programme, also taken from a statement during the World Water Week, urges that:

“As we eat our way up the food chain, the water intensity of many foods is also increasing in the face of depleting groundwater reserves and climate change impacts. Solving the water, energy and food equation for the world has to be a global priority”

The Worldwide Fund for Nature is convinced that there is much that the world community can do to help alleviate the water issue so critical to all life on the planet – if we work hard on it, together. WWF's ultimate goal is to build a future where people live in harmony with nature.

(www.wwf.org)

III. Making Rio 2012 Work : Setting the stage for global economic, social and ecological renewal

The paper, 'Making Rio 2012 Work – setting the stage for global economic, social and ecological renewal', published (June 2011) by the New York University Center for International Cooperation (CIC), was written by Alex Evan and David Steven.

This paper bluntly states that, since the 1992 Earth Summit, sustainable development has still not materialised, and “*as global GDP has risen, so have greenhouse gas emissions, species loss and environmental degradation*”. And today, “*the world faces old and new security challenges that are more complex than our multilateral and national institutions are currently capable of managing*”. The Rio+20 Summit could turn out to become a ‘damp squib’, it says, unless the core issue of **un-sustainability** is put squarely at the centre of all summit deliberations.

Making Rio 2012 Work identifies some main areas, which it believes could be important foci for the summit, such as:

- Greening growth, pointing to the opportunities for developing countries to become the ‘laboratories of the future’;
- Equity in a world of limits, saying that a world that attempts to sweep the issues of ‘fair shares’, such as access to energy, land, water and ‘carbon space’, under the carpet is one that is failing to face up to what sustainability will require;
- Building resilience to shocks and stresses, both internationally and nationally through improved crisis management, upgraded humanitarian assistance system, disaster risk reduction, social protection, decent jobs and legitimate, accountable governance.

The paper says that Rio 2012 will need to involve the non-state actors who can and will make the green economy a reality, such as companies, institutional investors, NGOs, philanthropic foundations and many others.

Among its many poignant suggestions to the Summit, the paper asks (with regard to the clear need for improved system coherence) that “*rather than re-arranging the institutional furniture within the existing environment silo, Rio 2012 needs to break out of it*”, for instance by

- requesting governments not to put environment ministers in charge of delegations, but rather to be represented by heads of governments or finance ministers; and by
- improving system coherence through making existing international organisations work effectively together... Especially by building ‘*interoperability to make them work across silos, for instance by mandating international organisations to collaborate on producing a World Resources Outlook*’

Making Rio 2012 Work believes that the forthcoming Summit could play a ‘pathfinding role’ and pave the way towards new types of collaboration. It might also help the world recognise that a power-shift is underway, between states, as well as with non-state actors. The paper concludes:

“Realizing this potential will require leadership, and a considerable degree of luck given the headwinds facing the summit. Probably the gloom-mongers will be right, with their predictions that Rio 2012 will be a damp squib. But that outcome is not written in stone. Rio 2012 could still emerge as the turning point the world needs.”

The New York University Center for International Cooperation works to enhance international responses to conflict, insecurity, and scarcity through applied research and direct engagement

with multilateral institutions and the wider policy community, and: “We have a particular concentration on the United Nations and multilateral responses to conflict”.

(<http://www.globaldashboard.org/wp-content/uploads/Rio-2012-paper.pdf>)

“Cooperation rests...

on the will of the people of the world to work for peace. A real will to peace must spring not from fear, but from positive faith in the brotherhood of men”

(Norman Makin, the first President of the UN Security Council)

IV. Caring for Climate

In September 2011 the UN Global Compact released a report from the Third Meeting of the Signatories of “Caring for Climate” (Copenhagen, May 2011), in which more than a hundred senior representatives from business, civil society, Government, the UN and other interest groups focused on finding ways to scale-up and intensify the business contribution to the Rio+20 Summit. (<http://climate-l.iisd.org/news/un-global-compact-issues-report-of-third-caring-for-climate-meeting/>)

The September report summarises the conclusions agreed upon by the meeting participants as follows:

- although challenging for many companies, core business strategies must be altered to adapt to the impacts of climate change through a sustainable approach,
 - businesses must go beyond showcasing their efforts to put forth climate objectives for the business community,
 - integrating water and climate issues into strategic business planning and operational activities is increasingly important to address climate mitigation and adaptation priorities – especially ahead of Rio+20. Moving forward, Caring for Climate and CEO Water Mandate signatories will offer new collaborative opportunities focused on disclosure and public policy engagements, and
 - Caring for Climate companies recognise that energy is a priority issue ahead of Rio+20 and will work with other businesses to expand modern energy services and mobilize larger business contribution to providing universal access to sustainable energy.
- (www.un.globalcompact.org)

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The UK Guardian offers a website through which its editors are highlighting and updating the most important environmental stories, debate and analysis, delivered in briefings directly to ‘your inbox’ every week.

For information on how to sign up, go to

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/sustainable-business/series/good-transition>

V. Climate Change is lapping at our Feet

On his way to attend the Pacific Islands Forum (Auckland, New Zealand, September 2011) UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon visited the Solomon Islands and Kiribati, and saw for himself the consequences of rising sea levels. He spoke of looking into the eyes of a young boy who was afraid to sleep at night because of the rising water and whose parents would stand guard when the tide came in.

During his visit to the South Pacific region the UN Secretary-General took time to address students at the Auckland University as well as the University of Sydney.

This is a time of global transition and global uncertainty, Ban Ki-moon told the students and “*we are at a pivot-point in history when the old world is slowly but irreversibly changing and the contours of a new world are just beginning to take shape*”. There is no opt-out clause for global problem-solving, and a great need for ‘*big thinking and bold action*’. We must, said Ban Ki-moon, “*unite and squarely face the anxieties and the opportunities of the 21st century*”, and today the world community is more engaged than ever and people more eager than ever to take charge of their lives. In a direct appeal to the young people of today he said: ‘*you are the most potent force to hold leaders to account, to transform your communities, to build a better world*’.

Ban Ki-moon made no apologies for giving the students a stark picture of the many grave security and sustainability issues facing humanity and the global environment and stressed the importance of connecting the dots between these challenges, such as climate change and water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food insecurity and the empowerment of the world’s women. Although seemingly distinct from each other, all these issues are intimately linked, and we must find the linkages, said Ban Ki-moon, and illustrated this point with a Korean proverb which says that it doesn’t matter how many beads you have, ‘*without a thread, you will never make a necklace*’.

On 7 September, during the 42nd Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the UN General-Secretary met with the Pacific Island Forum Leaders and presented a joint statement, which stressed that climate change and ocean acidification remained the greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific. It calls for an ambitious reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, sufficient to enable the survival and viability of all Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The statement also stressed ‘the critical importance of the sustainable development, management and conservation of the region’s oceans, coastal and fisheries resources as a source of livelihoods and income for communities, industries and governments, and of enabling Pacific SIDS to enjoy a greater share of the benefits derived from those resources’. It also calls on the international community to tackle threats to marine ecosystems and work towards integrated oceans management and a global network of marine protected areas.

It further notes the value of ‘enhanced cooperation and experience-sharing between the two Organisations on conflict prevention, peace-making, mediation, peace-keeping and peace-building, building on positive experiences in Bougainville and Solomon Islands’. Acknowledging the value of regular high-level dialogue, it was also agreed to convene meetings between the Secretary-General and PIF Leaders at regular intervals, beginning around the opening of the 67 Session of the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2012. (www.un.org)

***‘Technology will continue to shape and transform our lives. But let us not mistake being connected, with being united.
Being more connected depends on technology; being more united depends on us – on leaders, on institutions, on You’***

(Ban Ki-moon, in his Auckland University address)

VI. State of the World Forum: Women's Earth and Climate Caucus

Resilient Communities: Restoring People and Planet
Seminars and Trainings

Leading up to the 2012 Rio+20 Summit the Women's Earth and Climate Caucus is offering a series of seminar and training programmes in the building of resilient communities. Through exploring and building resilience we will find the way to deeper understanding of the natural world around us and the creative redemptive power that resides within us all.

In their introductory comments the Women's Earth and Climate Caucus points out that: "*from United Nation studies to the business community to a wide spectrum of world leaders and Indigenous elders, all are recognizing that empowering women and women's leadership are key to climate change strategies and essential to changing our current course towards one of thriving, healthy and just communities.*"

For more general information on the Caucus and specific details on the forthcoming seminars, contact June Timberlake at jtimberlake@worldforum.org

The Rights of Mother Earth campaign:

In 2008, Ecuador became the first country to officially recognise the rights of nature in its constitution, and subsequently the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth was proclaimed in Cochabamba, Bolivia, at the World People's Conference on Climate Change and The Rights of Mother Earth, attended by some 35,000 people from 140 countries (April 2010). In 2011 Bolivia introduced the Rights of Nature through its Law of Mother Earth.

Building upon the momentum of past efforts the Rights of Mother Earth campaign aims to create a grassroots movement to bring about a global recognition and acceptance of Rights of Nature, and as an essential step for achieving this Nature needs to be acknowledged and respected as a 'rights bearing entity', and not merely as a 'property to be exploited at will'.

To this end, the Rights of Mother Earth campaign is aiming to collect one million letters from people around the world asking for the acceptance and implementation of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth by ALL Nations.

These letters will be delivered by a delegation of youth to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development which will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 4-6 June 2012 (Rio+20). To sign this petition and add your personal comments, please go to www.RightsOfMotherEarth.com; <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/yes-to-rights-of-nature/>

VII. Wangari Maathai

On the 26 September 2011 the world lost an inspirational and strong and radiant woman warrior, who with heart ablaze awakened the vision in people everywhere of a world that works for the good of all life and lives within the planetary environment – and made them believe that they too can help make this vision come true.

“She was a visionary who saw over the tree canopy, but never lost sight of the roots”, said Jan McAlpine, Director of the Secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests.

In his tribute, Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director said: “Wangari Maathai was a force of nature. While others deployed their power and life force to damage, degrade and extract short term profit from the environment, she used hers to stand in their way, mobilize communities and to argue for conservation and sustainable development over destruction”. UNEP has lost a real friend and an icon of the environmental movement, he said, but Wangari Maathai’s ***“work and her vision will live on in the millions upon millions of people – young and old – who heard Wangari’s voice, resonated with her aims and ideals and like her rolled up their sleeves to design and define a better future for all”***. www.un.org

VIII. Preventive Diplomacy

As the UN Secretary-General launched his report, entitled ‘Preventive Diplomacy: Delivering Results’ (9 September), he called on the world community to *‘reinforce preventive diplomacy which, through a system of early warnings and skilled interventions, can pre-empt conflicts before they erupt, saving both lives and national resources’*.

The report is dedicated to former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, who died in a plane crash 50 years ago in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and starts with a quote by him which says: *“I believe we have only begun to explore the full potentialities of the United Nations as an instrument for multilateral diplomacy, especially the most useful combinations of public discussion on the one hand and private negotiations and mediation on the other.”* Since then preventive diplomacy has been evolving, and this first ever report on preventive diplomacy examines the opportunities and challenges the UN and its partners are currently facing in ‘conducting preventive diplomacy in a changing political and security landscape’.

In the introduction to his report, Ban Ki-moon stresses the importance of diplomatic action at the earliest possible stage *‘to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur’*. He tells how his efforts to re-energize, improve and expand the UN’s preventive diplomacy efforts and partnerships was encouraged by Member States, which were themselves placing greater emphasis on conflict prevention.

Ban Ki-moon points to several reasons for this renewed interest: *“Foremost is the recurring and devastating impact of armed conflict on individuals, societies and economies, coupled with the recognition – all the more acute in these strained financial times – that failure to prevent conflict is extremely costly. Moreover, although quiet successes rarely make the news, a number of recent engagements have reconfirmed that through a combination of analysis, early warning, rapid response and partnership, we can help to defuse tension in escalating crises and assist parties in resolving disputes peacefully”*.

Ban Ki-moon stresses that while the biggest return on investment in preventive diplomacy comes in lives saved ‘it also makes strong economic sense’. The World Bank estimates that the average cost of civil war is equivalent to more than 30 years of gross domestic product growth for a medium-sized developing country, with the cumulative costs of the most severe civil wars can amount to tens of billions of dollars. By contrast, the UN regional office in West Africa (UNOWA), which has played an important role in conflict prevention and mediation in Guinea, Niger and elsewhere in the sub-region, has a regular budget of less than \$8 million per year.

Today preventive diplomacy ‘standby teams’ of mediation experts are able to deploy within 72 hours and assist negotiators in preventive diplomacy matters anywhere in the world.

The report concludes with recommendations to strengthen the international capacity for preventive diplomacy over the next five years. *“With increasing knowledge, stronger partnerships and better instruments, I am convinced that it is possible to further strengthen the international community’s capacity for preventive diplomacy in the interest of peace, security and development”*, said the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon. (www.un.org)

IX. Who Killed Hammarskjöld?

The UN, the Cold War and White Supremacy in Africa

By Susan Williams

Hurst & Co, London. 2011

The following text is from a recent review of Susan Williams book ‘Who Killed Hammarskjöld’, written by Peter Greaves for the UNA-UK journal “New World”. It is included here with Peter’s kind permission.

“This riveting story reads like a novel by le Carré, or, as Gérard Prunier puts it, a James Bond novel. It was launched on 2nd September at a conference on “Dag Hammarskjöld, the United Nations, and the End of Empire and the Future of Global Governance”, sponsored by the DH Foundation, Uppsala; the Institute of Commonwealth Studies; and UNA-UK Westminster Branch.

In spite of a road accident 6 months before which badly smashed the author’s right elbow she and her publishers managed to get the book out in time for the 50th anniversary of Dag’s death at Ndola on 18th September 1961, just after midnight. She was unable to sign my copy of her book, but Dag’s nephew, Knut Hammarskjöld who was present did so, adding simply “50 years later.”

At the age of 25 Knut had flown to Ndola on 19th September to represent his family. While he was there he was given surreptitiously evidence that added an important piece to the elaborate jigsaw that the author has painstakingly assembled of this extraordinary event.

Susan Williams has gained access to many sources of documents that throw new light on the situation, and the context of the times, including the archive of Sir Roy Welensky at Rhodes House in Oxford. And she has been able to meet and interview an amazing number of extraordinary characters who easily out-Bond Bond. She describes well the atmosphere of the period, when – for example – a group of right-wing British MPs who were aghast at the implications of Macmillan’s famous “Wind of Change” speech in Cape Town in 1960 formed the Monday Club (Monday being the day he made the speech) in order to oppose decolonization.

Williams is measured in her overall assessment: “Hammarskjöld may have been assassinated; or he may have been killed in a failed hijacking. But whatever the details, his death was almost certainly the result of a sinister intervention.” And later: “Hammarskjöld’s untimely death was different in many ways from that of Lumumba, but there was a shared context: the decolonization of central Africa and the self-interest of the Western powers and the multinationals operating in the region...Patrice Lumumba and Dag Hammarskjöld were both killed because they sought to protect the integrity of the Congo and the self-determination of its people – free from the greed and interference of foreign powers.”

Six months after Hammarskjöld’s death President Kennedy invited a senior UN official to the Oval Office to apologise for the pressure that had been put on Dag to implement US policy in the Congo

– a pressure which Dag had refused to heed. “I realise now”, said Kennedy, “that in comparison to [Dag], I am a small man. He was the greatest statesman of our century.”

Peter Greaves, London. 17.9.2011 (petergreaves@ukgateway.net)

X. The Peace Bell Ceremony at the United Nations Ringing in the International Day of Peace, 15 September 2011

The following is the UN General Assembly President of the 66th session, H. E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser’s remarks at the Peace Bell ceremony:

“Secretary-General, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my honour to be with you at today’s Peace Bell ceremony, to mark the International Day of Peace. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Messengers of Peace and Goodwill Ambassadors for their valuable work, and to wish them every success in the future in fulfilling their important mission.

This year, the International Day of Peace feels particularly significant. People across the globe, including our youth, are joining together and calling for peace and justice in voices previously unheard. Historic shifts are taking place across the Arab world, in the name of peace, democracy and human rights. These shifts remind us of the pressing need to seek peace peacefully, to use mediation and other tools to broker legitimate, lasting peace.

We are also reminded that peace is not just the absence of war. Living peacefully means having food and shelter, health care and education, freedom and dignity. To help ensure and promote sustainable peace, we must continue to focus on development, improving living standards, and protecting human rights.

This year, as President of the 66th session of the General Assembly, I will work hard to further our vital mission of maintaining international peace and security. I will focus the Assembly’s efforts on four main priority areas: the peaceful settlements of disputes; UN reform and revitalization; improving disaster prevention and response; and sustainable development and global prosperity. I will undertake this work in the spirit of cooperation and consensus-building, and with particular attention to South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as dialogue among civilizations. I will also emphasise the need for the full and effective implementation of Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, in cooperation of course with governments, the Secretary-General and civil society.

It is my firm belief that by working together in close partnership, and with the UN Charter as our guide, we will advance our ultimate goal of peace and prosperity for all. Thank you.” www.un.org

“The sands are shifting. We have before us a unique opportunity to shape change and ensure that our next chapter will be safer for the most vulnerable, more prosperous for those in need, and kinder to Planet Earth. I am humbled by the opportunity to serve you as President and look forward to our close and successful partnership, working together for the sake of humanity.”

(from statement by President Al-Nasser to the UN General Assembly, September 2011)

XI. Groundswell of Community

11 September 2011

On the day of the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 tragedy, people throughout America were invited to become part of a ‘groundswell of community’. In honour of those that lost their lives on that day, and remembering also people throughout the world affected by violence, the initiators of the movement are committed to create a groundswell of people who will stand for compassion and openness.

In their vision statement the initiators of ‘groundswell of community’ explain that the way they will go about making changes matters as much as the changes they aspire to make. The core principles of the groundswell are:

- 1. We transcend the polarization that divides our country – right versus left, the religious versus the secular, us versus them. Instead, we galvanize people of all walks of life around shared moral imperatives to build a community where every person flourishes.*
- 2. We recognize that the greatest social challenges of our time are interconnected. We cannot realize racial equality in the U.S. without addressing religious bigotry, securing dignity for immigrants, and ending violence against women and girls, for example. We create tools and resources to build solidarity so that we stand up for one another’s causes as our own.*
- 3. We are not organizers of the movement. The movement is too big for that. To achieve meaningful change in a networked society, we generate open-source social action campaigns that you make your own. The movement is yours. Starting now.*

‘By developing and advocating nonviolent options and actions in the pursuit of justice, we hope to break the cycles of violence engendered by war and terrorism’.

For more details see: <http://www.groundswell-movement.org/who-we-are/partners/>

XII. Push4Peace

Push4Peace is described as an international media, marketing and fundraising campaign whose mission is to help aggregate and accelerate the work of multiple existing peace initiatives into a coordinated movement to inspire people everywhere to take action towards creating a culture of peace. Push4Peace is acting in support of the Earth Charter definition of peace, that

Peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part”.

Push4Peace’s objectives are to:

- ! Unify and amplify the efforts of peace organisations and initiatives worldwide;
- ! Reach one billion people to raise awareness of existing peace initiatives; and to
- ! Raise funding in support of existing peace initiatives

Push4Peace will communicate to the world that peace is possible, pragmatic, and profitable, and that realising this vision will require unprecedented coordination, collaboration, and funding. We are all invited to participate in this promising, refreshing, and exciting global movement.

A Google Earth platform is being developed to aggregate and consolidate all relevant and available information relating to the peace industry. It will serve to promote existing peace initiatives and coordinate a broader movement towards a unified global call-to-action. This user-friendly web 3.0 interface will display and aggregate live content, rich media, and real-time posting of geo-located local stories, integrating with social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. It will become the world's *meeting place for peace*, and will serve to highlight and spotlight peacebuilding projects and initiatives. Users can research efforts relevant to their personal interests, self-post their personal stories, locate and communicate with other peacebuilders, movements, like-minded groups, events, educational programs, and more. The website will serve as the connective tissue for making the existing peace network visible, accessible and relevant in this transitional time for humanity

A 90-Day Push4Peace Media Launch:

The launch of this global media and outreach campaign will take place, in partnership with the United Nation's International Day of Peace, on 21 September 2012.

Through its global network of partners, Push4Peace will reach out to people and groups worldwide, inviting their participation. There will also be a coordinated media push to get people involved in taking action for peace – local to global. On a weekly and monthly basis Push4Peace will report on these actions, generating a dynamic media campaign for proactive peacebuilding. And articles will *'infuse the media worldwide, effectively telling the emerging story of peace on Earth'*.

The Push4Peace team appeals to everyone everywhere to become involved in this unique idea whose time has come, and: “as we all tell the stories of this emergent culture of peace, we look forward to our continuing cooperation on behalf of the common good.” (www.push4peace.org)

XIII. Culture of Peace

The following proposal was submitted to the UN NGO/DPI Executive Committee Sub-committee on Future Conferences in response to their call for a theme suggestion after announcing that the 65th annual DPI/NGO Conference will be held at UN Headquarters in New York in 2012. It is unique in that it was proposed by a group--a loosely knit consortium--of like-minded NGOs who believe fervently that no time is more appropriate to work together to strengthen the global movement for culture of peace:

Global Movement for Culture of Peace: Call of the Time

Introduction: The unanimous adoption in 1999, by the UN General Assembly, of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace [resolution A/Res/53/243] was a watershed event, reaffirming “the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind”. This historic, norm-setting document is considered as one of the most significant legacies of the United Nations that would endure generations.

As the Cold War was ending and as the prospects of “peace dividend” was becoming within the reach of humanity, the United Nations took the lead in articulating the foundation of a sustainable world peace by focusing on the importance of and the need for building the culture of peace. It stipulates that culture of peace “consists of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their

society” The Programme of Action provides all of us a clear set of guidelines for action. It is a universal document in the real sense transcending borders, cultures, beliefs and societies.

It identifies actors who have a role in advancing culture of peace. In addition to states and international organizations like the United Nations, it says “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 and artistic activities, health and humanitarian workers, social workers, managers at various levels as well as to non-governmental organizations.” It also emphasizes that “civil society needs to be fully engaged in fuller development of a culture of peace” and that “the educative and informative role of the media contributes to the promotion of a culture of peace”. This special role of civil society as well as of media and public information underscores the high relevance of this proposed theme for the 2012 DPI/NGO conference.

Rationale: Last year, the UN General Assembly in its resolution on the culture of peace (A/RES/65/11 of 23 November 2010) ”reiterates that the objective of the effective implementation of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace is to strengthen further the global movement for a culture of peace following the observance of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) and calls upon all concerned that renewed attention be given to this objective.”

No time is more appropriate than now to build the culture of peace. No social responsibility is greater nor task heavier than that of securing peace on our planet on a sustainable foundation. Today's world, its problems and challenges are becoming increasingly more interdependent and interconnected. The sheer magnitude of these requires all of us to work together. Global efforts towards peace and reconciliation can only succeed with a collective approach built on trust, dialogue and collaboration.

For that, we need to strengthen the global movement for culture of peace with whole-hearted support of all, particularly with the proactive involvement and participation of civil society. The flourishing of culture of peace will generate the mindset in us that is a prerequisite for the transition from force to reason, from conflict and violence to dialogue and peace. The UN’s objectives with regard to culture of peace have been particularly bolstered by the broad-based support of civil society. As International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non Violence for the Children of the World (2001 to 2010) proclaimed by the United Nations was coming to an end last year, over 1,000 NGOs and CSOs from over 100 countries recorded progress and obstacle faced in their activities in an end-of-Decade report, as called for by the UNGA (http://decade-culture-of-peace.org/2010_civil_society_report.pdf).

Objective: To highlight the work for the Culture of Peace, as envisaged by the UN, recognize the cumulative contribution by civil society, and further encourage the global movement for culture of peace being carried forward by women and men of goodwill worldwide.

Content of Proposal: The UN’s highest purpose is to “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,” in essence realizing the culture of peace as envisaged by the world body. This very core objective can be realized by directing our energies on effectively implementing the United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, through its Eight Action Areas upon which civil society and governments must focus.

Worldwide, globally, there are many groups, some big, mostly small, even individuals working diligently for building the Culture of Peace, based on inner oneness and outer diversity. If we can create a network to connect all of these dots, dots representing hundreds of such organizations, hundreds of individuals, that way we would empower them in a big way and enhance the Global

Movement for Culture of Peace. A small group in Afghanistan or a group in Angola or a group in Albania or a group in Chile will know that they are not alone. They will know that they have hundreds of other groups worldwide who are working for the Culture of Peace. They will be able to more readily identify and align their efforts with those of the UN. That is the empowerment that we could achieve through highlighting this proposed theme at the 2012 DPI/NGO conference. At the same time, we can build the momentum to create opportunity for adding others to the network, like schools, institutions and professional bodies.

Structure of Conference: The Eight Action Areas for the Culture of Peace could very readily provide the outline of the structure of the 2012 Conference, effectively setting the platform for meaningful and purposeful deliberations on the action-generating theme.

The highlights of the topics from these Eight Action Areas are described below:

1) *Education— Last decades of violence and human insecurity had led to a growing realization in the world of education today that children should be educated in the art of peaceful and nonviolent living. The most significant way of promoting the culture of peace is through education. The aim is to promote respect for life, ending of violence and promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation.*

2) *Sustainable Economic and Social Development— Efforts to meet the developmental, environmental and ecological needs of present and future generations, benefiting from focus on sustainability and building an economy of peace. We need to recognize the actual costs of violence to life, to the environment and to our spirit and human progress. The health care costs of violence from guns and street violence and how the culture of peace can save money.*

3) *Human Rights— Full respect for and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and respect for and promotion of the right to development.*

4) *Women’s Equality— Respect for and promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men; drawing attention to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 that calls for women’s equality at all decision-making levels.*

5) *Democratic Participation— Strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring full participation in the development process.*

6) *Understanding, Tolerance and Solidarity— Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations;*

7) *Participatory Communication and Free Flow of Information and Knowledge— Respect for and promotion of the right of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion and information, as well as ensuring free flow of information at all levels and enhancing access thereto;*

8) *International Peace and Security— Promoting peaceful settlement of conflicts, mutual respect and understanding and international cooperation, as well as complying with international obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law.”*

For the 2012 conference the Executive Committee chose the theme “Migration”, a theme which emerged from the 2011 conference on “Sustainable Societies, Responsive Citizens”.

***‘All symbols and tablets of humanity contain one hieroglyph,
the sacred prayer – Peace and Unity’
(Nicholas Roerich)***

XIV. 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.