

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. *Tolerance*

It is difficult in today's turbulent climate of trauma and change to understand how to apply the concept of tolerance correctly and truthfully. Surrounded everywhere by the falling rubble of dysfunctional structures we are recoiling from the ugliness of the deceit, corruption and betrayal unveiled. Stress lines and breaking points are appearing within and throughout our communities and neighbourhoods, and the bellowing soot from the erupting fires of fear, resentments and consuming greed make it difficult to see what can or should be tolerated and endured.

So, while grappling with how tolerance can best be practised and applied by law, this noble but somewhat de-energised and de-valued human aspiration is often failing to secure a better life for the refugee who is fleeing from intolerable circumstances in search of a safer neighbourhood within a more stable environment. And the notion of being 'tolerated' may not be the reassuring foundation on which to establish good relationships within new and unfamiliar surroundings. The invisible, unspoken, conditions for acceptance can add stress and uncertainty to the lives of newcomers already bearing the burden of rejection and loss; 'tolerance' inadvertently leading to the collapse of the very principle it holds. Even so, people throughout the world are persevering in their attempts to deal with and control the consequences of fanatic and intolerant behaviour.

The limited successes in practising tolerance within the prevailing miasma of distress and decay might suggest to us that only in a world in which choices are freely made can tolerance come to reflect its own opposite. Only in a world of dualities can a pale look-alike be created and allowed to take the place of Tolerance in its true being. Should we perhaps acknowledge that it is in this earthly 'hall of learning' we are being taught to distinguish between the qualities and values that are real, authentic and enduring, and the many shifting forms through which these principles can, if we so choose, bring healing and redemption to our world. And, witnessing the brightest and finest fire of the unconquerable human spirit rising from the darkest places where rages the most brutal and vindictive assaults on human dignity and worth, how can we ever doubt the victorious outcome of our strivings?

Tolerance 'in its true being' might be likened to a sphere of clear and unflickering light within which we allow ourselves to *see*, without fear or favour, all members of our troubled human family and ourselves; the kind of tolerance which lets us, dispassionately, acknowledge the faults and failings we have in common, which can only be solved and remedied in a spirit of truth-finding solidarity and inclusion. This beneficent light of truth may also pierce into the dark depth of past trespasses and enable us to release old, generationally ingrained, patterns of thought and behaviour which have been conditioning our ways of life.

As Nature demonstrates, movement is constant. Today even hardcore deniers are beginning to accept that the entire planetary climate is undergoing drastic changes. Isn't it timely that we also acknowledge the unmistakable signs of change and transformation within the human being: the irreversible arrival of a new season which offers new opportunities to those who are willing to grow up and evolve?

Humanity has already sensed and prepared for the arrival of this new season, and affirmed that: "*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood*" (article 1, Universal Declaration of Human Rights). So let all mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers from all corners of the world unite and make this Truth come true. Let us for-give and let the livingness of Life unfold.

II. International Day of Democracy **15 September 2012**

Democracy requires sustained and painstaking work, said the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message; democracies are not born overnight but require sustained and painstaking work. The story of democracy *'continues to be written by people who yearn for dignity and human rights, for an end to corruption, for a way in their future, for jobs, justice and a fair share of political power'*. Reform must be real, said the UN Secretary-General, and it is crucial that diversity becomes a strength and dialogue inclusive; women will need to be at the forefront of movements for change and the voices of the must be 'heard and heeded'

The message also spoke of the United Nations strong commitment to participate in developing initiatives to promote global and local democracy education as an integral part of all education, and concludes: *"let us work to bring democracy education to all, and in particular, to those societies in transition that need it most"*

The Council for a Community of Democracies (CCD) recently received a grant from the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) to carry out its democracy education initiatives over a two year period which began July 2012. Many of these programmes will support the work of the CCD Education Working Group, which was established at the behest of Mongolian President Tshakia Elbegdorj and co-chaired by Mongolia and Poland. Pilot programmes will also be initiated in 2013 in chosen countries and begin with workshops featuring education professionals, NGOs as well as other stakeholders.

The International Steering Committee of the Community of Democracies (ISC/CD), is made up of 27 civil society leaders from all regions of the world and plays a key role in identifying threats to democracy and developing strategies for promoting democracy more effectively.
<http://www.ccd21.org/activities/index.html>

The UN Democracy Fund (<http://www.undemocracyfund.org>.) aims to support projects that strengthen the voice of civil society, promotes human rights and encourages participation of all groups in democratic processes and transitions.

The International Day of Democracy provides a welcome opportunity to review the state of democracy in the world, and ensure that the ideal of democracy are realised and enjoyed by everyone, everywhere; a democracy which embody the values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights *'which enshrines a host of political rights and civil liberties underpinning meaningful democracies'*
(<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/cpr.html>)

"The Right to Education" : This report by the Special Rapporteur to the UN Secretary-General, presented to the UNGA's 67th session on 15 August 2012, highlights the political commitments to promote technical and vocational education and training. (www.un.org)

The report stresses the need to ensure quality in such education and the responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in its implementation, and that: *"although States carry the primary responsibility for technical and vocational education and training, in a modern market economy, new partnerships among Government, employers, professional associations, industry, employees and their representatives, the local community and non-governmental organisations have become necessary for policy design and delivery of technical and vocational education and training, in addition to its financing"*. It draws attention to the importance of the framework already established by the International Labour Organisation (<http://www.ilo.org/>)

III. Cooperatives

Cooperatives are not just an economic phenomenon but also a philosophy. It is an entrepreneurial model which is based on values such as equality, solidarity and reciprocity – and democracy. According to Emmanuel Kamdem, an expert on cooperatives within the International Labour Organisation (ILO), it is: “*a model which brings market logic together with social inclusion, making solidarity the focus of concern.*”

The 2012 International Year of Cooperatives aims to promote the growth and development of this model which in today’s volatile economic climate is attracting increasing interest from economists and entrepreneurs around the world. Today cooperatives comprise more than one billion members around the world and employ more than 100 million people.

The Year of Cooperatives will also raise awareness of the founding principles on which Cooperatives are built. These principles can tend to be neglected when cooperatives become too big, says Kamdem, and the cooperatives’ responsibility of training and education be forgotten.

Social capitalism:

ILO has found that ‘cooperatives have done better at weathering the financial crisis of 2008-2009 than other banking institutions’ and are providing 20 per cent more jobs than the multinationals. According to Emmanuel Kamdem, ‘*this is because their members are both customers and owners, and they thus have more control*’. In addition to this ‘*they have equal voting rights, independently of the amount of capital they hold, and their room for manoeuvre is accordingly greater*’.

Kamdem believes the world will inevitably return to this cooperative model which is centered on the real economy and ‘*flexible enough to adapt to the needs of industrialized countries as well as developing ones*’ (<http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm>)

Small producers with clout:

According to the Economic Cooperation and Development Division of the Swiss III State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), cooperatives have experienced their greatest expansion in the developing world. Hans-Peter Egler (SECO) says that while single individuals do not have sufficient means to make themselves heard the ‘association of small producers’ gives poorer populations more power to participate in shaping their future. Cooperatives give a voice to small producers; a voice which allows them to protect themselves against the competition of the multinationals.

(<http://www.seco.admin.ch/org/00686/index.html?lang=en>)

IV. Peace, Peacebuilding and Peacelearning Peace Study Guide

By Tony Jenkins and Tiffany Jenkins, US National Peace Academy

This 90-day Study Guide for Peacebuilders of all Ages is the US National Peace Academy’s free on-line curriculum (www.nationalpeaceacademy.us). The “Peace, Peacebuilding and Peacelearning: A Holistic Introduction” is a study guide designed for peace and community change for leaders, from children to adults. It is intended for both seasoned practitioners as well as those who are new to peacebuilding, and who wish to create significant, meaningful and sustainable change in their personal lives, their communities and the world at large.

This curriculum is designed to support Push4Peace (<http://www.push4peace.org>), a 90-day global media campaign, launched on the International Day of Peace, 21st September, 2012. Under the banner of Push4Peace a group of partners is working to catalyze a worldwide celebration of the exponential growth of peacebuilding efforts quietly emerging everywhere around the world.

While the use of the curriculum is free and no registration required, we encourage you to take 3-5 minutes to complete our registration/feedback form (<http://nationalpeaceacademy.us/edresources/study-guide/registration-feedback/>). The National Peace Academy strives to maintain an open and reflective learning community and counts on your input and feedback to help it learn and grow as an institution.

The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon's Peace Day message for 2012, referred to this year's theme, 'Sustainable Peace for a Sustainable Future', and re-reminded us all that: 'armed conflicts attack the very pillars of sustainable development'. He urged that natural resources should be used for the benefit of society, not to finance wars; that 'children should be in school, not recruited into armies', and that 'national budget should focus on building human capacity, not deadly weapons'.

V. 'Oh, How we Wish to Live Without War'

The following text is excerpts from a letter to 'dear friends' from the Afghan Peace Volunteers (APVs) in which they are reaching out to the world, seeking '2 million friends', who will stand with them on the International Day of Human Rights, remembering those who have died in war, including the Afghan people who were killed through decades of continuous warfare and power struggles within Afghanistan.

They say:

"Because we don't know each another yet, we haven't been able to share with you how, in Afghanistan, the loneliness of mutual killing is dividing Afghans over and above the loneliness of life.

There is a global awakening though, and as 'everyday' Afghans, we're likewise awakening to the reality that all wars are socio-economic, geopolitical wars against the people.

We, the people of the world, have unwisely assented to a global system which gives unjust authority and money to a few fellow human beings in governments or big businesses.

This system tells us that we are ordinary folk, and that we don't understand. But we're awakening. We understand that the world has a child dying from hunger every 10 seconds. Our land gets taken away from us or purchased. We study hard but today's education makes our minds numb and we end up unemployed. Our mothers and infants die easily. We get threatened, imprisoned, or killed.

We want the whole world to be borderless friends... Solidarity with one another, person by person, can change our unfair world.

Last Spring, when we had gathered in Kabul to remember Afghan war victims over the past four decades, a middle aged Afghan man was close to tears as he said, 'I won't be satisfied with remembering only the 9 children killed in Kunar province. I want us to remember all 2 million victims of war.'

This December 10th, on the International Day of Human Rights, we'll remember the 2 million. We'll also remember the 95 million souls lost in two World Wars, and the countless souls in Iraq, Palestine, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and other forgotten lands."

The APVs have written a letter to the UN Secretary-General in which they strongly urge the United Nations to 'broker a ceasefire in Afghanistan', and call on all parties in conflict, including competing warlords and the Taliban, the Karzai government, regional players and NATO, to lay down their weapons.

The APVs have met with Dr Sima Samar, Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, and are calling on people around the world to become friends for peace in Afghanistan on 10 December 2012, the International Day of Human Rights. Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire and international observers will be joining them for events in Afghanistan. (for further details go to: 2millionfriends.org info@2millionfriends.org)

Let us envision 2 million friends - and more - throughout the world responding to their call on the International Day of Human Rights – and beyond.

'In a gentle way, you can shake the world'
Mahatma Ghandi

VI. A Sober Look at the State of Our World

In his opening address to the 67th General Assembly, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged the assembly to "*look soberly, and without illusion, at the state of our world*", and added "*I am here to sound the alarm about our direction as a human family*".

Amidst widespread insecurity and injustice, inequality and intolerance governments are wasting vast and precious funds on deadly weapons while reducing investments in people. Many people choose to be 'willfully blind' to the challenges of climate change. This is a time of turmoil, transition and transformation, said the Secretary-General, and 'a time when time itself is not on our side'.

Ban Ki-moon reminded the assembly of the action agenda outlined in the beginning of the year: *sustainable development, prevention, building a more secure world, helping countries in transition, and empowering women and youth*, and mentioned encouraging progress on some fronts, while action on climate change still remained '*a major piece of unfinished business*'.

Drawing attention to the alarming 'shrill war talk of recent weeks' he urged leaders to show responsibility and '*use their voices to lower the tensions instead of raising the temperature and volatility of the moment*'. Ban Ki-moon also referred to other offensive use of freedom of speech which had led to widespread reactive acts of violence, and made it clear that, while freedom of speech and assembly are fundamental human rights, neither of these freedoms should be used as a license to incite or commit violence. And yet, he said, we seem to live in a world where, too often, divisions are exploited for short-term political gain: '*too many people are ready to take small flames of difference and turn them into a bonfire*'.

The UN secretary-general concluded his address by appealing to the 'moderate majority' **not** to be a silent majority; it must "*empower itself, and say to bigots and extremists alike: 'you do not speak for us'*". (www.un.org)

Heartbeat of humanity:

In his address to the UN General Assembly the US President Obama also expressed his concern that so much attention is given to what divides us: “That’s what we see on the news, and that consumes our political debates”, he said. But *‘when you strip that all away, people everywhere long for the freedom to determine their destiny; the dignity that comes with work; the comfort that comes from faith; and the justice that exists when governments serve their people – and not the other way around’*.

President Obama told the UN General Assembly that what gives him the greatest hope is not the actions of leaders; it is the men, women and children of every race and every faith *‘who remind me that for every angry mob that gets shown on television, there are billions around the globe who share similar hopes and dreams.’* They are the ones who tell us that *“there is a common heartbeat to humanity”*.

An Assembly of Peace:

The incoming President of the UN General Assembly, Vuk Jeremic (Serbia), expressed the hope that its 67th session would go down in history as *‘an Assembly of Peace’*.

President Jeremic reminded the meeting of the sentiment expressed by an earlier UNGA president, the President of the 2nd session of the General Assembly (Oswaldo Aranha, Brazil) when he said that the United Nations is not merely a political organisation and a simple covenant between nations but also *‘an undertaking in human thought and sentiment’*. And it is from this source of our combined hopes and aspirations that *‘the peoples of the earth may learn to know and trust each other in the full understanding of a common destiny’*.

After giving an overview of the many challenges facing humanity in a volatile and unpredictable yet increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, confronted with ‘a series of ruptures that seem to be building in intensity’, the President shared his proposal to the theme for the coming year’s debate: **bringing about adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations by peaceful means.** Let us not forget, he said, that peace is not merely the absence of war; it also necessitates the reconciliation of those who are at odds: *“a solution to an international problem can be legitimately achieved only upon renunciation of unilateralism; it can become truly sustainable only when its provisions are willingly accepted and fulfilled in good faith”*.

The President expressed his appreciation of the valuable input by civil society representatives to the assembly’s debate and shared his intent to find ways of how to better utilise and *‘draw upon the tremendous work done by the world’s public policy institutes and think tanks’*.

Among the numerous proposals mentioned by the President was the establishing of a closer working relationship with the UN Alliance of Civilizations *, which he described as a *‘soft-power tool which seeks to overcome differences and tensions within and amongst different cultures, faiths, and societies’* while also respecting and protecting the integrity of each within a globalising world.

Quoting the roman statesman Cicero who in ancient Rome expressed the longing that ‘arms might yield to law’ President Vuk Jeremic concluded his statement by noting that humanity are still endeavouring to achieve this noble cause:

‘Let us bring to bear on the problems we face a renewed spirit of cooperation, a tenacity of purpose, and a will to overcome differences. Let us find the courage to master the many challenges ahead – and in so doing, work to assert the pre-eminence of justice’.

** The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) is an initiative of the UN Secretary-General, established in 2005. UNAOC works in partnership with governments, international and regional organisations, Civil society group, foundations and the private sector, and supports a range of projects and initiatives which aim to build bridges among a diversity of cultures and communities. UNAOC is supported by a community of a 100 member countries and some 20 international organisations. (www.unaoc.org)*

VII. UN Guidance for Effective Mediation

This first broad UN guidance of its kind, originally printed as an annex of the UN Secretary-General’s 2012 Report on the Work of the Organisation (released August 2012), was presented in New York at a high-level event alongside the 67th UNGA session. This launch was organised in cooperation with a grouping of UN Member States called the ‘Group of Friends of Mediation’, co-chaired by Finland and Turkey, who have taken an active and supportive interest in developing the capacities of conflict mediation of the UN.

In the Guidance are outlined eight key mediation fundamentals that will need careful consideration: *“preparedness, consent, impartiality, inclusivity, national ownership, international law and normative frameworks, coherence, coordination and complementarity among mediation efforts and the development of quality peace agreements.”*

The launch of this document could not have come at a more opportune moment, said the Vuk Jeremic, President of the UN General Assembly; effective mediation offers *‘a legitimate, democratic and consensual instrument for conflict prevention and resolution’* (www.un.org/sg).

Related information on mediation efforts can be read on: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42879&Cr=mediation&Cr1=#releases>

VIII. Commit Universities to Peace: Yes to civil clauses!

The International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES) and the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA) have published the brochure ‘Commit Universities to peace: Yes to civil clauses’ which contains information on the military exploitation of science; the responsibility of science to society to serve people and their peaceful co-existence, and the duty of science to provide solutions to the many ills of the 21st century.

INES and IALANA see the freedom of thought and ideas for a peaceful, sustainable and just world being threatened in many places, including the universities where growing militarisation of academic research are eroding and bending research, not only in engineering and natural sciences, but also humanities to serve its purposes:
‘Scientific resources get frozen for war, military dominance and control instead of serving humanity and providing solutions’.

They extend an invitation to interested groups and individuals to participate in this discussion and to send their information and feedback to office@inesglobal.com
The brochure can be read at : www.inesglobal.com/download.php or <http://www.inesglobal.com/civil-clause-brochure-2012.html>

IX. The 8th International Leadership Symposium On Ethics in Business

This 2012 Conference is organised by the World Forum for Ethics in Business (WFEB), in cooperation with the International Association for Human Values (IAHV) and the World Bank Institute. It will take place in the European Parliament in Brussels from 30th November to 1st December. The striking title of the conference is: “*Capitalism – but not reloaded?! – A systemic crisis and its consequences*”. This title aims to highlight the need to examine new leadership styles that are sustainable and will ensure profitability for businesses and provide a platform for leading minds to share their experiences on the value of an ethics based approach to deal with today’s challenges; and discuss what leadership style will help pave the way for a sustainable future. (www.wfeb.org)

Preceding the IAHV symposium the World Youth Forum members will also meet in Brussels and present a “**Call of the Youth**” at the Conference on Ethics in Business.

The World Youth Forum (WYF) was created by the WFEB in 2007 and presents an open platform for the youth (18 to 30 of age) to voice their message to the world’s top decision makers within the economic and political environment and to the world at large.

The five pillars of the World Youth Forum are:

- ! *Identify and discuss urgent challenges in the global scenario, and define possible solutions,*
- ! *Develop and strengthen the skills and capacities of the youth to take strong leadership in the world,*
- ! *Provide opportunities to learn through interactive sessions with top business and successful political leaders, and*
- ! *Present ‘A Call of the Youth’ at the International Leadership Symposium on Ethics in Business at the European Parliament.*

“Climate change has gone from being a marginal issue to being at the forefront of business leaders’ minds. We need to stir our hearts and minds, and admit that fighting climate change is our ethical obligation”
(Professor Jerzy Buzek, European Parliament President and former Prime Minister of Poland)

X. Creating Together a Culture of Heart!

The High Level Forum (HLF) on the Culture of Peace held 14 September 2012 at United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York was the first time that a high level forum was held on the Culture of Peace and that all members of the UN family, “We the People” – the Secretary-General, UN General Assembly (GA) President, member states, UN staff, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society – came together in one day-long event to discuss the culture of peace. Particular emphasis of the meeting was given to implementation of the Programme of Action from the landmark UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace [A/RES/53/243] adopted by consensus on 13 September 1999 by the UN General Assembly (GA). H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, the 66th UN GA President, who convened the HLF, was commended on (this) his last day in office for the priority he gave to promoting the culture of peace throughout his one-year tenure. In an effort to see this priority continue, he

proposed that a high level forum on the culture of peace take place annually on this anniversary every 13 September. Needless to say, his initiative received enthusiastic and overwhelming support from the audience.

The meeting consisted of an Opening session with: H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly; H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations; H.E. Mr. Federico Mayor, President, Foundation Culture of Peace; Ms. Cora Weiss, President, The Hague Appeal for Peace; a musical flute interlude by Eileen Ain and brief interventions by representatives from Missions to the UN supporting the Forum — Bangladesh, Benin, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Philippines and South Africa.

This was followed by two panel discussions. The first, “The Culture of Peace at the core of humanity’s agenda: New partnerships, new developments” was moderated by Ambassador Paulette Bethel, Permanent Representative of the Bahamas to UN. — Panelists included: Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, Assistant Secretary-General, UN-PBSO; Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Assistant Secretary-General, UN Women; Mr. Philippe Kridelka, Director, UNESCO New York Office; Mr. Mario Lubetkin, Director General, Inter Press Service; Ms. Christine Mangale, Programme Coordinator for Africa, Lutheran Office for World Community.

The second panel, “Strengthening the global movement, advancing the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Culture of Peace: the way forward” was moderated by Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Senior Special Advisor to the President of the UN General Assembly and former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations. — Panelists included: Ms. Avon Mattison, President, Pathways to Peace; Ms. Kathleen Kuehnast, Director, Gender and Peacebuilding Center, United States Institute of Peace; Ms. Cherine Badawi, Coordinator, Generation Waking Up; Mr. Jeff Abramson, Director, Control Arms Campaign Secretariat; Ms. Maria Butler, Peacemakers Project Director, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF); Mr. Philip Hellmich, Director for the 2012 Summer of Peace, The Shift Network; Ms. Sharon Deep, Spokesperson, Global Movement for the Culture of Peace.

The Closing session with: H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the UN; H.E. Mr. Federico Mayor, President, Foundation Culture of Peace; H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly was followed by a spontaneous performance by guitarist and peace troubadour, Cecilia St. King leading the room in singing “Happy Birthday” to the UN GA President!

Present in the GA Hall, viewing the live webcast from around the world, and on the panels were all the necessary participants needed to create sustainable peace – women, youth, and people of various backgrounds, races, spiritual persuasions and professions. All the stakeholders were “in the room”, including mindful representation of those who can’t make it to the table, yet are the most affected by UN and governmental policies and decisions, i.e., the poor; the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms—Earth herself; future unborn generations. This united group of peacemakers exemplified the multifaceted nature of the global movement for the culture of peace, which is currently sweeping our planet. One of the organizers of this event, along with the Culture of Peace Foundation <http://fund-culturadepaz.org/eng/english.htm> and Inter Press Service <http://www.ipsnews.net>, was a group of NGOs of the same name, Global Movement for the Culture of Peace (GMCOP) www.gmcop.org, who work in cooperation to hold space for and amplify the voice of a humanity desiring peace now! With the mission of promoting A/RES/53/243 and founded on the shared reality that we are one independent family belonging to Planet Earth, the group serves to create a living network uniting and aligning the UN system and this rapidly growing movement within civil society.

The additional significance of the HLF is apparent when seen in the context of the countless peace-related events this year alone (see a few listed below) with the hoped for and anticipated

goal by the end of 2012 of creating a tipping point in conscious awareness; a change in direction; a way forward from the dominance of material values, which result in greed and the mindset of war, to one based on spiritual values and a culture of peace. This is not only a dream; it is the most practical of next steps ensuring sustainable life on our planet, and a distinct possibility.

19 January 2012—UN Department of Public Information NGO Briefing on the Culture of Peace
<http://www.gmcop.org/creating-together/events/>

1-7 February 2012—Interfaith Harmony Week <http://www.interfaithharmonyweek.info>

UN decision to adopt 20 March each year as the International Day of Happiness
<http://www.prweb.com/releases/Internationaldayof/happiness/prweb9652737.htm>

11-21 September—11 Days of Global Unity <http://we.net/11days>

21 September—International Day of Peace <http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org>

21 September-21 December—Push4Peace <http://www.push4peace.org>

22 December—Birth 2012 <http://birth2012.com>

21-28 December—Festival Week of the New Group of World Servers
http://www.lucitrust.org/en/service_activities/world_goodwill/newsletter/recent_issues/2012_3/the_festival_week_of_the_new_group_of_world_servers_december_21_28_2012

Highlighted throughout the day was the necessity for peace education and the fact that inner peace begets outer peace. It was clear that the hope, responsibility and opportunity for changing the world are up to every one of us. Expressing the energy of goodwill leads to right human relations—the simplicity of which children know well—peace is the effect. Goodwill is the true ‘power of the people’, which—when spread like wildfire from heart to heart—creates positive change.

Now is the time! The time when, together, we can begin to create a better, more peaceful way of living—without poverty, without arms, without wars—for ourselves, our families, our communities, our nations, our planet; so that 2012 becomes the turning point, the marked beginning of a new age, which manifests as a living demonstration of love-in-action, a culture of peace—a culture of Heart!

By Iris Spellings – Representative to the UN for OPTU, and serving Global Movement for the Culture of Peace

XI. Creating the Culture of Peace ***Brogan O’Donnell***

The High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace, held within the United Nations on September 14th 2012 * was a truly inspiring event. Sitting in the General Assembly Hall, surrounded by people from all around the world, and eagerly listening to global leaders and representatives speak about creating a culture of peace, made me recognize the great potential we have for initiating positive change. Attending the event as a youth representative for the NGO Operation Peace Through Unity made me realize the importance of linking up with other youth and with other organizations supporting peace. It is through this process of linking up, strengthening and building our connections with one another, that we can stimulate the creation of a culture of peace.

With the enormous amount of energy and motivational panelists, I found myself left with a few strong key points that I plan to always carry with me. Through understanding that the United

Nations is about ‘We, the Peoples’, we can begin to shift our focus to supporting local, grassroots, initiatives. The power to effect change from a local level, resides within the people. Another point emphasized by several speakers throughout the day, was the need to develop peace studies within educational systems. Through educating younger generations about peace, a mindset to create a culture of peace can be inspired.

One of the many initiatives that I found myself grounding my perspectives in, was the grassroots organization ‘Generation Waking Up’ (coordinator: [Cherine Badawi](mailto:Cherine.Badawi@generationwakingup.org) cherine@generationwakingup.org generationwakingup.org). This organization recognizes the crisis that the world is currently facing, both economically and environmentally. However, with a shift in consciousness or with a gentle waking up, we can notice how with the rise of crisis also comes the rise of opportunity. We are being presented with the opportunity to change our society and build new, sustainable, systems that are no longer dependent on the economy and that no longer negatively impact the environment. This organization targets the youthful generation, or the generation that is growing up in these exciting times of change. Youth are coming together, across the globe, and practicing methods to become more sustainable, such as living off of the land and growing their own food.

Further highlighting how local organizations from around the globe are practicing a culture of peace is the Summer of Peace & the Shift Network (director Philip Hellmich <http://summerofpeace.net>).

Through recognizing local initiatives for peace on a global level, we can gather inspiration and, through linking up and uniting together, we can move our local initiatives forward knowing we are part of the whole, the worldwide community creating a culture of peace.

The Global Movement for the Culture of Peace, an initiative formed through the United Nations to connect Non-Governmental Organizations around the world with one another (spokesperson [Sharon Deep](mailto:Sharon.Deep@UN.Community@gmail.com) Sharon.UN.Community@gmail.com gmcop.org). Through linking up and partnering with global initiatives, we can empower, strengthen, and further foster a global movement for a culture of peace. Also, a culture of peace can be created simply, through practicing right human relations and spreading goodwill. Through forming heart connections with one another, on the most basic and purest of levels, we can create a culture of peace.

Through linking up with initiatives on a global level, we can envision a culture of peace strengthening. It is as if a quilt is being pieced together, with local initiatives acting as the patches. This High Level Forum provided a space to emphasize that a culture of peace is and can be created around the globe on local levels.

Through recognizing and linking up with these local initiatives, we can give them strength and we become empowered to do our part. It is recognized that we can create a culture of peace on the smallest of scales, since it contributes to this global movement for a culture of peace.

* The High Level Forum events can be viewed on the following links:

Opening of the High Level Forum:

<http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/watch/opening-of-the-high-level-forum-on-the-culture-of-peace-general-assembly/1841173371001>

High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace (Panel 1):

<http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/watch/high-level-forum-on-the-culture-of-peace-panel-1-general-assembly/1841361369001>

High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace (Panel 2)

<http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/watch/high-level-forum-on-the-culture-of-peace-panel-2-general-assembly/1841407169001>

Closing of the High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace

Brogan is a youth representative for the NGO Operation Peace Through Unity (OPTU) and for the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace. She is excited about the opportunity to link up with local initiatives, on a global level, through the United Nations! She is passionately studying Food Justice at Hunter College and involving herself in urban farming initiatives located throughout New York City. broganroseodonnell@gmail.com

XII. Peace

*Peace – immeasurably more
Than absence of war
Non-violence a way of living
Greenness
Blueness
Quiet breathing
Sacredness of the other
Admitting – ‘I may be wrong’
Standing strongly for the right
Standing fearlessly for truth
Standing positively for justice
All held
In the word - LOVE*

*Poem written by Meg Hartfield
for the Wanganui 2012 International Day of Peace*

XIII. United Nations Day – 24 October

On the 24th October 1960, the UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, attended his last observance of the United Nations Day (before his tragic death in Congo 1961). The following is the full text of his address on this occasion, as radiantly relevant as ever:

“It is the tradition that the Organisation marks United Nations Day with a concert including the final movement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony. Today we shall, for the first time in this hall, listen to the symphony in its entirety.

It is difficult to say anything knowing that the words spoken will be followed by this enormous confession of faith in the victorious human spirit and in human brotherhood, a confession valid for all times and with a depth and wealth of expression never surpassed. However, this concert is in celebration of United Nations Day and it has been felt that a few words may remind us of the purpose for which we have assembled.

When the Ninth Symphony opens we enter a drama full of harsh conflict and dark threats. But the composer leads us on, and in the beginning of the last movement we hear again the various themes repeated, now as a bridge toward a final synthesis. A moment of silence and a new theme is introduced, the theme of reconciliation and joy in reconciliation. A human voice is raised in rejection of all that has preceded and we enter the dreamt kingdom of peace. New voices join the first and mix in jubilant assertion of life and all that it gives us when we meet it, joined in faith and human solidarity.

On this road from conflict and emotion to reconciliation in this final hymn of praise, Beethoven has given us a confession and a credo which we, who work within and for this Organisation, may well make our own. We take part in the continuous fight between conflicting interests and

ideologies which so far has marked the history of mankind, but we may never lose our faith that the first movements one day will be followed by the fourth movement. In that faith we strive to bring order and purity into chaos and anarchy. Inspired by that faith we try to impose the laws of the human mind and of the integrity of the human will on the dramatic evolution in which we are all engaged and in which we all carry our responsibility.

The road of Beethoven in his Ninth Symphony is also the road followed by the authors of the Preamble of the Charter. It begins with the recognition of the threat under which we all live, speaking as it does of the need to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war which has brought untold sorrow to mankind. It moves on to a reaffirmation of faith in the dignity and worth of the human person. And it ends with the promise to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours and to unite our strength to maintain peace... We are indeed still in the first movements. But no matter how deep the shadows may be, how sharp the conflicts, how tense the mistrust reflected in what is said and done in our world of today as reflected in this hall and in this house, we are not permitted to forget that we have too much in common, too great a sharing of interests and too much that we might lose together, for ourselves and for succeeding generations, ever to weaken in our efforts to surmount the difficulties and not to turn the simple human values, which are our common heritage, into the firm foundation on which we may unite our strength and live together in peace.

May this be enough as a reminder of the significance of this day. And may now the symphony develop its themes, uniting us in its recognition of fear and its confession of faith.

In ending, may I express the gratitude of the Organisation, and of all of us, to Mr. Ormandy and to the Philadelphia Orchestra for coming to us today and for helping us to celebrate this fifteenth United Nations Day”.

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.