

Many to Many



Peace Through Unity

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“Many to Many” is a quarterly publication under the aegis of Peace Through Unity as 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 Is Peace a Right?

The theme chosen for this year’s International Day of Peace is ‘*the Right to Peace – the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70*’.

It was in the year 1948 that the UN Human Rights Commission, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, released the text of the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which asks that all peoples and all nations will honour and promote the 'rights and freedoms' outlined in the Declaration.

Whatever criticism we may throw at the wording of the text of this seventy year old document, it is hard to avoid hearing the essence of its message and its urgent appeal to future generations. It is timely that we, the peoples of all nations and cultures, are called upon to take a moment to listen carefully to the urgency of this heartfelt call from a time when the human family had been enduring unspeakable acts of cruelty as well as showing courageous selflessness in the face of evil.

This divisive state of affairs is still today being nurtured, sustained and manipulated through a lethal mix of apathy and fear, blame and intimidation, which allows the insatiable lust for power and dominion to continue to saturate our world community and divide nations, neighbourhoods and families through violence and treachery.

We human beings have still so much to learn regarding relationships and sense of direction. In a response to the question *'Where do universal rights begin?'*, Eleanor Roosevelt responded: *"in small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world" ... these places are the world of the individual person, she said; they are the neighbourhood within which 'every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination'.* Unless these rights have meaning there, they will have little meaning anywhere, she stressed, and added: *"Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world"*.

<https://www.humanrights.com/about-us/what-is-united-for-human-rights.html>

When the instinct awakens in the child to rise from a crawling position into walking upright, it will put great effort and determination into breaking down all old limitations. Numerous failures, mishaps and bruises will continue to teach the adolescent how to approach and probe into new relationships and the ever widening environments, both within and around itself. Cause and effect will continue to offer the individual human being opportunities to develop the full potential of its being; slowly the old habit of littering the crib with dismembered toys will be left behind.

Despite knowing much about the inner and outer spaces within and around ourselves, there is still much more to be learnt when it comes to standing up, 'true and straight'. But, although we may still tend to stumble when it comes to 'practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours', we are learning to 'walk upright', and we are - perhaps as never before - reaching out to one another.

If we find the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights slightly 'dusty', let us, the peoples of each and all nations, blow off the dust and make its message become vibrantly alive within our local and global neighbourhood.

Through love and respect for the dignity and worth of all life within, upon and beyond our own planetary home we shall have earned the right to peace.

II Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

This Convention came into being on the 9 December 1948, one day before the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is thus the first human rights treaty adopted by the UN General Assembly. In her statement

commemorating the 70th anniversary of this Convention, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet acknowledged with deep regret that the 'odious scourge' of genocide 'remains both a threat and a reality in the 21st century'.

Even so, she stressed, "these twin events marked the start of a new era of human rights: a vision of a world where the genocide of the Holocaust and the stripping of multiple human rights that it represented, would never happen again." Michelle Bachelet also pointed to the importance of 'accountability' and thus ending impunity; because this would provide justice for victims and punishment for perpetrators. "Impunity is an enabler of genocide: accountability is its nemesis" she stressed.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23551&LangID=E>

III 2018 "World Beyond War" Toronto Conference **(Included Workshop on Departments and Infrastructures for Peace)**

I am a long-time advocate within the U.S. "Peace Alliance" Department of Peacebuilding Campaign for the *current bill in Congress to establish a cabinet-level Department of Peacebuilding (H.R.1111)*. As such, I am thrilled to report my favorite topic of **Departments and Infrastructures for Peace (I4P)** was featured at this September's international "World Beyond War" (WBW) conference in a workshop my Canadian Department of Peace counterpart, Dr. Saul Arbess and I co-presented there. It was a logical collaboration, in that for the last decade Saul and I have worked together promoting governmental I4P within an international organization known as the **Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace** or GAMIP (which is currently in transition reconstruction).

The ambitious WBW 2018 conference intent, as stated by its planners, was to "explore how to re-design systems to abolish the institution of war by examining existing and potential legal models, modes of governance and frameworks that can be used to curb and abolish war, such as treaties like the Kellogg-Briand Pace, Peoples' Tribunals, peace tax funds, **departments of peace**, civil disobedience, the use of universal jurisdiction and the *International Criminal Court*."

Our workshop was timely because it meshed with what was going on this year in my UN NGO work whose focus has been about "seeking global solutions to global problems" per the UN 2030 "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs) Global Agenda. The UN Development Program, which oversees both the SDG's and I4P, has conducted studies showing evidence that **a viable solution to the global problem of "violence" is to establish governmental departments and other I4P worldwide**. This relatively new peacebuilding concept of governmental I4P is already operational in countries where violence has been shown to have been reduced or prevented (*Journal of Peacebuilding & Development Special I4P Issue, volume 7, Number 3, 2012 ISSN: 1542-3166*).

Thus if I4P are a viable global solution to the global problem of "violence," then their establishment in governments should be encouraged in order to provide the (missing) connective links necessary to build the culture of peace. That this topic was deemed relevant to the WBW's provocative conference theme of **Designing a World Beyond War: Legalizing Peace** was promising. For it offered a unique international forum to consider how governmental I4P may be a viable alternative to war in providing a "legal" **institutional framework for peace** that conceivably could be the "blueprint" for redesigning a world beyond war.

The conference was held September 21-22 to coincide with the International Day of Peace celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose focus this year was **"The Right to Peace."** It was held outside the U.S. in good-neighboring Toronto, Canada ... to demonstrate WBW's belief that *for the global peace movement to succeed in redesigning a world beyond war, it must broaden its scope to build one unified coalition in solidarity worldwide with other peace groups.* Most attendees were Canadian yet other countries were represented, as far away as New Zealand -- home of my UN NGO, Peace Through Unity Charitable Trust -- which as a founding member of the **Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace** has long advocated for a New Zealand **"Ministry for a Culture of Peace"** and **passage of a UN Resolution urging I4P in all member states** (see PeaceNow.com to sign petition for this). To quote Gita Brooke, Peace Through Unity founder: *New instruments are in the planning for carrying out the guidelines contained in the UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace: ministries and departments of peace will serve as meeting places for closer, more comprehensive and effective cooperation between peoples and governments; peace academies will teach and help develop communication, peacebuilding and peacemaking skills of individuals and groups within society; and the general public will hold themselves, their governments, as well as the UN, accountable for implementing promises that have been made.*

The U.S. Constitution preamble beautifully articulates the primary purpose of government – which in a nutshell is to ensure humanity's basic Human Rights (ie. the Right to Peace). Because we live in an ever-escalating global culture of violence, government needs vital help meeting this essential purpose. My advocacy for governmental I4P stems from my conviction that I4P can greatly assist government in fulfilling its fundamental "Peace" mandate. *Yet how I4P relate to the compelling WBW idea of "legalizing peace" needs further exploration.* While we only had time to scratch the surface of this there, our group began a lively interactive dialogue on I4P basics, such as the lack of political will for peace and on how the mere mention of I4P in some countries puts I4P advocates at risk of harm.

We are grateful to UN Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury for his short video on the conference theme, with mention of how I4P promote the Culture of Peace; also to Congressional sponsor of H.R. 1111 Rep. Barbara Lee for her welcoming letter where she states: *"Now is the time to put an end to needless wars and violence and to establish a Department of Peacebuilding in the U.S. and violence prevention infrastructures throughout the globe."* Visit WBW website to see the video and letter plus our power point and other valuable conference details at <https://worldbeyondwar.org/nowar2018/>.

I learned of other possible systems, models or frameworks besides governmental I4P that could redesign a world beyond war which I found uplifting and hopeful at this time of unprecedented global political upheaval. They included such compelling models and speakers as: Kellogg-Briand Pact (WBW Director David Swanson), Divestment from War Profiteers (Medea Benjamin), Peace Education Approaches (Tony Jenkins), World Citizenship & Global Rule of Law (David Gallup) to mention a few.

In conclusion, participating at the WBW conference gave the **U.S. "Peace Alliance" National Department of Peacebuilding Campaign** the opportunity to enlarge an important peace dialogue alongside our Canadian Department of Peace brothers and sisters. We trust seeds were planted to continue this conversation so next year the topic of **Departments and I4P** may appear in the 2019-2020 edition of WBW's scholarly booklet A Global Security System: An Alternative to War.

IV “The Right to Peace: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70” International Day of Peace, 21 September, 2018

Peace Through Unity (PTU) and the Whanganui Branch of United Nations Association New Zealand, celebrated the International Day of Peace, 21 September by holding a short peace prayer session at Handspan*, our local peace sculpture, at noon. Our group was smaller than usual, but we did welcome Jeremy Simons who gave the address at our evening event. The local newspaper was in attendance and interviewed Jeremy. They chose this year to take a video of the event!

In the evening we gathered at the Quaker Settlement, Quiet Room, to recognise the theme for the year, *“The Right to Peace: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70”*. The evening began with our asking that peace should prevail in each and every United Nations member state. Guests were invited to read out the country names and flags of each nation were on display. This was followed by Jeremy’s presentation.

Jeremy Simons is a PhD student at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at Otago University. He was born in the Philippines to American parents and, prior to coming to New Zealand, lived and studied in the USA. His fields of interest include, indigenous conflict prevention, restorative justice, and prison chaplaincy. So his background and experience fitted in well with the theme.

The topic for Jeremy’s address was looking at the Declaration of Human Rights as it applies today. His presentation was interactive and he made sure that everyone knew what was being discussed by having us all read together the 30 clauses of the Declaration. The document is 70 years old this December, and has been seen as reflecting contemporary Western notions of individualism, reliance on legal solutions and rational and scientific knowledge. Despite this it is still useful today, and a few changes in our outlook, will help in, *“... restoring and re-balancing the holistic realities and sensitivities of universal human rights.”* The ideas contained in the document are basic and still apply, especially in today’s troubled world.

Jeremy suggested three shifts which will revitalise the declared human rights. The first of these is ‘Solidarity’ – a shift away from individualism and isolation. Each of us is involved, together, in maintaining human rights and responsibilities. By sharing our stories we will find ways of ‘walking in others shoes’ which will benefit everyone. Jeremy told of his time in Denver, Colorado, when he and his family found themselves the ‘minority’ in a predominantly Hispanic community and had to seek help and guidance to ‘fit in’. *“They were the experts, we were the novices.”* Solidarity can also be found between the oppressed and the oppressor. As an example, Nelson Mandela learned Afrikaans while in prison and was able to talk to his guards in an effort to better understand their position. He proved that we can practise solidarity not only with those deserving compassion, but also with those with whom we totally disagree.

The second shift is to provide ‘Sanctuary’. Reliance on a purely legal solution to a problem is not always the best in terms of human rights. A good example of this is the treatment of a whistle-blower who identifies an illegal, or at least questionable

action. When one would assume right was on their side, they often end up being persecuted by those in power and have their human rights abused. Offering support through this process is what Jeremy sees as sanctuary. But sanctuary is not something new – churches have been providing sanctuary for centuries. And this is becoming more obvious, both for those needing support and more importantly, anyone who is becoming aware of harm they may have previously caused and need protection – victims and perpetrators alike. Jeremy gave several examples from his native Philippines.

The third change is from isolation to ‘Hospitality’. Jeremy used an example from Martin Luther King in the US in the 60s. One of his goals, apart from legal rights for black people, was to create, “...the ‘beloved community’ in which all people could re-discover a sense of our fundamental connectedness as human beings.” This listening and getting to know people can shift apparently firmly held derogatory views of others such as hate groups, for instance. Human rights of others is recognised as well as our complementary responsibilities. This shift is seen in indigenous peace building efforts, when historical practices are examined more closely and followed by, not only the indigenous peoples, but all of us.

Underpinning these three shifts is a move from radical choice to ‘radical sacrifice’. This is a move away from the economic culture of cost-benefit competition and power seeking. Alternative knowledges tap into hidden connections, opportunities and capacities – looking at things in a different way. We need to have, he said, “... new eyes and healed vision, new ears for healed listening, in order to discover new ways of seeing, perceiving and constructing reality.” For example, in Maori, there is no word for ‘enemy’ – the closest being ‘angry friend’.

Jeremy also told of a restorative justice practice in a North American indigenous community. If someone commits an offence, they stay in a cabin in the woods for a period of one to nine months, with a weekly visit by a mentor to discuss the effects of their offending. The period of separation allows the person to live closely with the plants and animals in the woods and work out for themselves the effects of their actions, through phases of fear and anger to reach acceptance. When they return to the community, they can apologise in person to those affected before being received back into the group. The process can be seen as requiring self-sacrifice and loss before finding a new life to lead.

Jeremy concluded his presentation as follows:

Thus, to struggle for Human rights peace and justice is nothing less than to sacrifice through solidarity, sanctuary, and hospitality, for our souls, our communities, our environment, and everything we hold dear as people journeying together in the beloved community.

The presentation had the audience thinking carefully about all human rights as well as responsibilities. The wide-ranging question and answer session was continued into the light refreshments which followed the talk.

Kate Smith
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* http://www.peacethroughunity.info/peace_sculpture.html

V United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs

The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) began its life in December 1958 as a small expert unit, aiming to promote international cooperation in the peaceful use and exploration of space (resolution 1348 (XIII) of 13 December 1958), in particular for sustainable economic and social development. In 1993 UNOOSA was relocated to the UN headquarters in Vienna, from where it continues to assist any UN Member Nation to ‘*establish legal and regulatory frameworks to govern space activities*’ so as to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to use space science technology for development by helping to integrate space capabilities into ‘national development programmes’.

In her foreword to the 2017 UNOOSA Report, the Director of Office for Outer Space Affairs, Simonetta Di Pippo, drew attention to certain highlights of the year, such as being the 50th anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty which is providing the very foundation of international space law and testifying to ‘*an important commitment from the international community to preserve space peacefully, for everyone, and for the generations to come*’. 2017 was also the 40th year of registration under the ‘Convention of Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space’. The Report stresses that in 2017 nearly 500 functional space objects were launched or deployed in Earth orbit or beyond, which is almost double the number from 2016. For this reason, we have, she said, ‘*focused in depth on this important transparency and confidence-building tool in this Report.*’

The 2017 UNOOSA Report urges that Space be considered as an ‘invaluable tool’ that can help the international community achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals as outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With space science, technology and applications, we can:

- monitor climate change and pollution
 - survey crops, land cover and soil moisture
 - observe desertification and droughts
 - respond to disasters
 - map diseases and public health emergencies
 - learn remotely
 - enable smart cities and transportation
 - achieve gender equality
- ... and much more

On 20 November former NASA Astronaut, Scott Kelly agreed to become a United Nations Champion for Space. Announcing the news, Ms Di Pippo expressed deep gratitude on behalf of UNOOSA for this cooperation, helping to bring ‘global attention to the important role that space can play in sustainable development’, and added: “*Mr. Kelly will combine his demonstrated passion for making our world a better place with his expertise and experience in space.*”

In his statement Scott Kelly agreed that ‘Space lends a unique perspective of our world’: “**When looking out at Earth from space, you don’t see boundaries. Instead, you see one planet we all belong to. Having lived in space with 40 people from 10 different countries, I learned the incredible value of what we can achieve by working together. Our joint global efforts in space transcend national borders and make the world on which we live better for everyone**”.

<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/copuos/2018/index.html>

VI 'Building Sustainable and Resilient Cities.'

Ever since the 31st October was designated the World Cities Day (by the UNGA in 2013), it has been celebrated under the general theme: '**Better City, Better Life**', while each year a theme has been chosen, which will focus on more specific concerns and challenges.

The theme for this year was the building of 'sustainable and resilient cities', with mayors, national and local governments experts - as well as representatives from global partnerships and coalitions - gathering for the main event, which this year was hosted by the city of Liverpool. Here the many different challenges - and how to overcome them through cooperation and sense of mutuality - were shared and discussed.

Stark facts and figures re both the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly inter-connected world were discussed and solutions sought. It was recognized that over half of the world's population now live in cities and this number still growing fast... '*with 1.4 million people arriving in cities each week*'. Among other reasons to focus more on resilience were mentioned that, in the past 20 years, climate-related and geophysical disasters have killed 1.3 million people and '*left a further 4.4 billion injured, homeless, displaced or in need of emergency assistance*'.

Some suggestions to possible solutions were focused on: 'how to build resilience', and on how cities can "*build socially cohesive societies becoming democratic, sustainable and inclusive by ensuring residents from all backgrounds take part in decision making*".

Another suggestion states that: '*to build climate and environment resilience, authorities need to plan cities properly to minimize the overall effect on the environment as well as ensuring resilience through strengthened infrastructure, good planning and public education*'. <https://unhabitat.org/Urban-October/Documents/WCDShortBrief.pdf>

VII 'Shaping urbanization for children: A handbook on child-responsive urban planning'

This handbook appeals to all 'urban stakeholders' to invest in 'child-responsive urban planning' and to recognise that cities are not merely 'drivers of prosperity, but also of inequity'. In 10 Children's Rights and Urban Planning principles it offers concepts and tools and develops 'promising practices' on how to create 'thriving cities' in which children can live and grow up in a safe and healthy environment.

Through focusing on children, it offers guidance on 'the central role that urban planning should play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, 'from a global perspective as well as in a local context'.

https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_103349.html

VIII 'Trust Deficit Disorder'

In his address to the UN General Assembly, 25 September this year, the UN Secretary-General's opening remark was: "*Our world is suffering from a bad case of 'Trust Deficit Disorder'*". Trust is at a 'breaking point', he added, and people are feeling 'troubled and insecure' and 'losing faith in political establishments'.

Cooperation among countries is *'less certain and more difficult'*, and *'divisions in our Security Council are stark'*.

Underscoring the above assessment he said: *"We have never had a true system of global governance, much less a fully democratic one"*. And yet, he stressed, we did come together *'as united nations to build institutions, norms and rules to advance our shared interests.'* And through the years and decades, solid foundations for international cooperation have been made.

Mentioning what the author of *'Destined for War'* (Graham Allison) calls the *'Thucydides Trap'*, the UN Secretary General shared a passage from this book which says: *'It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made the war inevitable'*. The book is reviewing many examples of rivalry in the past, and yet, the author arrives at the conclusion, that *'conflict is never inevitable'*.

'With leadership committed to strategic cooperation and to managing competing interests, we can avoid war and steer the world to a safer path', said the Secretary-General. Individual leaders have the duty to advance the well-being of their people, he stressed; and together - as guardians of the common good - we must *'promote and support a reformed, reinvigorated and strengthened multilateral system'*.

'We need commitment to a rules-based order, with the United Nations at its centre and with the different institutions and treaties that bring the Charter to life'.

We further need to show the *'added value of international cooperation by delivering peace, defending human rights and driving economic and social progress for women and men everywhere'*.

This, said the UN Secretary General, is why I am so committed to reform, and to making the United Nations more effective in responding to the needs and aspirations of *'we the peoples'*: *"In the face of massive, existential threats to people and planet – but equally at a time of compelling opportunities for shared prosperity – there is no way forward but collective, common-sense action for the common good"*.

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres shared a quote with the General Assembly from former Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, which reminds us all that: *"we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations"*.

In conclusion he stressed the importance of the above quote by adding: *'Our future rests on solidarity'*, and *'we must repair broken trust; we must reinvigorate our multilateral project. And we must uphold dignity for one and for all'*.

<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2018-09-25/secretary-generals-address-general-assembly-delivered-trilingual>

IX Raranga Pilot Course – Whanganui Prison August – October 2018

Juanita Davis held a 12-week course tutoring ten learners the art of Raranga, traditional Maori weaving. They had one lesson each week, for two hours. If there was Harakeke (*flax*) left over after lesson, or scraps and off-cuts, the men were allowed to take it back to their rooms and weave.

All tools were kept in a box, and returned at the end of each lesson. Each item was counted, including pegs, and left with the unit to be retrieved for the following week's lesson.

The men went through the initial 12-week programme, producing Raurau (*small baskets for holding food*) and Waikawa (large baskets with a strong base) baskets (using fresh Harakeke), then Konai (*four corner basket*) in different forms using softened and boiled Harakeke. They then made back-packs – a significant achievement within itself.

The men all observed the tikanga (*spiritual lore*) within the weaving process, and were hungry for knowledge and the history of Raranga. I attended many of Juanita's classes with her, the men were all focused and committed, and producing beautiful work – of which they were very proud.

Juanita felt compelled to work with the men to weave their own Korowai (*woven cloaks*). This was a decision she did not make lightly, it is a taxing process for her physically and spiritually, with much harvesting and preparation involved before the actual weaving takes place.

Times were negotiated with the unit and Juanita was given access to the men for four mornings each week for two weeks, sixteen hours in total, to work alongside the men as they wove their stories into their cloaks. Upon completion the cloaks were wrapped and covered, kept in darkness until they were ready to be presented at graduation. At this point they were uncovered, and brought into the light, they were then blessed and prayed over before the men put them on and told the graduation attendees the meaning behind each pattern, the story of their journey and their whanau (family).

The feedback from the men has been incredibly positive, it's a therapeutic activity, but also a means with which to connect each individual's culture and history. It is a Taonga (a treasure) that can be handed down through whanau (*family*); the cloak itself and the knowledge and story woven into it. Each man has spoken of teaching their children to weave when they go home, and those who have a close release date have asked for information to engage with Te Wananga O Aotearoa (*University of New Zealand*) and enrol in the Diploma course in weaving.

We are also running Creative Writing, Sketching and Drawing, Art, Guitar for Beginners, CV, Job skills and Employment Law and ESOL lessons - English for speakers of other languages - who are currently incarcerated.

Our classes run in all levels of security, from Remand units (where unsentenced prisoners were previously not allowed to access any forms of education, therapeutic or otherwise), High security and Minimum/Low/Medium security.

Mel Shaw, Manager Community Education Whanganui (CEW)

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As the tutor for Creative Writing course, I have been most impressed by the dedication and commitment of the students. They visibly grew in self-confidence when they realised they could, in fact, write a story. Encouragement also came from their fellow students who regularly gave constructive suggestions for improvement. A practical outcome of the course is a printed and bound version of their story.

Kate Smith, tutor CEW

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X United Nations High Level Forum on The Culture of Peace

“Culture of Peace: A Credible Pathway to Sustaining Peace”

5 September 2018 - UN Headquarters, New York

“Peace must be made real and tangible in the daily existence of every individual in need.”

Secretary-General Kofi Annan, 2001

“We are moving our international system to where it’s a culture of peace.”

H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the 72nd Session of the General Assembly

The United Nations High Level Forum on The Culture of Peace (HLFCoP) is welcomed annually by member states and civil society alike. This, being the seventh of such forums, pays tribute to the meeting’s fundamental and timeless significance!

This year’s theme, *“Culture of Peace: A Credible Pathway to Sustaining Peace”*, provided an opportunity for UN member states, UN agencies, media and civil society to consider ways and means of implementing the UN Programme of Action on the Culture of Peace [A/RES/53/243] and its importance to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Organized by the President of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, H. E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, in cooperation with *The Global Movement for The Culture of Peace*, the all-day forum opened by reflecting on the founding purpose of the United Nations... to save future generations from the scourge of war.

“The document [UN Charter] does not specifically mention a Culture of Peace (CoP), but I believe it is embedded in every word.

“Let’s be frank, a CoP is not yet a reality. Conflicts rage on across the world. International terrorism poses as grave a threat as ever... and a political and religious intolerance is rising. But we have chosen not to accept this as our fate. In fact, in this resolution, and in this Forum, we have chosen to say NO... In this Forum we are recommitting to the very ideals of the UN Charter... We are showing that it is in our power to save succeeding generations from war—not in some places

in the world, but in all, and that's a powerful message of hope!"

H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the 72nd Session of the General Assembly

Nobel Peace Laureate Dr. Rigoberta Menchú Tum, an activist from a small Mayan community in Guatemala, gave a powerful and inspiring keynote address on human rights, equality and opportunity for all human beings. In it she conveyed dire statistics and great atrocities. Yet our very presence at this HLF, which is now an 'established' part supporting the UN's realization of the vision of the CoP, gives evidence to the fact we have turned a corner. We have moved from reactive to proactive...from response to prevention; going beyond merely responding to emergency alerts and picking up pieces to accelerating peacebuilding measures. Sustainable measures... like restorative justice, ensuring women's involvement and initiating peace education at the earliest age, and more.

"It's completely unacceptable that thousands die each day from hunger and extreme poverty while \$4 billion is invested in armaments and military."

Professor Frederico Mayor Zaragoza, former Director General of UNESCO

The cost of armaments continues to grow exponentially, and effects are mirrored in the numerous conflicts and casualties. This spawns a vicious cycle, seemingly with no end in sight, by individuals and regimes that have disregarded human rights and fundamental freedoms—the basis of the CoP.

The UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace defines the CoP as: "a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behavior and ways of life" in harmony with all life. It is a way of living in right relation with oneself, each other and all life (the Earth Charter says). A life recognizing that universality and cultural diversity go together, and therefore, a life of '*relational resilience*'!

Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, whose determined leadership led to UN RES/53/243's historic adoption in 1999, was the esteemed chair and moderator of the afternoon panel. He emphasized a key thread voiced throughout the day. Namely, the important role of individuals in building a 'larger' CoP (complementing the international), and aptly compared it to the essential role of more pixels in creating a 'bigger' picture.

He added that the essence of CoP is self-transformation... and inner peace leads to outer peace. We must put peace in our everyday behavior by asking ourselves what we did for peace today... and how we can live our lives in a very peaceful and non-violent way.

Through daily acts of kindness, we each have the opportunity to weave a part of this web of resilience and to build right relations within our families, at work and in our communities. The 2030 Agenda is also referred to as 'humanity's plan'. Reaching each target of the 17 SDGs, we close a gap in the global safety net—where no one can fall through, and no one is left behind.

The Culture of Peace is a way of living built on the Golden Rule rather than the GDP. The hope for change lies within the heart of each one of us!

Morning Session —1st Plenary Meeting: <http://webtv.un.org/search/high-level-forum-on-culture-of-peace-general-assembly-72nd-session-1st-plenary->

[meeting/5831207833001/?term=2018-09-05&sort=date](http://webtv.un.org/search/high-level-forum-on-culture-of-peace-general-assembly-72nd-session-2nd-plenary-meeting/5831207833001/?term=2018-09-05&sort=date)

Afternoon Session —2nd Plenary Meeting: <http://webtv.un.org/search/high-level-forum-on-culture-of-peace-general-assembly-72nd-session-2nd-plenary-meeting/5831294674001/?term=2018-09-05&sort=date>

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XI 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