



# Many to Many

Issued by

**Peace Through Unity**

Accredited NGO in association with  
the UN Department of Global  
Communications.

Anthony & Gita Brooke,  
co-founders

**ISSN 2744-7057 (Print)**

**ISSN 2744-7065 (Online)**

*“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.*

**Issue Number 150      September 2021**

## Contents

Broken Promises: The Future of Afghanistan.....	2
High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace .....	4
One Planet Peace Forum .....	11
The wisdom of the 8th-grade Peace Flame Keepers .....	12
World Hunger and the impact of climate change.....	14
Lest We Forget.....	16
THE GREAT INVOCATION .....	18

**Kate Smith PTU Co-worker 48 Parsons Street, Whanganui, 4501, NZ**

**Website:** [www.peacethroughunity.info](http://www.peacethroughunity.info)

**Email** [optuwhanganui@gmail.com](mailto:optuwhanganui@gmail.com)

ORDER THE EMAIL EDITION OF MANY TO MANY BY SENDING AN EMAIL TO: [optusteve@earthlink.net](mailto:optusteve@earthlink.net)

with 'Many to Many subscribe' in the subject line.

## Broken Promises: The Future of Afghanistan

After nearly twenty years of fighting, America will withdraw all US troops from Afghanistan by August 31st, 2021, ending a war nearly as old as I am. The war in Afghanistan began following the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center when the US, with British support, invaded Afghanistan. The public goal stated behind the invasion was to bring those responsible for the events of 9/11 to justice and to dismantle terrorist organizations, preventing future threats to national security. These actions were supported by many in the West, including Australia, Canada, France and Germany, who pledged future assistance. The United Nations Security Council adopted resolutions 1368 and 1373 following the attacks. These resolutions reaffirmed states' right to self-defense and supported ["international efforts to root out terrorism"](#). Notably, it did not approve military action in Afghanistan.

Following the deployment of foreign troops to Afghanistan, within three months the Taliban were quickly forced to retreat, and the organization splintered. Though the initial objective for military action had been achieved, the operations then shifted to one of nation-building. In a speech on April 17, 2002, President Bush pledged to bring true peace to Afghanistan, which he defined as when ["we give the Afghan people the means to achieve their own aspirations"](#), through the reconstruction of the country and military, and the establishment of a strong, stable and democratic government that ensured the liberties and rights accorded to every individual. He vowed that the US would stay engaged ["until the mission is done"](#).

Despite the heavy toll of the war paid in hundreds of thousands of mostly Afghan lives and trillions of dollars spent, it remains unclear if Afghanistan is being left in a better situation than when foreign troops first arrived two decades previously. That is not to say that development has not been made. Huge strides have been achieved in healthcare, WASH, education and gender equality. Afghanistan went from one of the countries with the highest maternal mortality rate to cut both child and maternal mortality dramatically--nearly by half. The World Bank tracked advancements, reporting that girls' enrollment into school jumped from 0% to 80% while overall enrollment of secondary-age children went from 13% to 54%. 25% of parliamentary seats were held by women (almost as many as women who serve in the US Congress) and 20% of civil servants in Afghanistan were women. Real wages per capita jumped by 75% since 2002. Access to an electricity grid increased from 7% to 32%. Material progress was made; however, despite these gains, by Bush's own promised objectives few have been fully realized. True peace in Afghanistan has not been achieved nor have full liberties and rights been accorded to every Afghani. The lasting accomplishments of this state-building project have yet to be determined. The gains that have been hard fought for hang precariously in the balance as the war ends as it began--with the Taliban in power.

The current situation is grim and deteriorates further every day. Withdrawal of foreign troops has been anything but orderly and has been accompanied by rapid, equivalent gains for the Taliban. In a shock to the world, the Taliban seized the capital

Kabul in 10 days, effectively collapsing the Afghani state so rapidly that the fighting was over before it even began. The evacuation of foreign and Afghani nationals has been chaotic with lethal consequences.

The Taliban have sought to reassure both the domestic and international audiences that have watched with horror as the events unfold. Through media-savvy PR campaigns, they are seeking to change public perception and rebrand themselves from an extremist Islamic terrorist group to a more moderate and inclusive image ready to cooperate with global norms. They have insisted on a [“smooth transition” of power](#) without [“trouble, harm and damages”](#) and promised [“peace, order and amnesty”](#). They have also assured the citizens of Kabul that their security is guaranteed. Despite these new promises, many are scared and terrorized at the prospect of life under Taliban rule. Those who were brutally persecuted under the last Taliban reign such as women, those who championed human rights and other ethnic minorities like the Hazara fear a return to the darkest days. There is a very real fear that [“once the world stops watching, we are all dead”](#). Already there have been reports of abuse, including allegations of targeted killings of journalists and people who worked for the opposition government as well as orders sending women home from work to be replaced by male relatives, though the Taliban has already stated its commitment to women’s right to work and amnesty for former government officials. Taliban rule is uncertain and dreaded but without the protection of a strong state, a bloody, power struggle to consolidate power and decades more of instability is almost guaranteed.

The US and the wider international community have some difficult decisions ahead of them. Afghanistan is on the verge of becoming a full-blown humanitarian crisis. Funds earmarked for the Afghanistan state from the international community have been frozen. The economy propped up by the US is in freefall and opium production steadily becomes the only stable livelihood. Four decades of instability have left over three million Afghans internally displaced and reliant on international aid. The UN estimates that nearly half of Afghanistan's population, roughly 18 million, need and continue to need humanitarian assistance on essentials like food and housing assistance. However, significant funding for aid from organizations like the World Bank has been halted following the Taliban takeover. Organizations like the UN that remain committed to providing aid are facing huge logistical difficulties to bring medical and food supplies into the country, due to the capacity of Kabul airport, which is already struggling to cope with evacuations.

The continued foreign occupation of Afghanistan was untenable. US occupation was only ever supposed to be a temporary solution that has since long overstayed its welcome. However, the mission is not done. The withdrawal of troops does not signify a release of responsibility from the promises made to Afghans. In the coming days, the international community must determine the role that they will play in Afghanistan's future, the extent it will cooperate with the Taliban and how much a Taliban-led Afghanistan will be integrated within existing institutions. Despite all these crucial decisions that have to be made, one thing is abundantly clear. In the words of United Nations Secretary-General Guterres, particularly applicable to those who participated in and facilitated the invasion and

occupation, [“we cannot and must not abandon the people of Afghanistan”](#). Humanitarian assistance acting in line with core humanitarian principles must be supported and permitted to distribute aid immediately. All those must be allowed to leave the country safely if they wish. Speedy asylum and evacuation must be granted to Afghan nationals. The US has committed to resettling up to 125,000 Afghan refugees while the UK has pledged to resettle 20,000 Afghan refugees over five years--a good start but not enough.

Following the United Nations lead, states must come together to [“stand as one”](#) and use every means possible to enforce an immediate end to violence and uphold respect for human rights. As comedian John Oliver astutely and gravely observed, [“there are immediate decisions that need to be made that have life-or-death consequences for Afghans who put their trust in us”](#). The international community must continue to support Afghanistan’s progress and growth. Neither Afghans nor the world can afford the instability a collapsed state presents to global peace and security nor another stain on humanity caused by indifference.

Ananda Young, PTU co-worker. [Anandayoung154@gmail.com](mailto:Anandayoung154@gmail.com)

## High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace

Editor:

*The following section relates to the High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace HLFCoP, which will take place at the UN and virtually, on Tuesday 7 September, 2021. You are invited to attend. The afternoon programme emphasises NGO involvement and will be live streamed from the UN. Several PTU co-workers are closely involved in the preparation of this event.*

# THE CULTURE OF PEACE



You are cordially invited to attend the

10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## UNITED NATIONS HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON THE CULTURE OF PEACE

convened by H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the 75<sup>th</sup> UN General  
Assembly

### THEME

*“The Transformative Role of the Culture of Peace:  
Promoting Resilience and Inclusion in Post Covid Recovery.”*

**7 September 2021**

**Plenary segment -10:00 am to 1:00 pm EDT** -- Remarks by President of the General Assembly, UN Secretary-General and 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, followed by Member States to be held at GA Hall in-person

**Virtual Panel Discussion - 3:00 pm to 5:45 pm EDT** – Implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Culture of Peace focusing on the Theme - followed by interactive comments, questions and answers segment. Moderated by Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, founder of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace (GMCoP),

The day-long Forum would be broadcast live by UN  
**WebTV** <http://webtv.un.org/>. **Join the gathering, deepening the collaborative interaction among all stakeholders, and advance the Culture of Peace.**

**Global Movement  
for the  
Culture of Peace**



## CONCEPT NOTE

**High level Forum on The Culture of Peace  
convened by the President of the 75<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly**

**Tuesday, 07 September 2021  
United Nations Headquarters, New York**

### Overview

Pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 75/25 adopted on 09 December 2020, the President of the 75<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkir, will convene a High-Level Forum on The Culture of Peace on Tuesday, 7 September 2021, at the UN Headquarters, New York.

This year's High-Level Forum will offer an opportunity to the Member States and observers of the General Assembly and other stakeholders to renew their commitments to the full and effective implementation of the UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, with particular emphasis on tackling the multidimensional impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and towards a resilient and inclusive recovery.

### Background and Objectives

On 13 September 1999, the UN General Assembly adopted, by consensus and without reservation, its pioneering resolution 53/243 on the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, asserting and reaffirming the commitment of all the UN membership for building the culture of peace. Through annual substantive resolutions adopted by consensus for more than two decades as well as by holding annual highlevel forums since 2012, the General Assembly has highlighted the importance it attaches to the implementation of its Declaration and Programme of Action, which serve as a universal mandate for the international community, particularly the UN system, for the promotion of the culture of peace underscoring its enduring value that benefits humanity, in particular its future generations.

The Culture of Peace remains one of the key items for the General Assembly since 1997 when the Assembly decided to include a new item to its agenda. This was followed by the UNGA resolution 52/15 of 20 November 1997 that proclaimed the year 2000 as the "International Year for the Culture of Peace" and GA resolution 53/25 of 10 November 1998, that proclaimed the period of 2001-2010 as the "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World".

Over the years the scope of the Culture of Peace expanded and became more relevant than ever. The concept now embraces a wide range of related issues and multiple resolutions are now adopted under this agenda item.

The annual high-level forum on The Culture of Peace convened by the President of the General Assembly, provides a platform for the Member States, civil society and relevant stakeholders to deliberate on the conceptual validity and continuing applicability of the Culture of Peace in the contemporary contexts.

Last year, the President of the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly virtually convened the High-Level Forum on 10 September 2020, under the theme “The Culture of Peace: Change Our World for the Better after COVID-19”. Despite the difficulties resulting from the raging COVID-19 pandemic, the Forum asserted the utmost importance that the United Nations continued to support the global movement to promote the culture of peace, its Declaration and Programme of Action, and that the international community’s response and recovery efforts were guided towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Transformative Role of The Culture of Peace: Promoting Resilience and Inclusion in Post-Covid Recovery

This year’s High-Level Forum is taking place at a time when the international community is still facing the enormous challenge presented by the all-embracing and debilitating impact of the apparently never-ending COVID-19 pandemic. While the recovery efforts are ongoing, a large part of the world is still engaged in a life-or-death battle with the virus and its variants. Inequality and violations of human rights is widening in multiple forms and dimensions. Hate speech, extremism and xenophobia manifested in most cases with violence, are on the rise. On top of all these, the emerging “vaccine nationalism” threatens to undermine the efforts to end the pandemic globally.

It is, therefore, an imperative to inculcate the values of the Culture of Peace among nations, societies and communities, with particular attention to the younger generation, through promotion of compassion, tolerance, inclusion, global citizenship and empowerment of all people.

This year’s theme for the 2021 high-level Forum - “Transformative Role of The Culture of Peace: Promoting Resilience and Inclusion in Post-Covid Recovery”, will provide a platform to explore and discuss multiple ways and means for empowering all segments of the society, towards a resilient recovery, including by ensuring vaccine equity, bridging digital divide, ensuring equality and empowerment of women and harnessing the power of youth, among others.

## Participation

All Member States and observers of the General Assembly are invited to participate in the high-level forum. It will be webcasted on UN WebTV.

## Format of the High-Level Forum

The High-Level Forum on The Culture of Peace, convened by the President of the 75<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly, will take place on Tuesday, 7 September 2021 at the General Assembly Hall from 10.00a.m. to 1.00p.m. This will be followed by an interactive Panel Discussion to be held virtually from 3.00p.m. to 6.00p.m., with participation from civil society and other interested stakeholders, in addition to Member States and observers.

The session in the General Assembly Hall will consist of an opening segment and a plenary segment. The opening segment will feature statements by the President of the General Assembly, a video message by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, remarks by the Chef de Cabinet of the United Nations Secretary General, a video message by the High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilization (UNAOC) and an address by Director a.i. of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Liaison Office in New York. The plenary segment will comprise statements by Member States and observers of the General Assembly.

Member States are encouraged to deliver statement on behalf of a group of States, whenever possible. Members States are encouraged to limit their statements to three (3) minutes for individual delegations and five (5) minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States. A pre-established list of speakers for the plenary segment in the morning has been opened for inscription on Monday, 30 August 2021. Delegations wishing to inscribe for the plenary segment, please contact the General Assembly Affairs Branch by sending an email to [galindo@un.org](mailto:galindo@un.org), with a copy to [gaspeakerslist@un.org](mailto:gaspeakerslist@un.org). In view of time constraints for the plenary segment, delegations that will not have the opportunity to speak can send their statement for uploading to [estatements@un.org](mailto:estatements@un.org).

The interactive panel discussion during the afternoon session (3.00 - 6.00 pm) includes participation of civil society and other stakeholders. It will then be followed by a closing segment with remarks by the President of the General Assembly.

Further information regarding this meeting will be made available on the PGA's website: <https://www.un.org/pga/75/>.





**UNITED NATIONS HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON  
THE CULTURE OF PEACE**

07 SEPTEMBER 2021, UN HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK

## PROGRAMME

### HIGH-LEVEL FORUM ON THE CULTURE OF PEACE

**“Transformative Role of the Culture of Peace: Promoting Resilience and Inclusion in Post-Covid Recovery”**

**Tuesday, 7 September 2021**

**United Nations Headquarters, New York**

<b>OPENING SESSION</b>	
<b>10.00am – 10.45am</b> General Assembly Hall	<b>Opening Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ H.E Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the 75<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly</li><li>✦ Video message by H.E. DR AK Abdul Momen, MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh</li><li>✦ Ms. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet of the UN Secretary General representing the Secretary-General</li><li>✦ Video message by H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilization (UNAOC)</li><li>✦ Mr. Eliot Minchenberg, Director a.i., the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Liaison Office in New York</li></ul>
<b>10.40am – 1.00pm</b>	<b>Plenary Segment</b> Statements by Member States and observers
<b>PANEL DISCUSSION: “Transformative Role of the Culture of Peace: Promoting Resilience and Inclusion in Post-Covid Recovery”</b>	
<b>3.00pm – 5.45pm</b> <i>Virtual Platform</i>	<b>Chair and Moderator</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✦ H.E. Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury, Founder of the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace (GMCoP), Former UnderSecretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations, Chairman of the UN General Assembly negotiations for</li></ul>

	<p>the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (1998-1999)</p> <p><b>Keynote message</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Ms. Beatrice Fihn, 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Executive Director, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) <b>Video Messages:</b></li> <li>✦ Hon. Mr Kazumi Matsui, Mayor of Hiroshima, Japan and President of “Mayors for Peace” with a worldwide membership of 8000 City Mayors; and</li> <li>✦ Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.</li> </ul> <p><b>Panellists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ H.E. Ms Rabab Fatima, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations;</li> <li>✦ H.E. Mr. Rodrigo A. Carazo, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations;</li> <li>✦ H. E. Ms. Mathu Joyini, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations;</li> <li>✦ Mr. Federico Mayor Zaragoza, President of Foundation for a Culture of Peace, former Director-General of UNESCO (1987-1999);</li> <li>✦ DR Ada Juni Okika, Global Director of the Centre for Transformative Advancement of Development of Africa;</li> <li>✦ Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs;</li> <li>✦ Mr Francisco Rojas Aravena, Rector of the University of Peace in Costa Rica.</li> </ul> <p>[Interactive segment with comments, questions and answers from the floor with participation of the panellists]</p>
<p><b>5.45pm – 6.00pm</b> <i>Virtual Platform</i></p>	<p><b>Closing Segment</b> Closing remarks by the President of the General Assembly</p>

## One Planet Peace Forum

**One Planet Peace Forum** is coming up the weekend after 21 September *International Day of Peace* and here is info with links to share.

OPPF is a free virtual gathering designed to cultivate a culture of peace by offering a universal platform for people of all spiritual and secular expressions to co-create solutions to humanity's most challenging issues. It seeks to help fulfill the age-old vision of peace on Earth by inspiring cooperative action toward building the future we envision.

Co-produced on Zoom by Good of the Whole with the Connection Field, emcee Julie Krull, host of the Dr. Julie Show All Things Connected, will guide peacebuilders everywhere through the rich presentations by world-renowned peace ambassadors offering their visions for a peaceful future.

[www.oneplanetpeaceforum.org/register](http://www.oneplanetpeaceforum.org/register)

The program takes place from 3:00-5:30pm ET/**New York time** each day, Friday, September 24th, Saturday, the 25th, and Sunday, the 26th, and includes two one-hour sessions each day consisting of short keynote talks with interactive dialogue, punctuated with contemplative interludes of sacred practice, music, and performance.

*Presenters for 2021 include:*

**Audrey Kitagawa**, former chair of the Parliament of the World's Religions;

**Haneen Khalid**, youth Obama Foundation Scholar;

**Kurt Johnson**, author, *The Coming Interspiritual Age*;

**Xiye Basitida**, Climate Justice Activist;

**Swami Tyagananda**, Vedanta Society of Boston;

**Phil Goldberg**, author, *Spiritual Practice for Crazy Times*;

**Dot Maver**, National Peace Academy USA;

**Joe Weston**, Fierce Civility Project;

**Jon-Luc Maclean**, youth peacebuilder;

**Robert Shetterly**, painter and founder of Americans Who Tell the Truth;

**Chloe Maxmin**, Environmental Activist;

**Peter Blaze Corcoran**, Unity Earth; and,

**Francisco Morales**, URI Global Trustee

Here are the links, the complete overview, and the event banner to share with your friends and network.

<https://oneplanetpeaceforum.org>

<https://oneplanetpeaceforum.org/register>

<https://oneplanetpeaceforum.org/overview>

<https://oneplanetpeaceforum.org/speakers-2>

## Global Silent Minute 9pm GMT

"Lift up your eyes into the Hills. Reach up to the Summit of your understanding. Look out from there. Learn how to widen your awareness through the attainment of the stillness of complete silence. In that Silence, listen for the Voice that will teach you all things. And be at Peace!" Wellesley Tudor Pole

Unity in Silence gathers a special energy known as *Silence as Action*.

[www.globalsilentminute.org](http://www.globalsilentminute.org)

[www.nationalpeaceacademy.us](http://www.nationalpeaceacademy.us)

[www.centerforpeacebuilding.org](http://www.centerforpeacebuilding.org)

[www.gamip.org](http://www.gamip.org)

Dot Maver, [dotmaver@gmail.com](mailto:dotmaver@gmail.com)

## The wisdom of the 8th-grade Peace Flame Keepers

On September 21, 2018, the International Day of Peace, the World Peace Flame was lit in the Thalden Pavilion, Sustainability Center on the Southern Oregon University (SOU) campus in Ashland, Oregon. This is only the second World Peace Flame in the United States and the 23<sup>rd</sup> in the world. Irene Kai, Co-founder of the Ashland Culture of Peace Commission (ACPC) discovered the original World Peace Flame in Wales, and she was inspired to bring it to Ashland.

This symbol of peace, unity, freedom, and celebration aims to inspire people everywhere that the individual plays a crucial role in creating peace at every level. As the World Peace Flame was lit at the Thalden Pavilion, Ashland was recognized internationally. A unique part of this ceremony was the role of the newly formed Flame Keepers, made up of students from Kristina Healy's class at nearby Ashland Middle School. These 8<sup>th</sup> graders volunteered to keep the World Peace Flame lit by refueling the oil lamp every Friday during the school year with 100 percent sustainable biomass lamp oil and keeping the lamp and enclosure clean.

After 11 weeks of Flame Keeper experience, the students were asked two questions by David Wick:

1. Why is it important to have a World Peace Flame?
2. What do you like about being a Flame Keeper?

Here are their responses:

*Lauren Drabik:* The Peace Flame gives hope for peace, and it can help change the world and make it a better place for new generations. It is a big honor and there aren't very many in the world, and you get to be part of something so big! It's just special to do.

*Kendra Caruso:* The World Peace Flame brings people together and it helps everyone know there is peace in the world. The Peace Flame represents how everyone is one in the world. I really like it because I was chosen to be handed the flame (during the Sept. 21 lighting ceremony) and I handed it off to someone else who lit the flame. That was a huge honor! I felt like I was a part of the whole celebration of the flame. I think it is really cool to have Flame Keepers because it is a huge honor and because you are doing good for the world, and I believe giving back is really nice.

*Samara Penn-Kout:* Having a World Peace Flame, especially in our small community, is really nice because its being part of something bigger. There are only two in this country, and we are helping and being the representatives in the United States and the Northern Hemisphere. We are part of something greater to share with anybody. I love being a Flame Keeper because I feel so good about my actions, it is a big responsibility, and it is really nice because it feels like we are helping peace around the world.

*Tara Vivrett:* It is such a reminder for people to stay peaceful where they are, and it is a constant thing going that you can always look to. It feels like being included because we're being part of it, and we are keeping it going. It is also something you can tell people around you and that feels good.

*Levi Predpelski:* It is a reminder every day. Every time I see it, I am reminded, "oh ya, be peaceful every day and don't forget about it." It is being part of something bigger than myself, it is about community, and it is not just about me, it's about everyone.

*Finley Taylor:* It is important because it shows us that peace isn't just one day of the year. It is every day. And it is always there in the background, and we should focus on making the world a more peaceful place. It feels like I am doing something important that changes the world. It's just a good feeling.

*Kade Price:* It is important because then we know we will have peace all around the world. I like how I can be a part of peace.

*CJ McDonald:* It brings people together and it makes you feel peaceful when you are around it, then every place you go you have this going on. It is a huge responsibility and I like refueling the flame with my friends.

*Cash Cota:* It shows you how much you should enjoy peace and that everybody should enjoy peace and not just certain people. It also shows that our culture is very peaceful as a community and that we deserved it because we can resemble peace a lot and we can also show other people how to be peaceful around the world. I like it because it is really cool to

be part of something that no one else has done at this age, and it is also fun just being with friends and enjoying peace together.

*Tara Lusk:* It is important to represent how peace is all around us, especially in Ashland, a small community town that has a lot of organics and very community (focused). It is nice to have the World Peace Flame represent how peaceful we are here and how we get along together. It's really fun; I like the responsibility of it. It is a little bit stressful at times, but overall, it is a really nice experience.

*Madeline Bolin:* It reminds us that we should be constantly trying for peace, like always not just one event. The responsibility and knowing that we are helping to achieve peace.

*River Collins:* Having the World Peace Flame shows triumph over hate and is a check point in our history to accomplish peace. It is fun and because people see me as a peaceful person, not angry and more peaceful. This supports the change in the world.

*Kristina Healey (teacher):* I think it is always wonderful to have a reminder about peace. Peace in your own mind and heart and community and all the way beyond. And to know that they are originating from the same place of peace here on our planet. I like that I was able to do it, to be the vehicle to keep it (a focus on peace) going here in Ashland. I really loved to see the kids and how they we say, "Oh this is so much responsibility, I don't know if I can do it," and just to empower them that we can do it if we all work together. We check that calendar, we go over (to the World Peace Flame Monument across the street) and we go through the directions. (The students) have felt very privileged and responsible about keeping the flame going for people who come and visit the Peace Flame in Ashland. We talk about it in class and some of the kid's families have gone over, outside of class to see what it is all about. Anything to remind kids, our school district, our city that we are not finite, we are connected, we are bigger than that. So having the Peace Flame here reminds us of the importance of the commitment to peace.

When we wonder what peace really means, go ask an eighth grader at Ashland Middle School.

David Wick, Co-founder, and Executive Director of Ashland Culture of Peace Commission

## **World Hunger and the impact of climate change**

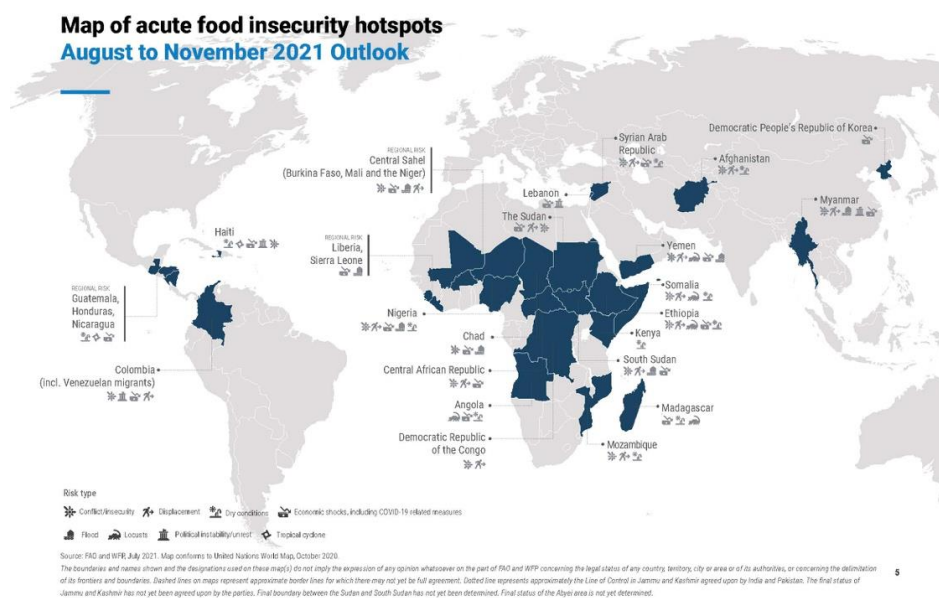
The number of people experiencing hunger globally and suffering from food insecurity had been rising gradually since 2014. With the COVID-19 pandemic wreaking havoc from 2019, it has increased the vulnerabilities and inadequacies of global food systems, potentially leaving hundreds of millions more people chronically undernourished and making the goal of ending hunger in the year 2030, set out in the Sustainable Development Goals more difficult to achieve. Between 83 and 132 million more people may already have

been pushed into chronic hunger in 2020. In addition, countries and territories around the world continue to struggle with multiple forms of malnutrition.

It is estimated that almost 690 million people around the world experienced hunger in 2019, equivalent to 8.9 per cent of the world population – an increase of nearly 60 million in five years. According to the latest publication produced jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agriculture (IFAD), the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP) and World Health Organization (WHO)<sup>1</sup>, the data indicates that between 720 and 811 million people in the world faced hunger in 2020, as much as 17% increase from 2019.

A statement released by the UN Secretary General on 12 July<sup>2</sup> highlights, “COVID-19 has made things worse, and made clear the linkage between inequality, poverty, food and disease. Despite a 300 per cent increase in global food production since the mid-1960s, malnutrition is a leading factor contributing to reduced life expectancy.” He further elaborates that climate change is both a driver and a consequence of hunger. The negative impact on nature being done by humankind includes a food system that generates one third of all greenhouse gas emissions. The same food system is also responsible for up to 80 per cent of biodiversity loss.

The latest scientific assessment from the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>3</sup> reinforced with certainty about the total responsibility of human activity for rising temperatures. The world’s top scientists warn that the planet will warm by 1.5° Celsius in the next two decades without drastic moves to eliminate greenhouse gas pollution.



Source: Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and World Food Programme, July 2021<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/07/1068261>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/news/statement-secretary-general-food-systems-summit>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

<sup>4</sup> WFP and FAO. 2021. Hunger Hotspots. FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity: March to July 2021 outlook. Rome.

The recent publication released by WFP<sup>5</sup> also describes how climate change has left communities in developing countries most exposed to hunger despite the fact that they contribute little to global CO2 emissions. More so, the report warns that in 23 countries (see map), acute food insecurity is likely to further deteriorate in the outlook period from August to November 2021, as a result of conflict and economic risks.

On 23 September 2021, the UN Food System Summit will be held as a virtual event **during the UN General Assembly High-level week**. Through this people's summit, the UN aims to reaffirm its commitment to promote human rights for all and ensure everyone, everywhere has the opportunity to participate. **It will serve as a historic opportunity to empower all people to leverage the power of food systems to drive the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and get back on track to achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.**

The event is open to all through its virtual programme and virtual platform, for information please go into the following page: <https://www.unfoodsystems.org/registration/>



*Eric Wong. Co-worker, PTU, ericwong729@gmail.com*

## Lest We Forget

Despite this poignant phrase belonging to the end of an earlier war, it still applies today.

Just last month, the annual commemorations were held in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On 6<sup>th</sup> August 1945 at 8.15am the first atomic bomb was used in anger. Approximately 150,000 people were dead by the end of the year as a result. Then, at 11.02 on 9 August 1945 a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. There were relatively fewer casualties because of the more uneven terrain. Both cities were involved in military operations at the time.



The people there don't need the UN to dedicate a special day or declare a UNESCO World Heritage site – they have lived with the consequences for 7 decades. So has the rest of the world, although in many cases the memories are dimming, and for those born since, it is becoming just part of 'history'. But, is it?

While we have not had a full 'world' war since 1945, we have not as yet found a 'world' way to live in harmony and peace with one another either. The history books, despite being written by the so-called winners, tell us that mankind has used weapons to settle differences since they were invented. And we seem to keep on inventing them – ever more complex and ever more deadly. At one time, antagonists had to face each other, eyeball to eyeball, when trying to settle an argument. Now weapons can be discharged from drones where the operator can be well away from the action, effects and consequences of pressing a button!

Some believe that good has come from the military complex in the form of technical advancements, which have made life easier for us all. However, maybe some serious thought should be given to making investment in research and technology directly for the common good, for example, into ways to combat the climate change crisis facing all of humanity. If this challenge is not both faced and solved, military weapons will only hasten the extinction of us all.

This article is remembering what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki – the losses suffered directly and indirectly both then and still today. The commemoration will be best served by taking action to ensure that good may come from so much destruction and suffering.

Lest We Forget.

Kate Smith, PTU Co-worker, [optuwhanganui@gmail.com](mailto:optuwhanganui@gmail.com)

## **THE GREAT INVOCATION**

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

**From the point of Love within the Heart of God  
Let love stream forth into human hearts.  
May the Coming One return to Earth.**

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

**From the centre which we call the human race  
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.**