



Many to Many

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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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Editorial

These editorials, although written at an earlier time, have a timeless value and remain quite relevant.

“Home is where the Heart is”

Was there ever a time when human beings like so many other species did not seek a shelter or build a dwelling that could be considered ‘home’; a safe place in which the future of the species could be secured? Yet these shelters would be in danger of being taken over by stronger members of the same or other kinds of species - or destroyed by winds or floods. Through centuries human beings have fought to create, maintain and safeguard territories and dwellings for future generations; walls were erected and weaponry refined to more effectively invade or defend such habitats. Long generational grudges could, and sometimes would, explode into open warfare between rulers, families and peoples alike.

Some 70 years after the war was fought against a totalitarian might which aimed - and still aims - not merely for superiority over territories and nations but also for the control and dominance over the mindset of peoples, we are still experiencing this subtle, ruthless and systemic manipulation throughout the world community. With promises and sweeteners, our dreams of a home, a car and other modern commodities are made to come true - at a price. And throughout today’s global community an intricate web of indebtedness to

some lending institution is conditioning, controlling and depleting the general state of human affairs as well as the planetary environment.

Totalitarianism, in all its many disguises, depends on a general state of mistrust and alienation between peoples as well as a polarization of ‘power’ and control. And today it could indeed seem as if this ancient tester and ‘manipulator’ has succeeded in derailing humanity’s sense of direction and destination and numbed the mind into a state of fearful apathy and submission.

But just as the midnight blue sky accentuates the brightness of the stars so does the dark backdrop of despair and gloom show up the increasing - glorious - light of the human spirit. So much is and has been learnt during our long travail in the forecourt of the Temple. Among the rubble we are discovering - re-discovering - the carefully chiseled stones which contain records of knowledge, vision and wisdom from the past. And, beyond the swarms of gossip and snippets of news on the internet, a wealth of thoughts and information from our thinkers and scientists can be found.

Today we can instantly watch - and *see* - the cost to human and all other planetary life of the way we have been using *forcefully* to satisfy our appetites. And in front of us is the crossroad where a decision must be made. We are required to take a good and steady look at the sorry state of

affairs in the forecourt of our Home - still to be built on planet Earth. We need to ask ourselves: 'Is *this* what we will be bringing to other places within the universe that we shall be capable of visiting? Is this the footprint - the mark - that an intelligent species will leave behind wherever it goes?'

Throughout time the human being, the carpenter and builder of homes and the constructor of bridges of relationships, has honed the skills of many tools. Now we must discover - re-discover - the blueprint entrusted to us, a blueprint which will keep testing and teaching, guiding and expanding our mind and vision so we can - and will - fulfill our destiny.

On 25 September 2015 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution entitled: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1). The text of this document is the result of more than 2 years intensive public consultation throughout the world community and includes the voices of the poorest, most vulnerable and oppressed among us. The vision and resolve of the resolution is to create a world, free of poverty, hunger, disease and want; a world in which all life can thrive - and in which we will be living in harmony with nature.

So, with the skills acquired, the tools at hand, and with a blue print outlining the design for our future planetary home - will we rise to the task of

building the 'Home where the Heart is'? I believe we will.

From Many to Many, November 2015

"If there is to be any peace, it will come through being - not having.

Henry Miller.

The UN's 78th Birthday: Revisiting the Operational Credibility of the United Nations By Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury



Credit: United Nations

NEW YORK, Oct 30 2023 (IPS) - I thank the United Nations Asia Network for Diversity and Inclusion (UN-ANDI) for inviting me to present the keynote speech on this special occasion for the observance of the United Nations Day.

I commend wholeheartedly the UN-ANDI and its dedicated team for their work, particularly its recent survey report on racism and racial discrimination despite the constraints of the global Covid pandemic of last few years. I am proud to be associated with the conceptualization of UN-ANDI in late 2019.

As the first ever effort to bring together the diverse group of

personnel from Asia and the Pacific in the UN system, UN-ANDI needs all our support and encouragement. In my decades of work for the United Nations, both representing my country as well as representing the organization, I have seen many faces of the world body – positive and not so positive, spirit-uplifting and also frustrating, focused and determined and also confused and politicized.

But the most enduring experience for me about the work of the United Nations in its 78 years of existence has been its contribution to making a positive difference in the lives of the millions of people of our planet.

Over the years, the United Nations has been tested time and again by conflicts, humanitarian crises and poverty and deprivation, but has always risen to live up to the challenges in a determined and inclusive way. It has been rightly called the “indispensable common house of the entire human family.” Respected global peace leader and philosopher Daisaku Ikeda describes it as the “Parliament of the World.”

It is worth reminding us that without attracting attention, the United Nations and its family of agencies and entities are engaged in a continuing gigantic endeavour against enormous odds to improve every aspect of people’s lives around the world. It is also worth remembering that the UN’s inspirational norm-setting role covers a very broad range of areas.

In my personal association with the application of my country, Bangladesh for membership of the United Nations

in 1972 and since then, in my fifty-one years of collaborative involvement with the UN, I can affirm with great pride that all major aspects of Bangladesh's development architecture reflect the stamp of the UN.

Last Tuesday, as we observed the UN Day, I received many "Happy UN Day" text messages. I did not have the intellectual and moral energy to join them. So, reflecting the current realities, I responded by saying "A not-so-happy UN Day in a conflict-ridden world where the UN is found to be helpless." That helplessness pains me immensely.

The progressive British newspaper Guardian in its editorial on 26 October echoed that perception by saying that "The United Nations marked its 78th birthday on Tuesday but had little cause for celebration." It went on to say that "On the same day, Israel called for António Guterres to resign over his [remarks](#) on the Israel-Hamas war, and accused him of 'blood libel'."

The well-meaning peoples of the world should not be cocooned in our own isolation without recognizing and understanding the reality where we are at this of time. In the most unbecoming manner and forsaking all diplomatic decency, the Israeli Permanent Representative to the UN turned on the Secretary-General at the open session of the Security Council is inconceivable and totally unacceptable.

The earlier Guardian editorial appropriately wrote that "But 10 years ago, it would have been hard to

imagine the contempt radiating from the Israeli Ambassador's announcement that UN representatives would be refused visas because 'the time has come to teach them a lesson'. That surely reflects the UN's reduced status."

The conservative Wall Street Journal went even further the day before on 25 October in its editorial board's opinion to say that "This is how the UN makes itself a fellow traveler in the advancing march of global disorder."

We need to revisit the operational credibility of our much-cherished world body. What was needed in 1945 to be enshrined in the UN Charter is to be judged in the light of current realities. If the Charter needs to be amended to live up to the challenges of global complexities and paralyzing intergovernmental politicization, let us do that. It is high time to focus on that direction. Blindly treating the words of the Charter as sacrosanct may be self-defeating and irresponsible. The UN could be buried under its own rubble unless we set our house in order now.

I am often asked, during 'questions and answers' segment following my public speaking, if I want to recommend one thing that would make the UN perform better, what would it be. My clear and emphatic answer always has been "Abolish the Veto!"

Veto is undemocratic, irrational and against the true spirit of the principle of sovereign equality of the United Nations.

In an opinion piece in the IPS Journal in March 2022, I wrote that “Believe me, the veto power influences not only the decisions of the Security Council but also all work of the UN, including importantly the choice of the Secretary-General.”

The same opinion piece asserted that “I believe the abolition of veto requires a greater priority attention in the reforms process than the enlargement of the Security Council membership with additional permanent ones. Such permanency is simply undemocratic. I also believe that the veto power is not ‘the cornerstone of the United Nations’ but in reality, its tombstone.”

Abolishing the veto would also release the election of the Secretary-General from the manipulating control of the veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council.

I would also recommend that in future the Secretary-General would have only one term of seven years, as opposed to current practice of automatically renewing the Secretary-General’s tenure for a second five-year term, without even evaluating his performance.

After choosing nine men successively to be the world’s topmost diplomat, I strongly believe that it is incumbent on the United Nations to have the sanity and sagacity of electing a woman as the next Secretary-General.

Also, I am of the opinion that a formalized and mandated involvement of and genuine consultation with the civil society would enhance the UN’s credibility. The UN leadership and Member States should work diligently on that without

fail for a decision by the on-going session of the General Assembly.

Transparency and accountability are essential in the budget processes of the UN and personnel recruitments at all levels. Two other areas which need more scrutiny are extra-budgetary resources received from Member States and consultancy practices including budgetary allocations for that by the organization. Special attention in these areas is needed to restore the UN’s credibility and thereby effectiveness and efficiency for the benefit of the humanity as a whole.

The international community has reached a fork in the road. One path is to resign ourselves to the idea that an effective multilateral system is beyond our grasp, with the potential for reversion to the dangerous, anarchic world order that the United Nations was set up to improve upon.

The other path, also rocky but considerably more hopeful, leads to global solidarity based on shared principles, objectives, and commitments, on oneness of humanity and on a global security architecture that has a chance of commanding the genuine respect as well as the true acceptance and adherence of all States.

Let me conclude by asserting that, all said, I continue to hold on to my deep faith in multilateralism and , my belief and trust in the United Nations as the most universal organization for the people and the planet is renewed and reaffirmed!

*This opinion piece is the enhanced version of the keynote address by **Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury**, former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations at the*

virtual observance of the United Nations Day (24 October) by the United Nations Asia Network for Diversity and Inclusion (UN-ANDI) on 27 October 2023.

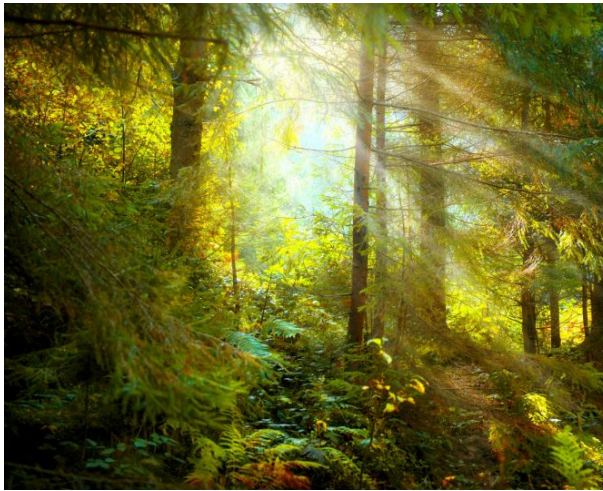
IPS UN Bureau

"So even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

Martin Luther King Jr

– ["I Have A Dream"](#) speech at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., August 28, 1963.

Ode to Silence



Steadily does our bush track
descend
Into filtered light most mellow
It draws us along and beyond
each bend
With its softening, radiant yellow.

Down deeper and deeper slowly
we go
Through leafy cathedrals vast
Till reaching a point of stillness
below
In silence now, at last.

Closely that silence embraces us
With a cloak of soothing healing
Dissolving all the worry and fuss
That our daily lives keep dealing.

With jangled nerves untangling
now

My listening heart does waken
I hear it make a solemn vow
Oh silence, be not forsaken!

This vow is as a fiery seed
Which grows in force and
radiance
Responding to our daily need
For amelioration through silence.

The heart thus charged with inner
strength
Flows forth its benefaction
In this transformational
wavelength
We discover Silence as Action.

<https://newwavesoflight.org/poems>

2024 UN Summit of the Future
Chapter II. International peace and security

Project- Creation of a UN
Council of Peace

The challenge of our times is in daring to create new thinking about peace.

Our proposal is to incrementally increase a focus of peace away from the existing central attention to global security through military means, with the establishment of a UN Council of Peace. This council will require enough resources so it will be sustainable and effective with sufficient authority and leadership so that over time it will help bring a new paradigm/worldview of peace.

In the preamble for the UN Charter, to achieve its stated ends, it is written that UN members are to **practice tolerance and live together in peace** as good neighbours, followed by a goal to unite our strength **to maintain international peace** and security.

Sadly, the maintenance of international peace has been constructed through a perpetual threat of military dominance and annihilation.

The UN Charter was developed with two world wars as background history.

¹ "Peace and Violence" - Council of Europe – Compass – Manual for Human Rights Education for Young People, [https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/peace-and-](https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/peace-and-violence#:~:text=Peace%20as%20a%20human%20right&text=It%20is%20as%20an%20essential,viole%20and%20resolving%20conflicts%20peacefully)

At that time, the victors of the Second World War chose to become the leaders of global security. In retrospect, it would have been difficult not to place peace within the security framework at that time. For 75 years, these leading states have practiced "tolerance of one another" by imposing a nuclear threat regime upon the world.

Why Now?

The UN needs to strengthen itself to better face the onset of the climate crisis, war and conflict, the erosion of democracies, and the current dominance of military security.

Peace is often an after-thought, for when military affairs of conflict get settled. Since the inception of the UN, the priorities and rivalries managing current affairs have failed Peace. The world is desperate for a UN Council of Peace, as part of UN fiscal priorities, so that nations can prioritize the establishment of new, effective peace-driven institutions.

What is Peace?

We agree that "peace is a human right. It is essential to the realisation of human rights. Peace is also a product of human rights: The more a society promotes, protects and fulfils their obligations towards these rights, the greater the chances for curbing violence and resolving conflict peacefully."¹

[violence#:~:text=Peace%20as%20a%20human%20right&text=It%20is%20as%20an%20essential,viole%20and%20resolving%20conflicts%20peacefully](https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/peace-and-violence#:~:text=Peace%20as%20a%20human%20right&text=It%20is%20as%20an%20essential,viole%20and%20resolving%20conflicts%20peacefully). Accessed Dec 7, 2023.

In the current worldview of security, peace is narrowly defined as the absence of hostility, violence, conflict or war; and now perceived as “stable” by nuclear deterrence.

However, a worldview of peace as an intrinsic state of relationships, becomes an intergenerational vision of freedom, political social justice, harmonious co-existence, and a movement away from the primacy of military means,

What is missing at the UN?

There have been statements regarding UN peace ambitions, such as the Agenda for Peace and the New Agenda for Peace.

The UN project of “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets have integrated peace into their objectives. It “seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom.” It reveals a determination “to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.”²

In particular, goal SDG 16 is to **promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable**

² The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> Accessed Dec 7, 2023.

³ SDG 16. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>. Accessed Dec 7, 2023.

development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.³

However, there is abundant proof on the need to do much better. The creation of a UN Council of Peace could provide a means to help fulfill the original and optimistic ideals of the UN Charter. We believed that peace must be the foundational framework for global decisions and not an elusive outcome of the present-day “primacy of military” security context.

Potential Organizational Factors

Both the General Assembly (Chapter 4, article 22) and the Security Council (Chapter 6, article 29) can establish subsidiary organs as they deem necessary for the performance of their functions.

Usually, membership of UN organs has been provided through UN Member representation. However, other bodies such as credible academic institutions, peace movements or expert individuals should be welcome, and their participation in a founding Council of Peace would be encouraged.

For example, one could envision the inclusion of The Elders⁴ group,

⁴ The Elders, <https://theelders.org>, Accessed Dec 7, 2023.

whose engagements and values would benefit the elevation of peace as a primary, hopeful value, together with their commitments towards Multiculturalism, Human Rights, Gender equality and Women in Leadership and intergenerational dialogue.

One could envision a fulsome reform of the UN Trusteeship Council to focus on codifying new major principles of international relations, centering on peace first, prohibition of the use of force in international relations, and a commitment to disarm the planet.

Lastly, one could envision a wider public citizen engagement for partnership and funding, recognizing that citizens rarely have a say in priorities and spending for national and international security.

Potential Status

The vision of this project would see the UN Council of Peace initially empowered as an advisory group and ultimately with decision making authorities within the United Nations, in relation to the Secretary General, the General Assembly and Security Council. We believe that the time is, now, for the Creation of the UN Council of Peace. In the name of humanity, let us "Give Peace a Chance."

We remain available should you have any questions on this proposal,

Signatories not shown

"The cost in human lives and suffering is so high that we all have to work to end violence and oppression once and for all. We have to proclaim that every human being is equal, in dignity, in freedom -and, as the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, we have to live in a spirit of brotherhood."

-- **Federico Mayor Zaragoza**

Thoughts on Beauty



Beauty is the signature of
Spirit,
A universal language that
touches the Soul
And opens the doorway to
Truth.

Through Beauty we
approach the Principle of
Existence,
So abstract we can only
sense it.
Yet feeling it, we know the
Truth that Life is an
expression of Love.

To enjoy – find joy in –
Beauty is to bond with
Every other human who

opens to Beauty;
It is to experience the Love
of Life which makes us
whole.

Thus Beauty reveals the
Heart
And leads to an awareness
of a great Truth:
Though many, we are One.

<https://newwavesoflight.org/poems>

Think with your heart. See with your heart. Hear with your heart. Feel with your heart. Act with your heart. Speak with your heart. For love is the highest, most powerful, durable human capacity.

Robert Muller

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.**