

# *Many to Many*

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Information

*“Many to Many” under the aegis of Operation Peace Through Unity is a communicating link between “we, the peoples” of all nations, races, creeds and ideologies offering in the spirit of the preamble of the United Nations Charter an instrument for the furthering of better relationships based on deepening mutual understanding and the aspiration to promote unity and cooperation beyond all differences.*

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## *I. Truth*

The computer age does not seem to have made it any easier to tell fact from fiction.

With the continuously increasing stream of information pouring from well-known as well as more obscure sources, offering diverse and often contradictory research, statistics, points of view on almost anything and everything, the “data smog” as David Shenk, author of “Data Smog – Surviving the Information Glut”, calls it, seems to get thicker by the day. To pierce through the mesmerizing hum of words and sound bytes vying for our attention, information distributors are resorting to more and more drastic and dramatic ways of presenting their contributions in the competitive world of communication – shock treatment becoming the norm.

According to some analysts this information explosion is shortening our attention span, playing havoc with our capability to ‘think deeply’, and pulverising whatever we hitherto believed to be factual, right and true. David Shenk proposes that we may be experiencing: “the unfortunate coinciding of two consequences of technology: more citizen power with less citizen understanding”.

Even so, the very fact that we are becoming aware of possessing a knowledge power, which will require of us deeper understanding and right action, is good news.

In a world overloaded with information of mixed quality and complex character, perhaps we need to find a receptacle within ourselves, a smog-less place where we can think deeply and see truth without fear or favour - but with heart.

One of world’s great teachers warns us that “burdened by knowledge, but un-winged, will be those who are heartless”. Knowledge can only deliver us from ignorance if lifted up into the clear light of truth. Truth is defined as a ‘quality or state of being true or truthful’. Only in such a state of being can we tell fact from fiction and recognize the design of the emerging tapestry of a new civilization.

Within the labyrinths of a scientist’s mathematical calculations are found the magnificent simplicity of a revolutionary equation; obscured by the gushing of information feeding the world with knowledge on many things, we can begin to glimpse the contours of a new community of peoples who with greater integrity than ever before “bear witness to truth”.

Truth is one, says the same teacher, but each country and even each decade contacts it in its own way. “New scrolls are unrolled and the human consciousness observes in a new way the manifestations of the Universe”.

In a ‘state of being true’ we will be able to see the countless units of new knowledge fall into place, revealing the blueprint of what is to come. With understanding equalling power we, the citizens of the world, will know in our hearts how to create a world of beauty.

## ***II. Women and Peacebuilding***

The world community is using this year's United Nations 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to assess the plusses and minuses of this international institution to date and to make suggestions as to what reforms and reconstructions are needed for the UN to serve better the entirety of the world's peoples.

The UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's recent Report to the General Assembly "In Larger Freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All", outlines specific proposals for change – proposals he insists must be seen as a single comprehensive strategy, because "at no time in human history have the fates of woman, man and child been so intertwined across the globe". We must find common ground and sustain collective action to build a world in larger freedom.

At the September Millennium Summit+5 government leaders and heads of state will gather and take stock on what progress has been made in realizing the goals set out in the 2000 Millennium Declaration to eradicate extreme poverty; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development.

In this Declaration all member states also reaffirmed their commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, which they declared had proven to be timeless and universal: *"Indeed their relevance and capacity to inspire have increased, as nations and peoples have become increasingly interconnected and interdependent"*.

So there seems to be general agreement that it is a universal human right and responsibility to ensure the dignity and worth of the human person, the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.

Perhaps one of the most significant and hopeful changes that has happened since 1945 is the awakening of people everywhere to this interdependence and interconnectedness, and to the realization that it is "we, the people of the United Nations" who need to show the determination to save "succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Each global conference has seen greater participation by representatives from non-governmental organizations and civil society. As Deputy Secretary-General Louse Frechette has expressed it: "Where once global conferences were largely the realm of governments, today it would be unthinkable to stage such events without the unique advocacy and mobilization of non-governmental actors.... Who are making increasingly important contributions to global policy debates and intergovernmental deliberations, in areas ranging from the environment to gender mainstreaming."

The issue of gender equality is increasingly being acknowledged as crucial to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and essential for the building of peaceful global community. Women's right to gender equality was recognized in the Millennium Declaration, which pledges to "combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)".

The role of women in creating and maintaining peace throughout our troubled world has also been recognized. As the result of a strong and determined pressure by women, supported by the

then president of the Security Council (Namibia), the landmark resolution 1325: Women, Peace and Security, was unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council, 31 October 2000.

Since then women throughout the world have pressed forward, step by step, to become accepted as an equal partner in the building of a peaceful, just and healthy world community:

In 2001 the Afghan Women's Summit for Democracy outlined a strategy for action regarding gender equality to be included in the discussions on reconstruction of Afghanistan, and in 2004 the first post-conflict Constitution was adopted which includes provisions for gender equality, women's education and political participation. In their country's first presidential election the women of Afghanistan made up 40 per cent of voters.

Iraq's interim constitution has adopted gender equality and a 25 per cent quota for women representation in the National Assembly.

In the first national elections in Rwanda since the 1994 genocide, held in September 2003, women won 48.8 per cent of the parliamentary seats, the highest percentage in the world.

These few examples merely testify to the concerted effort by women throughout the entire world community to have a say and to influence decision-making on all levels. The Beijing Action Plan, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the 1325 resolution have all pushed hard for governments to accept women's right to participate on an equal basis in the building of a better and fairer world.

But although the legal, political and constitutional framework may be in place, the outcome of such gender equality will depend on the common sense, cooperation and goodwill of all parties, women as well as men. In a mutually respectful, supportive and compatible relationship between the genders, the world can look forward to a better and brighter future for all.

Contacts: UNIFEM websites [www.unifem.org](http://www.unifem.org) – [www.womenwarpeace.org](http://www.womenwarpeace.org)  
CEDAW websites [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw) - [www.mdgender.net/](http://www.mdgender.net/)  
Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) website [www.wedo.org/](http://www.wedo.org/)

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### ***III. Right from the Start***

“Right from the Start” describes itself as a vision for children and their futures. It presents this vision through the publishing of a series of practical, accessible and richly illustrated books, each following a particular theme, which it believes together will achieve the purposes of the project.

Right from the Start aims to:

- Build a background of love and security into the lives of children particularly during the ultra-sensitive first three years of their lives
- Encourage a full recognition of the spiritual nature of every person.
- Answer some of the problems caused by poverty, parental loneliness and lack of support for families.
- Respond to the damage caused to children by parental breakdown and the loss of family values.
- Uphold children's inborn capacity for sociability, empathy and co-operation, and to foster and strengthen good human relationships.
- Break the cycle of fear, anger and abuse carried through from one generation to the next.

- Bring children closer to the natural world and an understanding and care of the environment.
- Counteract the corrupting elements in commercial pressures and materialistic values.
- Reduce the tensions experienced by many teachers and enhance their sense of fulfillment.

The second book in the planned series was published this year by Network Educational Press Ltd, entitled: *The Right from the Start Handbook - PROMOTING CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING IN THE PRIMARY YEARS*, edited by Andrew Burrell and Jeni Riley.

In this handbook, teachers, therapists, and pupils offer their experiences, ideas and activities that will help children develop intellectually, socially, emotionally and spiritually in a safe and secure school environment.

Topics include: educating the whole person; emotional literacy; partnerships with parents and the wider community; developing a sense of wonder; creating positive relationships and building self-belief and understanding; and enhancing learning – through good nutrition, learning through song and movement.

The appendices offer a summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, titles of children's books as well as teachers' books and curriculum materials.

Among the many Right from the Start book series still to be published are: "The Power of Music for You and Your Children"; "Food for Thought: What children eat and its effect on their intelligence, personality and behaviour"; and "Natural Wonder: The enchantment that feeds the human spirit".

Sarah Woodhouse and Andrew Burrell use a quote by former UN Secretary-General U Thant to help describe the purpose and vision of Right from the Start:

*"The world will not change and there will be no peace if there is not a new education".*

This charitable company was originally developed in response to a three-year research programme, set up by the Schools' Council in the 1980s, in order to study the emotional and mental health and behaviour of children in inner-city and council estate primary schools throughout England and Wales.

Among the findings from this study were that over 70 per cent of the five year olds coming into these primary schools already showed signs of disturbed or violent behaviour, while children who had experienced a loving and creative family life and had attended a secure school showed an extraordinary 'peaking' of human qualities between the ages of 9 and 12: *"During this period these children showed a striking capacity for openness, helpfulness, kindness and generosity, also a high degree of sensitivity towards others, and freedom from cruelty, prejudice and dishonesty".*

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The first book in this series, published by Hawthorn Press ([www.hawthornpress.com](http://www.hawthornpress.com)) was "Sound Sleep: Calming and helping your baby or child to sleep". This book has been translated into Chinese.

"Promoting Children's Well-Being in the Primary Years" and all future books in this series will be published by Network Educational Press Ltd.

If you wish to support or learn more about this educational project, so vital for future education of children everywhere, more information can be obtained at the following addresses:  
Network Educational Press Ltd., P.O. Box 635, Stafford St16 1BF, UK.  
E-mail: [enquiries@networkpress.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@networkpress.co.uk) Website: <http://www.networkpress.co.uk>

Right from the Start contact: e-mail [sarah@rightfromthestart.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:sarah@rightfromthestart.fsnet.co.uk)  
website: [www.rightfromthestart.co.uk](http://www.rightfromthestart.co.uk).

*“Spirituality is a state of connectedness to life. It is an experience of being, belonging and caring. It is sensitivity and compassion, joy and hope.*

*It is the harmony between the innermost life and the outer life, or the life of the world and the life universal.*

*It is the supreme comprehension of life in time and place, the tuning of the inner person with the great mysteries and secrets that are around us.*

*It is the belief in the goodness of life and possibility of each person to contribute goodness to it.*

*It is the belief in life as part of the eternal stream of time, that each of us came from somewhere and is destined somewhere, that without such belief there could be no prayer, no meditation, no peace and no happiness.”*

*U Thant*

#### ***IV. PEOPLE BUILDING PEACE***

##### ***A global action agenda for the prevention of violent conflict***

This Action Agenda is the product of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), which has been described as a world-wide civil society-led process to generate a new international consensus on peacebuilding and the prevention of violent conflict. With an International Secretariat in Utrecht, The Netherlands, it represents a vast and growing array of civil society organizations (CSOs) around the world, who are working to prevent violence and promote peace.

The Global Agenda believes that promoting peace and security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires a fundamental shift in how we respond to the challenge of violent conflict: “Our priority must be to prevent it from occurring and thereby avoid the massive human, environmental, and economic cost of war”. Measures and strategies are proposed in this Agenda which concludes by highlighting key reforms and tasks that can be implemented by CSOs, the UN, regional organizations and governments to strengthen their institutional capacities to address the issues identified in the Global Agenda.

“The goal of prevention is a world where people and governments elect nonviolent means to achieve greater justice, sustainable development and human security”, says the Introduction to the Global Action Agenda, “We are not attempting to prevent all conflict. We believe in the importance of channeling conflict through peaceful processes capable of delivering constructive change”.

Among highlights in this action agenda is:

**To promote human security and address root causes of conflict:** prevention and sustainable peacebuilding necessary to achieve Millennium Development Goals; implement demilitarization,

disarmament and resettlement; provide post-war reconstruction and generate cultures of peace from the grassroots up by mainstreaming peace education, cultivating conflict resolution skills and promoting reconciliation.

**To make prevention the fundamental goal of collective security arrangements:** develop and implement an internationally agreed programme of action; integrate early warning and early response systems;

**Prevention and peacebuilding requires an integrated architecture of effective institutional capacities and partnerships:** strengthen CSO capacities for prevention and peacebuilding through local, national, regional and global networks that improve accountability and effectiveness through communication, coordination and mutual assistance; enhance leadership of prevention and peacebuilding efforts at the UN through a peacebuilding commission and peacebuilding support office that engages effectively with civil society, mobilize resources and enable coherent and sustained peacebuilding through information-sharing, planning and monitoring.

In his opening remarks at the Security Council debate on “The Role of Civil Society in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding” (June 2004) the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, stressed that “if peacebuilding missions are to be effective, they should, as part of a clear political strategy, work with and strengthen those civil society forces that are helping ordinary people to voice their concerns, and to act on them in peaceful ways” The aim, he continued, “must be to create a synergy with those civil society groups that are bridge-builders, truth-finders, watchdogs, human rights defenders, and agents for social protection and economic revitalization”.

*Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, c/o ECCP, P.O. Box 14069, 3508 SC Utrecht,*

*The Netherlands. E-mail [info@conflict-prevention.net](mailto:info@conflict-prevention.net) website [www.gppac.net](http://www.gppac.net)*

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## ***V. Designing a Peacebuilding Infrastructure***

A Development Dossier published April 2005 and produced by the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS), entitled: DESIGNING A PEACEBUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE: Taking a Systems Approach to the Prevention of Deadly Conflict, by Toby P. Dress, J.D. can be obtained from:

*UN-NGLS, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland ([npls@unctad.org](mailto:npls@unctad.org)), or UN-NGLS, Room DC1-1106, United Nations, New York, NY 10017, USA ([npls@un.org](mailto:npls@un.org)) Website: [www.un-npls.org](http://www.un-npls.org)*

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## ***VI. EDUCATION FOR PEACE IN SCHOOLS***

As their contribution to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (A.U.Th.) and UNESCO Chair, Dimitra Papadopoulou, have together published a book entitled: “*Towards a Culture of Peace – Education for Peace in School*”.

This book, edited by Dimitra Papadopoulou, contains contributions from 48 authors from all levels of education and covering many subjects, such as theology, mathematics, biology,

psychology and medicine. Also included in this 530 pages volume are the Seville Statement on Violence and the Manifesto 2000.

The book provides the framework within which representatives of international organizations such as the UN, UNESCO and UNICEF can meet with educators on all educational levels, from kindergarten to university, on issues regarding culture of peace and human rights. It also provides a place where all kinds of educators: chemists, physicists, biologists, scholars, foreign language teachers, fine arts teachers, theologians and others, can meet and, together with their students, cultivate the values of a culture of peace under the aegis of the UNESCO Chair of A.U.Th.

Therefore the main aim of this publication is to present to educators as well as the general public the values, attitudes and behaviours that constitute the culture of human rights and peace. It provides knowledge regarding resolutions and other relevant texts pertaining to a culture of peace, and hopes to inspire even more educators and people in general to help making a culture of peace into a way of life.

Among the topics and issues discussed in this book are: *The role of UNESCO in the Education towards a Culture of Human Rights and Peace; Education in Human Rights and the School curriculum; School without Frontiers; A Collection of stories, myths and fairytales from the countries of origin of our foreign students; Child Abuse and Neglect; We and the others: a journey in the land of diversity etc.*

“Towards a Culture of Peace – Education for Peace in School” is available from the UNESCO Chair at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, P.O. Box 48, 541 24 Thessaloniki, Greece.  
Email: [dipeace@psy.auth.gr](mailto:dipeace@psy.auth.gr)

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## ***VII. Reflections on Sino-Japanese Relationship*** ***By Eric Wong***

The recent political relationships between China and Japan has reached rock bottom and has been described at its lowest since 1975. Massive anti-Japanese demonstrations took place all over China earlier this year as a result of a series of provocative political decisions made by the Japanese government. While some people took to the streets to protest peacefully others turned the demonstration into racial attacks which then led to street riots. Windows and signboards were smashed; some Japanese restaurants and cars were attacked and vandalized, and Japanese Embassies in China were targeted by protesters. Japan has responded by expressing its frustrations over the demonstrations, demanding an apology and compensation from China. At the same time in Japan, Chinese Embassies and Language schools for the Chinese were being threatened and red paint sprayed over the exterior of the buildings, as some of the Japanese showed their discontent over what happened in China.

As a Chinese myself, married to a Japanese woman, I wonder what effect this political turmoil will have on the peoples of both countries. Is this a struggle between two countries in the political sphere, or is this a basic struggle within the human race?  
I'm living my life in these two cultures on a daily basis, and that is giving me and my wife the challenges and the learning opportunities to understand and overcome our cultural differences, through dialogue and love.

The recent political arm wrestling started earlier on this year in April. The Japanese government had given the green light for a controversial history textbook to be used by some schools in Japan. The latest edition of this Japanese history textbook was seen as the revival of the past imperialism and has been described as a cover up of past Japanese war crimes by the Chinese and the Korean government. This sent alarm bells ringing through the rest of the East Asian Countries once suffering from the Japanese invasion at the World War Two.

The history textbook received tremendous criticism from China, regarding the eliminations and rewording of the Japanese occupation of China, which resulted in massacres where tens of thousands of civilians were raped and killed by the then Japanese Army, namely the Nanjing massacre. This particular issue has always been the debating ground between the two countries over the past years.

It is obvious that the Japanese Government does not want the future generations to identify their country with such barbaric acts. Over the years, the educational board asked some right wing scholars to rewrite the history, as it would educate the young ones to be proud of their country. Another catalyst that has set off the mass demonstrations is the Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's repeated visits to Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo in recent years, where he pays respects to those who fought in the World War Two, including some Class A war criminals. Despite repeated protests by the Chinese Government, the Prime Minister of Japan along with some of his ministers carry on with the annual visit to the Shrine, claiming that other countries should not intervene with the Japanese traditions. Furthermore, Junichiro Koizumi defends his visits as an act of personal belief and respect which has nothing to do with politics.

While China continues putting pressure on Japan over the history textbook dispute, Japan is criticizing China for its incompetence in protecting the safety of Japanese nationals in China. Two Japanese students in Shanghai were attacked while dining in a restaurant, demonstrating the strong anti-Japanese sentiment among the Chinese people. The Japanese Government is also demanding compensation for damages done during the demonstrations to their embassies and restaurants

Despite efforts were being made to mend the fences, China not only refuses to apologize for the damages that has been done during the demonstrations but is asking Japan to reflect on the things that it has done, which have hurt the feelings of the Chinese people.

Very little progress is being made at the negotiation table. Japan wants to exercise its growing political muscle and be firm against China, and China can not tolerate that Japan is denying their war crimes.

As history tells us, Japan was founded by China many years ago. Therefore the two countries have a lot of similarities. Although the relationship between China and Japan has not always been smooth the fact cannot be ignored that today, 60 years after World War II, China and Japan have in some areas a closer relationship than before. There is a growing number of Japanese investing their business in China, and Chinese people are becoming much more interested and growing fond of the Japanese culture. Many Chinese people are living and studying in Japan and the number of marriages between the two nationalities is also increasing.

So it seems that on the political sphere the two countries are drifting apart, but in the area of business and on a more personal level Chinese and Japanese are building stronger ties. It would be a pity to see such relationship and friendship being destroyed by politics. Only if both

countries could agree on what happened in the past, and mutual trust and respect could be developed, then a more harmonious relationship could grow between the two countries. The responsibility should not however be shouldered only by the two governments: all of us should be responsible for improving and maintaining the Sino Japanese relationships. We may not all have the political power to influence the governments but all of us have the power to analyze what we see and hear. Before making any judgment, we can take time to think and to seek better understanding of the many aspects of any given situation. What is happening between China and Japan at the moment has mostly to do with politics, and does not represent every Chinese and Japanese's opinion.

There is nothing that we can do to change past history but there is so much that we could do to help build and maintain a harmonious relationship between the two countries. And this requires all of our efforts in accepting and understanding each other's culture without prejudice. We should treat the war in the past as a good lesson for all of us to learn from, because it reminds us of the horror and trauma caused to the people before us. Let the two neighbors of the Asia Pacific be inspired to create a peaceful environment in the region, and set a good example for the rest of the world.

### ***VIII. Peacebuilding: Cooperation, Coordination, and Holistic Vision*** ***By Rene Wadlow***

“From the outset of my mandate”, said in 1993 the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, “I have been convinced that the structure of the Organisation must mirror, as closely as possible, the tasks it is assigned to undertake. An institution must reflect the objectives it pursues... The UN therefore faces the difficult task of relating our aims to our means, of updating and reforming institutions, set up at different times and with different imperatives.” Boutros-Ghali proposed measures to promote coordination and decentralization within the UN system, greater cooperation with non-governmental organizations and regional bodies, and creating more effective UN financing and budget-making mechanisms.

He went on to stress the vast challenges of famine, drought, AIDS, civil wars, uprooted and displaced populations and deepening human misery in many parts of the world. These situations make dramatic demands on the UN system and require a better field presence and operational capabilities. The UN system is called upon to respond to very diversified requirements, often involving the provision of crucial and direct aid to peoples in deep distress and involving sensitive new fields of social, economic and political transformation.

Over a decade later, Kofi Annan made many of the same observations as he set out his own proposals for structural reforms in his report “In Larger Freedom”. The text is found on the UN website: [www.un.org/largerfreedom](http://www.un.org/largerfreedom). In September 2005, government leaders and NGO representatives will meet in New York to discuss progress since 2000 on the Millennium Declaration and its goals to halve poverty worldwide by 2015. They will also discuss structural reforms for the UN system.

The proposals to enlarge the UN Security Council have attracted most attention, but there are other significant measures proposed. One proposal potentially important is the creation of a “Peacebuilding Support Office” within the UN Secretariat, linked to an intergovernmental Peacebuilding Commission. Hopefully this will be more than a name change for the same functional relief coordination and the World Food Programme. There is a need for a body which

can inspire national governments, NGOs, and academic communities for the long and often painful long-term restructuring of societies leading to justice and stability. Afghanistan is a good example of the difficulties, as well as Kosovo in the former Yugoslavia where the UN has more direct responsibility.

We all have limited attention spans for crisis situations in which we are not directly involved or do not have strong emotional links. We are constantly asked to pay attention to a new crisis, to new tensions, to new difficulties. Political leaders have even shorter attention spans unless there are strong domestic reasons for remaining involved. Therefore there is a need both within the UN system and within national governments for a group of persons with a long-term holistic vision, who are able to see trends and interlinks between situations. Such a body needs to be able to organize long-term cooperation drawing upon the knowledge and resources of universities, religious groups, NGOs and governmental services at all levels.

Just as ecological concerns require actions by a multitude of actors who do not always see the relationship between their actions, so peacebuilding has material, intellectual and spiritual dimensions.

Finding the way these fit together in ways understandable to policy makers is not easy. However, this is the challenge before us. The process will take time and vision. We will have to see what seeds are planted in September and reflect on how we can be most useful to this effort.

*Rene Wadlow is editor of the on-line journal of world politics: [www.transnational-perspectives.org](http://www.transnational-perspectives.org)*

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## ***IX. A CALL TO ALL SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS***

A press release was issued on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2005, Hiroshima Day, by the Scientists for Global Responsibility and the Architects and Engineers for Social Responsibility with the following text:

*To coincide with the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR)\* and Architects and Engineers for Social Responsibility (AESR)\* call on scientists and technologists to cease working on projects which contribute to the creation, development, improvement or manufacture of further nuclear weapons. We also call on the scientific and technical community to demand the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and, as a first step towards this, demand that the nuclear powers honour their obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).*

*This all comes at an especially important time. The UK is currently expanding its laboratories at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) at Aldermaston, with a government decision on whether to commission a replacement for its existing Trident nuclear weapons due soon. India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea deploy nuclear weapons outside the NPT. India and the USA are preparing to exchange civil nuclear technology for the first time, despite India's continued refusal to sign the NPT. Iran is preparing to re-start its uranium enrichment plant. All these activities undermine the commitments made by countries under the NPT, and are likely to increase the threat that the continued deployment of nuclear weapons poses. Indeed, the insistence by the existing nuclear weapons nations such as the UK that they need to retain their*

*nuclear weapons undermines our ability to convince other countries that they should not have such weapons.*

*Given the horrific nature of these weapons of mass destruction – the Hiroshima bomb alone killed at least 145,000 people, and most nuclear weapons deployed today are many times more destructive – it is extraordinary that efforts still continue to further develop these weapons. Indeed, it is incredible that at least 20,000 nuclear weapons are still deployed across the world today, enough to destroy global civilization many times over (through a combination of explosive power, radioactivity and disruption to environmental systems). Furthermore, some of these weapons are deployed on high alert – ready to launch at a few minutes notice – and hence open to the possibility of accidental launch.*

*The latest conference of the NPT in May broke up without agreement, demonstrating that the politicians cannot or will not act. Hence, SGR and AESR believe that scientists and technologists should show the way.*

*Dr Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director of SGR, said: “We should be trying to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction – especially nuclear weapons as they are by far the most devastating of these. Yet many governments, including that in the UK, are not only unwilling to take steps towards disarmament, they are looking to developing new nuclear weapons. If the politicians will not act for peace, then the scientists and technologists should.”*

\* SGR is a UK organization of approximately 600 scientists and technologists promoting ethical science and technology, based on the principles of openness, accountability, peace, social justice, and environmental sustainability. <http://www.sgr.org.uk/>

\* AESR is a UK organization of approximately 250 engineers and architects which works closely with SGR and has similar concerns. [http://www.sgr.org.uk/AESR/AESR\\_Overview.htm](http://www.sgr.org.uk/AESR/AESR_Overview.htm)

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This Call is underscored in a message from Joseph Rotblat, Nobel Peace Laureate and Fellow of Royal Science to the *Inheritors of the Manhattan Project* on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Trinity Atomic Test in New Mexico, 16<sup>th</sup> July 1945 which ends:

*“Let me, in conclusion, remind you that the basic human value is life itself, the most important human rights is the right to live. It is the duty of scientists to see to it that, through their work, life will not be put into peril, but will be made safe and its quality enhanced”.*

<http://www.atomicmirror.org/>

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## ***X. International Congress on Intercultural and Inter-religious Dialogue Palacio Euskalduna in Bilbao (Basque Country) Spain, 11-13 December 2005***

This Congress, with the theme “New Challenges in a World Longing for Peace” and organized by Barandiaran Kristau Alkarte, Pax Romana together with UNESCO Etxea, aims to “*affirm and promote dialogue as the road to a peaceful and just global coexistence in which diversity is enriching*”.

Core issues will be discussed, such as: interdependency among religions and cultures; causes for violent conflicts and opportunities for reconciliation among different groups; and the way forward to living with justice and peace in a global and intercultural world.

The following are excerpts from the intellectual foundations of the Congress:

*“It is only in dialogue that communities can truly meet and understand one another. Choosing the route of dialogue however, involves facing a number of difficulties and challenges. First of all, throughout history there have been clashes between groups of people bearing different ‘truths’ or worldviews. This difficulty is ingrained in the centuries-long history of every group and its own self-understanding and therefore, can be eliminated neither quickly nor through pure will power.”*

*“For some, dialogue among cultures or civilizations must take place on a strictly cultural level so as to avoid the dangerous symbolic-affective worlds of the different religions, worlds with vast sentimental and historical burdens. For others, dialogue among religions is of prime importance precisely because of the effect that religions have had on the core values and motivations of every civilization”.*

*“A new and wide range of ‘identity’ factors have become the nuclei of new blocks struggling for self-affirmation, for international recognition, and for an adequate level of power in the concert of nations”.*

*“Underlying this issue is the question of how we are to understand this concept of ‘identity’. It is by no means clear whether or not any human group can have a totally separate identity of its own. History teaches that civilizations and religions have intermingled constantly throughout the centuries, and that the identity of any given culture or civilization should, therefore, be construed as an ongoing and complex process during which several ‘identities’ never cease to interact.”*

*“A relatively new phenomenon may help in overcoming this danger. The vast migratory movements across countries and continents should be treated as an essential part of any modern-day dialogue. Many countries face the reality of culturally and religiously pluralist societies, a reality which they must learn to manage. Such societies provide the possibility of new perspectives on the meeting of civilizations. They produce vastly promising cultural and religious interactions at the heart of countries that, until recently, had rather more homogenous cultures.”*

*“The fact that different groups clash on the basis of difference usually masks an important truth, i.e., that they share in many spiritual resources and values, which may ultimately be essentially similar”.*

For more details: <http://www.icii-bilbao.org/en-contenido.htm>

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## X. *The Great Invocation in English and Tamil*

### 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.

### பெரும் விண்ணப்ப பிரார்த்தனை

ஒளியின் நடுநின்று,

ஆண்டவனின் திருவுள்ளத்திருந்து அவ்வொளி, மாந்தர் மன  
அகத்துள் வெள்ளம் போல் பாய்ந்து பூமியின் கீழ் ஒளிர்வதாக.

★

அன்பு நடுநின்று, ஆண்டவனின் இதயத்துள் வெள்ளம் போல்  
பாய்ந்து கிருஸ்துதேவர் மீண்டும் உலகில் வருவாராக.

★

எவ்விடத்தே ஆண்டவனின் அருட்செயலை அறிய படுகின்றதோ  
மாந்தர் சிற்றறிவிற்கு, இவ்வுணர்வே வழிக் காட்டுவதாக.  
இவ்வுணர்வை, பரமாசரியர்கள் அறிந்தே தொண்டுச்  
செய்கின்றனர்

★

மனித சமூகம் என்று அழைக்கப்படும் இடம் எதுவோ அந்  
நடுநின்று அன்பும் ஒளியும் வகுத்தவழி இயங்கி தீய செயல்களின்  
கதவுகள் மூடபடுவதாக, இப்பூமியில் வகுத்தவழிப்படி அன்பும்  
ஒளியும், சக்தியும் உயிர் பிக்க படவேண்டும்.