

UNITED NATIONS NON-GOVERNMENTAL LIAISON SERVICE

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Int'l. Year for Culture of Peace: Launch of a Global Movement

As of September 2000 more than 60 million signatures had been collected from around the world for the Manifesto 2000 for A Culture of Peace and Non-Violence. The Manifesto (see box on back page), drafted by a group of Nobel Peace Prize laureates with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was launched in March 1999. UNESCO is the United Nations system coordinator for the activities of the International Year for the Culture of Peace (IYCP), including Manifesto 2000.

The Manifesto is addressed to individuals and civil society, according to UNESCO, in order to "raise awareness among people around the world who, in signing the Manifesto, will commit themselves to adhere to the values of peace, tolerance and solidarity and undertake to translate the values, attitudes and modes of behaviour that underpin the culture of peace into daily action."

More than 160 international organizations and over 1,300 national and local organizations are part of a Global Movement to publicize and collect signatures for the Manifesto 2000, as well as organizing flagship events and promoting their projects in the field of the culture of peace. The signatures of the Manifesto 2000 were presented to the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations for the Millennium Peace Day on 19 September 2000.

The 1945 Constitution of UNESCO declares that "since war begins in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that defences of peace must be constructed." Around the world many are working to achieve this goal. This is a long process, and the challenge today is to accelerate awareness and anticipate the threat of violence so that people's daily lives are improved and future generations can be spared the consequences of violence.

MOBILIZATION FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE

In 1998 the UN General Assembly, which relied on preparatory work undertaken during ten years by UNESCO, defined the culture of peace as "values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and

"Today, around the world, the march of human progress continues to be plagued by conflict, violence, hatred and greed."

"For the United Nations, there remains no higher goal, no deeper commitment and no greater ambition than preventing armed conflict. But true peace is far more than the absence of war."

"For there to be peace among nations, there must also be peace within them, among groups and individuals."

"All of us—young and old, rich and poor, Governments and civil society alike—must do our part. The founding of the United Nations itself was a start. Let us now pool our efforts and make good on its great potential. Peace is in our hands. The culture of peace can be ours."

—Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General
Extracts of message on
launch of the International Year
of the Culture of Peace
14 September 1999

"The century now coming to a close has seen remarkable progress in science, technology and communication. Unfortunately, however, it has failed to put an end to the practices of violence and war."

"Peace cannot be guaranteed exclusively by political, economic or military agreements. In the final analysis it depends on the unanimous, sincere and sustained engagement of peoples. Each one of us, no matter what our age, sex, social position, religious affiliation or cultural origin is called upon to create a peaceful world."

"Peace can only be achieved through our behaviour, attitudes and everyday acts. The culture of peace is the universal culture that is shared by all peoples. It is essential to our common humanity."

"Together, let us construct this world of peace, beginning by signing Manifesto 2000—whereby each of us undertakes to practise the universal principles of a culture of peace, non-violence and harmony in our family, our community and our place of work. Together, let us cultivate peace. Let us each ask ourselves, 'what can we do for peace today?'"

—Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO
Extracts of message on beginning of the
International Year for the Culture of Peace
1 January 2000

negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society."

The concept of the culture of peace is not only concerned with war and violence but especially with their origins. Many individuals, groups, organizations and institutions around the world have been inspired to help promote this concept. They are working to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality, promote sustainable economic and social development and the respect of human rights, encourage freedom of expression and democratic participation, help protect the environment, facilitate access to education, and improve women's status.

The General Assembly has declared that "partnerships between and among the various actors...should be encouraged and strengthened for a Global Movement for a culture of peace" (A/RES/53/243). This calls for the creation of a "grand alliance" of existing movements that unites and makes visible all those already working for aspects of a culture of peace—from grassroots to international initiatives—and is the basis upon which the Global Movement for a culture of peace and non-violence was founded.

The year 2000 was chosen as the International Year for the Culture of Peace because of its symbolism as the first year of the new millennium. The International Year serves as a warning against the proliferation of violence and as a symbol of hope. It also serves as an opportunity to launch the Global Movement for a culture of peace and non-violence. It is based on individuals' engagement in their everyday lives, with participation of institutions and organizations at all levels from local to international, including States and Governments. This is important, according to UNESCO, because the existence of political will is imperative for creating and maintaining long-lasting peace.

AWARENESS BUILDING

The development of the Global Movement is based on partnership with NGOs, schools, universities, business, the media, parliamentary groups, towns and United Nations agencies. It focuses on flagship events organized during the International Year and local projects that promote a culture of peace as well as the Manifesto signature campaign. It is expected that these will continue during the 2001-2010 International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World.

Signatures to the Manifesto have been sent from 196 countries to UNESCO thanks to partnerships with local, national and international organizations, as well as Messengers for the Manifesto. The Messengers are individuals who promote the document and gather signatures. These efforts are all helping to work toward the goal of collecting 100 million signatures by the end of the year 2000.

Each partner organization can also help build awareness about the Global Movement by holding events that promote the culture of peace by publicizing the logo of the International Year and by focusing on at least one of the points of the Manifesto.

For example the Network for Voluntary Development of Asia organized a camp in Nepal, bringing together around 100 young people aged 15 to 25. Activities focused on the danger of nuclear weapons and how to build awareness about them. In Aliaga (Turkey) young Greeks and Turks were brought together at an archeology site. In the United States the American Association of Psychology's Peace Division is devoting its annual congress to the study of peace. In Togo the NGO *Astovoct* is organizing an artistic expression camp of music and theatre for young, international volunteers to, among other things, promote peace in the local community. In Brazil the International Festival of Folklore has dedicated its sixth festival to

the International Year for the Culture of Peace. And in Tuzla (Bosnia and Herzegovina) almost 1,000 young people of diverse origins are learning about each other and their cultures in order to help promote ethnic tolerance in the region.

Partly as a result of activities like these, over 30 million signatures have been sent to UNESCO from India, where 30 partner organizations of the world movement have been established and eight flagship events have been held. In Brazil, 11 million signatures have been collected, largely thanks to the work of 100 partner organizations and four events. In the Republic of Korea some 1.6 million signatures have been collected with the help of three partner organizations and 13 events. More than 86,000 signatures have been collected in France, thanks to 136 partners and 34 events. The number of signatures sent from Algeria is almost 800,000, where there are 11 partner organizations and where one flagship event has been held.

ORGANIZATIONS IN THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT

To date over 1,500 local, national and international organizations are partners in the International Year. They include, among others, educational, religious, humanitarian and cultural groups, and some maintain official relations with the United Nations. The most active include the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University; the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centers and Associations; Jubilleum; the World Conference of Teachers; the Dhammakaya Foundation; Pax Christi International; Education International; and the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service.

Organizations participating in the International Year can:

- become a Messenger for the Manifesto 2000;
- propose a flagship event for the International Year that will appear in the IYCP calendar;
- have their projects that are focused on a culture of peace listed in a database aimed at encouraging exchange of resources and information; and

CONTACT

International Year for the Culture of Peace
UNESCO
 7, place de Fontenoy
 F-75352 Paris 07 SP, France
 fax +33-1/45 68 55 57 or 45 68 56 38
 e-mail <iycp@unesco.org>
 websites (www.unesco.org/iycp)
 (www.unesco.org/manifesto2000)

QUOTES FROM THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT

"What we teach in schools is very important. If future generations are to learn about conflicts, there is no better place to start than in the classroom. Respect for human rights and for the dignity of every person is the basis of education for a culture of peace."

—Fred van Leeuwen, Secretary-General of Education International, which represents 24 million teachers and education workers through its 296 member organizations in 153 countries and territories

"The crew of Mir, the International Orbital Complex, has appealed to presidents, governments, parliaments and all people of goodwill across the world to join the Manifesto 2000 for the Culture of Peace and Non-violence and the International Action 'For a century without wars.' This message on behalf of Russian NGOs participating in the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace was delivered soon after the 55th anniversary of the victory over Nazism in World War II."

- participate in developing the Programme of Action of the 2001-2010 International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World.

Upon signing the Partnership Agreement for the International Year, organizations benefit from greater visibility for their activities focused on promoting the Global Movement.

The organization:

- will be listed on the website of the International Year in sections entitled "Who is Engaged," "What is New/Calendar" and "What is New/Newsletter;"
- will be able to use labels and logos of the International Year in activities of its choice including the organization's own website, publications, press releases, posters and brochures;
- can personalize with its own logo communication materials supplied by UNESCO; and
- will receive an Internet account number, which will give it privileged access to the technical site of the International Year in order to, among other things, update the site about its activities.

Interested organizations can access the website (www.unesco.org/iycp) and follow the instructions for either international or local/national groups in order to register online. The organization will then receive a partnership kit, which includes all necessary information as well as a graphic file of the logo and posters.

FULL TEXT OF THE MANIFESTO 2000

Because the year 2000 must be a new beginning, an opportunity to transform—all together—the culture of war and violence into a culture of peace and non-violence.

Because this transformation demands the participation of each and every one of us, and must offer young people and future generations the values that can inspire them to shape a world based on justice, solidarity, liberty, dignity, harmony and prosperity for all.

Because the culture of peace can underpin sustainable development, environmental protection and the well-being of each person.

Because I am aware of my share of responsibility for the future of humanity, in particular to the children of today and tomorrow.

I pledge in my daily life, in my family, my work, my community, my country and my region to:

- 1. "Respect all life." Respect the life and dignity of each human being without discrimination or prejudice.*
- 2. "Reject violence." Practise active non-violence, rejecting violence in all its forms: physical, sexual, psychological, economical and social; in particular towards the most deprived and vulnerable such as children and adolescents.*
- 3. "Share with others." Share my time and material resources in a spirit of generosity to put an end to exclusion, injustice and political and economic oppression.*
- 4. "Listen to understand." Defend freedom of expression and cultural diversity, giving preference always to dialogue and listening without engaging in fanaticism, defamation and the rejection of others.*
- 5. "Preserve the planet." Promote consumer behaviour that is responsible and development practices that respect all forms of life and preserve the balance of nature on the planet.*
- 6. "Rediscover solidarity." Contribute to the development of my community with the full participation of women and respect for democratic principles, in order to create together new forms of solidarity.*

* * * * *

You can sign the Manifesto 2000 on the Internet (www.unesco.org/manifesto2000). If you do not have access to the Internet, return the form below to UNESCO. (Your name, as a signatory of the Manifesto 2000, will appear on the Internet website.)

First Name: _____ *Family Name:* _____

Date of birth: _____ *Sex:* M _____ F _____

Town of residence: _____ *Country:* _____

Date: _____ *Signature:* _____

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