

# Culture of Peace as the Best Alternative to Terrorism

by David Adams

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## Summary

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As the culture of war, which has dominated human civilization for 5,000 years, begins to crumble, its contradictions become more evident. This is especially so in the matter of terrorism. It will be argued here that terrorism, including state terrorism, is a particularly clear manifestation of the culture of war in its stage of decline.

We begin with a broad definition of terrorism because the term is so often manipulated for political reasons. Each side accuses the other of being the "true terrorists." The United Nations and the non-aligned states, especially the Islamic states, are caught in the middle.

Statements related to terrorism by each of these actors are presented and contradictions analyzed within and between them. One contradiction concerns the religious justification for each side's claims. Another major contradiction concerns state terrorism. The West avoids this discussion, while Osama Ben Laden has justified the attack on the World Trade Center as retaliation for state terrorism by the West.

A key issue is nuclear weapons which can be considered as weapons of terror, according to experts including judges of the World Court. The use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki continued the development of aerial bombardment of civilian populations, which had begun in World War I. Both are extensions of the culture of war that has dominated human societies since the beginning of history.

The contradictions associated with terrorism are analyzed here in the framework of the analysis of the culture of war that was prepared for the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace issued for the International Year for the Culture of Peace by the United Nations General Assembly. Relying on violence and exploitation, the culture of war also includes authoritarian governance, secrecy and manipulation of information, male supremacy, enemy images and intolerance.

In the Programme of Action the General Assembly called for a Global Movement for a Culture of Peace. Is this Movement making progress? To answer this question, we recently prepared a report at the midpoint of the Culture of Peace Decade for the United Nations based on contributions from 700 civil society organizations in 100 countries. Their contributions show that despite being ignored by the mass media and by the United Nations system, the Movement is advancing around the world.

Although violence must be avoided, active struggle is needed to replace the culture of war by a culture of peace. To this end, the culture of peace is linked to the methodology of active nonviolence developed by Gandhi and used effectively by Martin Luther King and others as a force for political transformation.

In conclusion, the culture of peace and nonviolence, as it has been described and adopted in UN resolutions, provides a viable alternative to the culture of war and violence which underlie both sides of the terrorist struggles of our times. And the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace provides an historical vehicle for the profound transformation that is needed.

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## Main Text

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Since the destruction of the New York World Trade Center in 2001, everyone is talking about terrorism. It is top priority at the United Nations and in the politics of the great powers, especially the United States and the European Union. And, of course, the terrorists themselves are mobilizing their own people with public statements from time to time. Meanwhile, the headlines of the mass media seem to thrive on terrorism. They often make it seem like there are simply two sides, one right and one wrong, but on closer analysis there are differences, problems and contradictions. Before analyzing them, however, let's listen to these actors one at a time.

First, it is necessary to define terrorism for the purposes of this paper. This is not simple because, as pointed out on the website of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), there is no definition that has been formally accepted by the UN. In fact, as will be shown, the definition of terrorism and of terrorists is an issue of contention among the actors. To begin the present analysis, however, here is a definition drawn loosely from the "academic" definition provided on the UNODC website:

*Terrorism is violence carried out by individual, group or state actors designed to frighten a non-combatant population for political reasons. The victims are usually chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a population in order to pass a message which may be intimidation, coercion and/or propaganda. It differs from assassination where the victim is the main target.*

### United Nations

At the level of the Security Council, terrorism is the highest priority even though it is not defined. All three items listed on the Council section of the UN website pertain directly or indirectly to terrorism:

- Counter-terrorism Committee
- Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee
- 1540 Committee [to stop nuclear proliferation]

The Counter-Terrorism Committee was set up to implement Resolution 1373 which was adopted by the Security Council in response to the terrorist destruction of the World Trade Center. The Resolution is written in such a way as to associate terrorism with "entities and persons" and to dissociate terrorism from the state, demanding that states "Refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts, including by suppressing recruitment of members of terrorist groups and eliminating the supply of weapons to terrorists." The Al-Qaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee, which had been established even before the events of 2001, give specific form to the term "entities and persons." State terrorism, which we will discuss further down in this article, is not considered or recognized.

Resolution 1540 to stop nuclear proliferation is not designed to rid the world of existing nuclear arsenals but only to prevent the development and stockpiling of such weapons by additional countries. Since nuclear terrorism is one of the greatest problems in the world today, we will come back to this question.

Clearly the approach of the Security Council reflects its domination by the great powers, the US, UK, France, Russia and China, who are, in fact, the nuclear powers, and who are among the primary targets of terrorist "entities and persons" such as Al-Qaida.

At the level of the General Assembly, where the great powers do not dominate, the approach is quite different. The Summit Outcome document at the United Nations in September 2005 devoted an entire section of 11 paragraphs to the subject of terrorism, and referred to dialogue of civilizations as the preferred method of addressing its root causes. It called for "a strategy to promote comprehensive, coordinated and consistent responses, at the national, regional and international level, to counter terrorism, that also takes into account the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. In this context, we commend the various initiatives to promote dialogue, tolerance and understanding amongst civilizations."

One of the paragraphs concerning terrorism in the Summit Document specifically addresses the question of nuclear weapons: "We support efforts for the early entry into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and strongly encourage States to consider becoming parties to it expeditiously and acceding without delay to the twelve other international conventions and protocols against terrorism and implementing them."

There was some controversy on terrorism in the recent UN debate on culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations which took place on October 20, 2005.

Some states took the position that culture of peace and dialogue of civilizations is the appropriate response to terrorism, echoing the Summit Outcome document quoted above. The delegate of the European Union stated: "Who could have imagined at the start of this international decade the challenges to a culture of peace that the world is facing today? As a counter to extremism and terrorism, we must choose to celebrate the values that unite us. In order to undermine those who seek to sow division and chaos we must strive to develop tolerant and inclusive societies. We must celebrate how diversity enriches our societies, improve understanding amongst faiths and cultures, and foster stronger respect between communities." Similarly, the delegate of Iran stated: "Strengthening the culture of dialogue among civilizations will prove to be a most important element in combating the calamities of the day in particular terrorism. For, terrorism seeks to make the diversity between nations the source of conflict, while Dialogue among Civilizations can help make that same diversity the foundation for cooperation and betterment."

On the other hand, there was criticism about the way that terrorism has been linked to religious intolerance and Islamophobia. This was expressed by the delegate from Malaysia who said, "It is disheartening to note that recent tragic events - from the terrorist attack on September 11, the Madrid and London bombings to the latest incident in Bali - have further exacerbated the widening gap between civilizations, and generated negative perspective of Islam particularly among the non-Muslims in the West and elsewhere. There is a dire need to correct the misconception that acts of terrorism are sanctioned by any particular religion or culture. Terrorism must be attributed to the perpetrator and not the religion they profess. It is totally unjustifiable to associate terrorism with any particular race or religion. The root causes of the any act of terrorism must be carefully examined in order to effectively address and combat terrorism." Their remarks were echoed by the delegates from China and Qatar.

## UNESCO

The recent report on the culture of peace by UNESCO to the General Assembly (A/60/279) includes in its paragraph 19 the following remark; "A commitment to both the culture of peace and the dialogue among cultures and civilizations is also a commitment to fight terrorism, as terror rests always and everywhere upon prejudices, intolerance, exclusion and, above all, on the rejection of any dialogue."

UNESCO's culture of peace analysis reflects its Constitutional mandate which was written

in the aftermath of World War II:

*Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed ... ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war.*

### United States Government

From the beginning the US government response to the bombing of the World Trade Center made it clear that the threat of terrorism would be used to bolster national patriotism, to increase government surveillance and to justify attacks on other countries. In his initial address to the nation, President Bush said, among other things:

*"Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts ...*

*"The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed; our country is strong. A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve. America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.*

*"Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the best of America -- with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could. Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared ...*

*"The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them ...*

*"Thank you. Good night, and God bless America."*

Within days Bush sent to the Congress a package of laws called the Patriot Act that included provisions to spy on American citizens considered to be opposed to government policies. These laws had been prepared well before the attack on the World Trade Center which was used as an excuse to get them passed. They were adopted into law without having been read in their entirety by the Congressmen who voted.

A few months later plans were made for the American invasion of Iraq - justified by its alleged link to the bombing of the World Trade Center. Although it has been shown repeatedly that Iraq had no connection to the events of September 11, 2001, President Bush has continued to imply this, as recently as his address to the American people on December 18, 2005: "From this office, nearly three years ago, I announced the start of military operations in Iraq. Our coalition confronted a regime that defied United Nations Security Council resolutions, violated a cease-fire agreement,

sponsored terrorism and possessed, we believed, weapons of mass destruction" [emphasis added].

In his December 18, speech, Bush continued to make terrorism the central focus of his Presidency: "I see a global terrorist movement that exploits Islam in the service of radical political aims - a vision in which books are burned and women are oppressed and all dissent is crushed. Terrorist operatives conduct their campaign of murder with a set of declared and specific goals - to demoralize free nations, to drive us out of the Middle East, to spread an empire of fear across that region and to wage a perpetual war against America and our friends. These terrorists view the world as a giant battlefield and they seek to attack us wherever they can. This has attracted Al Qaeda to Iraq, where they are attempting to frighten and intimidate America into a policy of retreat. ... We will defeat the terrorists by capturing and killing them abroad, removing their safe havens, and strengthening new allies like Iraq and Afghanistan in the fight we share."

The official American definition of terrorism is problematic. For example, most of the events listed by the US government as terrorist acts in the Year 2000 were attacks on oil pipelines belonging to American companies. Furthermore, the official listing of terrorist organizations is highly politicized. It routinely ignores organizations located in states with which the country is allied and concentrates instead on organizations in other states.

### European Union

Following the bombing of the World Trade Center the European Commission adopted a Framework on Combating Terrorism with the following definition of terrorism: violent acts (listed individually) *intentionally committed by an individual or a group against one or more countries, their institutions or people with the aim of intimidating them and seriously altering or destroying the political, economic or social structures of those countries*. Here, once again, the definition excludes state terrorism.

At the recent Euro-Med summit in Barcelona in November 2005, terrorism was the main topic. According to the official Euro-Med Report, "The Euro-Mediterranean Summit to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Barcelona Process reached agreement on a Five-Year Work Programme for the further development of the partnership as well as on a Code of Conduct on Countering Terrorism." The Code of Conduct lists 21 specific actions that participating States are expected to take in order to protect against terrorist attacks. Although the code of conduct does not mention culture of peace, it does at one point refer to the United Nations new project of Alliance of Civilizations in the context of intercultural dialogue to promote understanding. And the term "dialogue" is used more than a dozen times.

What is not clear from this summary of the summit is whether this emphasis on countering terrorism was shared by the Arab States who are parties to the Barcelona Process. According to the Reuters account of the recent meeting, "A mass stay-away by Arab leaders from the first Euro-Mediterranean summit on Sunday highlighted the difficulties of strengthening the European Union's decade-old partnership with its southern neighbours." According to this account, there was disagreement around the issue of terrorism: "Syria and other Arab partners want the EU to distinguish between terrorism and the right to resist occupation, while the Europeans and Israel opposed any qualification of terrorism.

### The Islamic States

Although there are many different political tendencies among the Islamic states, they arrive at consensus positions in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). The 2004 Final Communique of the ministers of foreign affairs of the OIC includes the following remarks about

terrorism, which shows clearly their differences with the Europeans:

*The Meeting reaffirmed its resolve to combat all forms and manifestations of terrorism, including state terrorism, and its determination to participate in the multilateral global efforts to eradicate this menace, rejected selectivity and double standards in combating terrorism, and any attempts to link terrorism to a specific religion or culture. It also reiterated its support for the convening of an international conference under the aegis of the United Nations to define terrorism and stress the need for efforts to be exerted to conclude a convention on international terrorism that would differentiate between terrorism and legitimate struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation for self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law. The Meeting reaffirmed that situations of foreign occupation are governed by international humanitarian law and not by conventions on terrorism, it also called upon all Member States, who have not done so, to take the necessary steps towards the ratification of the OIC Convention on Combating International Terrorism.*

Notice the specific mention of state terrorism and the need for a UN definition of terrorism that would distinguish it from "legitimate struggle." These differentiate their position from those of the US and Europe.

#### Terrorist Statements

The most prominent terrorist statements in recent years have been released in the name of Al Qaida. Here are excerpts from the statement of Osama Ben Laden issued after the destruction of the World Trade Center:

*"God Almighty hit the United States at its most vulnerable spot. He destroyed its greatest buildings. Praise be to God. Here is the United States. It was filled with terror from its north to its south and from its east to its west. Praise be to God. What the United States tastes today is a very small thing compared to what we have tasted for tens of years. Our nation has been tasting this humiliation and contempt for more than 80 years ....*

*"One million Iraqi children have thus far died in Iraq although they did not do anything wrong. Despite this, we heard no denunciation by anyone in the world or a fatwa by the rulers' ulema [body of Muslim scholars]. Israeli tanks and tracked vehicles also enter to wreak havoc in Palestine, in Jenin, Ramallah, Rafah, Beit Jala, and other Islamic areas and we hear no voices raised or moves made ...*

*"In the aftermath of this event and now that senior US officials have spoken, beginning with Bush, the head of the world's infidels, and whoever supports him, every Muslim should rush to defend his religion ...*

*"They came out to fight Islam in the name of terrorism. Hundreds of thousands of people, young and old, were killed in the farthest point on earth in Japan. [For them] this is not a crime, but rather a debatable issue. They bombed Iraq and considered that a debatable issue.*

*"As for the United States, I tell it and its people these few words: I swear by Almighty God who raised the heavens without pillars that neither the United States nor he who lives in the United States will enjoy security before we can see it as a reality in Palestine and before all the infidel armies leave the land of Mohammed, may God's peace and blessing be upon him.*

*"God is great and glory to Islam. May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you."*

But the terrorist threat of Osama Ben Laden has not been directed only against the United States and other Western powers. It has also been directed against the governments in states with predominantly Muslim populations. In a tape sent to Al Jazeera on February 11, 2003, he said:

*"We also stress to honest Muslims that they should move, incite, and mobilize the [Islamic] nation, amid such grave events and hot atmosphere so as to liberate themselves from those unjust and renegade ruling regimes, which are enslaved by the United States. They should also do so to establish the rule of God on earth. The most qualified regions for liberation are Jordan, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, the land of the two holy mosques [Saudi Arabia], and Yemen."*

### State terrorism

Because most pronouncements about terrorism are made by states or their representatives, and because the commercial mass media represents state interests, there is little discussion of state terrorism.

However, keeping in mind the definition of terrorism as *violence carried to frighten a non-combatant population for political reasons*, a case can be made that many of the most prominent terrorist acts of the 20th Century have been committed by states. For example:

- The aerial bombardment of Guernica by the Spanish fascists, immortalized in the painting by Picasso
- The aerial bombardment of London by the Nazis using V2 rockets
- The firestorm bombardment of cities in Germany and Italy by the Allies
- The nuclear bombardment of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States

Nuclear terrorism is the most dramatic of all. Throughout the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union held the war in a balance of terror, each aiming enough nuclear weapons at the other to potentially destroy the planet with a "nuclear winter." This balance of terror went far beyond the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and put all people on the planet under a cloud of fear. Although there was some decrease in the deployment of nuclear weapons at the end of the Cold War, hopes for nuclear disarmament were thwarted by the Great Powers who continue to deploy enough weapons to destroy the planet. We continue to live under the nuclear threat, as the US alone has 2,000 nuclear warheads on hair-trigger alert.

When asked to rule on nuclear weapons, while the World Court as a whole did not take a clear position, some of its members were eloquent. Judge Weeramantry condemned nuclear weapons in the following terms:

*The threat of use of a weapon which contravenes the humanitarian laws of war does not cease to contravene those laws of war merely because the overwhelming terror it inspires has the psychological effect of deterring opponents. This Court cannot endorse a pattern of security that rests upon terror ... A global regime which makes safety the result of terror and can speak of survival and annihilation as twin alternatives makes peace and the human future dependent upon terror.*

*This is not a basis for world order which this Court can endorse. This Court is committed to uphold the rule of law, not the rule of force or terror, and the humanitarian principles of the laws of war are a vital part of the international rule of law which this Court is charged to administer.*

The issue is put most clearly by the eminent authorities Johan Galtung and Dietrich Fischer:

*If someone holds a classroom full of children hostage with a machinegun, threatening to kill them unless his demands are met, we consider him a dangerous, crazy terrorist. But if a head of state holds millions of civilians hostage with nuclear weapons, many consider this as perfectly normal. We must end that double standard and recognize nuclear weapons for what they are: instruments of terror.*

The topic of nuclear terrorism by the state is taboo. A number of years ago I was asked by a colleague to speak at an academic conference on terrorism she was organizing. I replied that she should know the topic of my talk before inviting me, and I told her that I would speak on Hiroshima and Nagasaki as the key terrorist acts of the 20th Century, which provided the moral umbrella for all terrorist acts since then. She thought for only a moment and then disinvited me, saying that if I gave such a talk, their financial source for the conference, the Ford Foundation, would probably never fund them again. Similarly, a few years ago, the Smithsonian Institution of the US government planned to make an exposition of the damage done at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but the plans were stopped after complaints from Congressmen that they would show the US in a bad light. These examples are typical.

The state terrorism of nuclear weapons is practiced not only by the US, but also by Russia, UK, France, China, Pakistan, India and Israel. The recent war in Iraq was justified by claiming that Iraq was going to deploy nuclear weapons. This is especially ironic since it was not true, while those making the accusation were the very countries that refuse even to discuss disarmament of their own nuclear weapons.

The United Nations, rather than seriously discussing nuclear disarmament, is pressured by the nuclear powers to help maintaining their monopoly of terror. How else should we interpret Resolution 1540, mentioned at the beginning of this article? It is designed less to rid the world of existing nuclear arsenals and more to protect the existing nuclear powers from losing their monopoly on these weapons due to the development and stockpiling of such weapons by additional countries. One can interpret in a similar way the paragraph on nuclear weapons in the section of terrorism of this year's Summit Outcome Document at the UN which, as mentioned above, promotes an International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. It does not call for disarmament by the nuclear powers, but for the maintenance of their monopoly control of nuclear weapons.

Given the history of their use in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, what other purpose can nuclear weapons serve than to strike fear in the hearts of civilian populations? One needs to keep in mind, in this regard, that Henry Kissinger advocated using nuclear weapons in Vietnam, and when the Americans invaded Iraq in 2003, they called their aerial bombardment "shock and awe."

### Aerial bombardment

Nuclear terrorism is an extension of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century military practice of aerial bombardment. As mentioned above, the aerial bombardments of Guernica, London, Milan, Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki set a precedent in World War II of mass violence against

noncombatant populations as a means of intimidation, coercion and propaganda. In the case of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there is evidence that the bombing were intended to send a message to Joseph Stalin that the United States was prepared to destroy the Soviet Union, if necessary, in the case of a military confrontation. And, needless to say, the terrorist threat increased when the Soviet Union put a priority on the development of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems.

In the sixty years since World War II we have seen continued use of aerial bombardment which can be considered, in at least some cases, as a form of state terrorism. This includes the bombing with agent orange, napalm and fragmentation bombs against civilian as well as military targets by the Americans in Vietnam, the bombing of civilian areas in Panama by the United States, the bombing of Kosovo by NATO, the bombing of Iraq during the first Gulf War and on a continuing basis in subsequent years.

### The commercial mass media

The amount of damage caused by state terrorism is far greater than that caused by Al Qaida and other such non-state terrorist organizations. Why then do the media speak only of non-state terrorism? Two reasons are immediately evident:

First, non-state terrorist organizations threaten to break the monopoly on violence that is supposed to be held by state powers according to the unwritten rules of the power in today's world. State powers try to prevent any other institutions from holding means of organized violence, including armies and weapons of war, which threaten to destabilize the "peace" which is defined by state power. The media usually does not question these unwritten rules of power.

Second, non-state terrorist organizations are given unprecedented attention by the commercial mass media. While the nuclear terrorism of the state receives little attention, every terrorist act by Al Qaida and other non-state terrorists receives headline news, and every news bulletin that they issue is quoted and analyzed repeatedly by media around the world. There is an unwritten synergy giving the appearance of an implicit conspiracy between the modern terrorist and the contemporary mass media. On the one hand, the headlines given to terrorist acts help commercial newspapers and television programs attract readers and thereby satisfy their advertisers. On the other hand, the terrorists are able to get their message across because they get so much publicity.

### The contradictions

Each side claims to be right and that it is the other side who are the true terrorists. But in reality, each side employs terrorism, holding the civil populations of the other side in fear and producing, from time to time sufficient destruction to give substance to the fear. And each side imposes taboos and secrets and produces propaganda and misinformation.

Each side invokes the "One God" to justify its actions, and denounces the religious "fanaticism" of the other side.

The Great Powers continue to keep nuclear weapons ready for use. At the same time, however, they take a contradictory position by denying access to nuclear weapons to most other countries or groups. The contradiction is heightened by their acceptance of the nuclear weapons of Israel. Although the claim is made that nuclear weapons are needed for defense, yet they are only useful against state actors and they are useless to deter the actions of non-state terrorist groups.

All the while, the mass media and arms manufacturers amass their profits as a result, and

the poor get poorer while the rich get richer, both within and between the nation-states.

How can these contradictions be analyzed so that they become understandable?

It is the thesis of this article that both sides are the contemporary manifestation of a culture of war that has dominated human societies since the beginning of history, a culture that is deep and dominant, but not inevitable.

### The culture of war

The analysis of the culture of war was carried out at UNESCO where I became the director of the International Year for the Culture of Peace, declared by the UN General Assembly for the Year 2000.

It rests upon an earlier initiative called the Seville Statement on Violence in which leading scientists from around the world considered the question whether war is inevitable because of human biology and evolution and came to the conclusion, reached earlier by the great cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead, that war is a cultural invention and "the same species that invented war is capable of inventing peace." In writing the brochure for UNESCO, after it had officially adopted the Seville Statement as UN policy, I subtitled it, "Preparing the Ground for the Constructing of Peace."

For the International Year, I was in charge of preparing a Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace at the request of the United Nations General Assembly. And as part of this task, my team and I needed to prepare an analysis, not only of the culture of peace, but also of the culture of war that it was intended to replace. Here is what we came up with as the essential characteristics of the culture of war:

1. Enemy images
2. Economic growth based on military supremacy and structural violence
3. Governance based on authoritarian structures of power
4. Inequality between men and women
5. Secrecy and manipulation of information
6. Soldiers and weapons
7. Elevation of the rights of the group above the rights of others.
8. Education which teaches that power is based on force and fear.

We included this analysis in the original document (A/53/370) that we sent from UNESCO to the United Nations in 1999, showing, point by point, how the characteristics of the culture of peace and non-violence can replace those of the culture of war and violence:

1. There has never been a war without an 'enemy', and to abolish war, we must transcend and supersede enemy images with *understanding, tolerance and solidarity* among all peoples and cultures.
2. *sustainable human development for all ...* This represents a major change in the concept of

economic growth which, in the past, could be considered as benefiting from military supremacy and structural violence and achieved at the expense of the vanquished and the weak.

3. *democratic participation and governance* ... the only way to replace the authoritarian structures of power which were created by and which have, in the past, sustained the culture of war and violence.

4. *equality between women and men* ... can replace the historical inequality between men and women that has always characterized the culture of war and violence.

5. *participatory communication and the free flow and sharing of information and knowledge* ... is needed to replace the secrecy and manipulation of information which characterize the culture of war.

6. *International peace and security, including disarmament*. [We felt it unnecessary to point out the obvious fact that the culture of war includes soldiers and weapons.]

7. The elaboration and international acceptance of *universal human rights*, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, has been one of the most important steps towards the transition from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace and non-violence. It calls for a transformation of values, attitudes and behaviours from those which would benefit exclusively the clan, the tribe or the nation towards those which benefit the entire human family. [Although the culture of war and violence is not specifically mentioned here, it is inferred that it considers the rights of its own clan, tribe or nation to be above the rights of other clans, tribes or nations.]

8. *Education* is the principle means of promoting a culture of peace ... The very concept of power needs to be transformed - from the logic of force and fear to the force of reason and love. [Although education for the culture of war and violence is not specifically mentioned here, it is inferred that it is based on force and fear, i.e. the basic qualities of terrorism.]

Although the Declaration and Programme of Action were approved by the UN General Assembly as Resolution A/53/243 on September 13, 1999, it did not include the analysis of the culture of war and violence. This is because the European Union threatened to block its passage, claiming that "there is no culture of war and violence in the world."

Once again, we encountered the taboos imposed on our thinking by state power. Not only is it taboo to speak about nuclear terrorism, but it is also taboo to speak about the culture of war and violence.

### Explaining the contradictions of terrorism

The contradictions of terrorism can best be understood through a culture of war analysis.

1. Enemy images: Each side demonizes the other, mobilizing its own people by appealing to fight against the other side. No attempt is made to understand the other. Bush says, "Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature" and Ben Laden calls Bush "the head of the world's infidels." In addition to the contradictions between East and West, there are also contradictions within the East, since, as noted, the Al Qaida forces have targeted moderate Arab states for overthrow.

2. Economic growth based on military supremacy and structural violence. Throughout recorded history the culture of peace has produced economic growth, at least in the short term analysis. As every historian tells us, the empires of Greece and Rome were built on war and slavery, and this has

continued in recent history through colonialism and neo-colonialism. The fundamentalist Islamic terrorists associated with Ben Laden do not have the structures in place to sustain economic growth, and, in fact, they denounce the materialism of the West, but this could change if their forces succeed in their goal to take over some of the wealthy Middle Eastern states.

But there is a contradiction in the economic usefulness of militarism. In the long run, it can be a source of weakness rather than strength. For example, it can be shown that the collapse of the Soviet empire was the result of their over-reliance on military production. By the end of the empire, they could not provide such elementary goods as good boots to their citizens (all the boots were used for the military), let alone consumer goods such as televisions and tape recorders (electronics priorities were for the military). They tried to match Western military production on the base of an economy only half as big. The balance of payments got worse year after year and eventually the economy collapsed. The political collapse was secondary to the economic collapse. There are signs of similar contradictions in today's American empire.

There is an even more fundamental contradiction in capitalist exploitation, as emphasized by Marx and his followers. The greater the exploitation, the greater the impoverishment of the workers, to the point that they can no longer serve as effective consumers. This is contradictory because capitalism cannot be maintained without consumption of its products. In this regard one of the most striking economic trends of our time is the increasing gap between rich and poor both within and between nations. The consequences for consumption are masked by massive debt, but debt also becomes a contradiction in the long run if it continues to increase.

3. Governance based on authoritarian structures of power. Europe and the United States criticize the authoritarian nature of their terrorist opponents, and they claim to be democratic, but there are problems in the nature of their democracy. Within the state, a monopoly of force is maintained in standing armies, national guards and national police forces which can always be called out in an emergency. I have called this the "internal culture of war," a topic that is frequently manifested but rarely discussed. For example, in 1995, I published in the *Journal of Peace Research* the figures for the United States where there were an average of 18 internal interventions involving 12,000 troops over the previous 120 years. Between the states, there is little pretence of democratic relations. For example, the European Union eliminated the following paragraph in the original draft Declaration on a Culture of Peace (A/53/370) apparently because it called for democratic principles in international relations: "Recognizing that the end of the cold war has opened new perspectives for international peace and security, and for furthering respect for human rights and democratic principles both in international relations and within nations."

The problem of authoritarian power can be masked for some time by economic growth, but as the experience of the Soviet Union shows, once the growth stops, popular support for the authoritarian regime also stops.

4. Inequality between men and women. The West correctly criticizes Al Qaida and other fundamentalist Islamic groups for their male domination, but the West is often hypocritical in this regard. The internal culture of war, mentioned above, which represents the ultimate power in most countries, including both the European Union and the United States, is characterized by male domination.

5. Secrecy and manipulation of information. Both sides are secretive, and both sides employ misinformation to attack the other. When secrecy masks errors and weaknesses (which is often its function), it undermines the capacity of a country (both government and people) to make the needed corrections. This contradiction was especially critical in the collapse of the Soviet empire.

6. Soldiers and weapons. Each side tries to overcome the other through the use of soldiers and weapons, including weapons of mass destruction. As described above, the emphasis by the Great Powers on denying nuclear weapons to countries of the South, while defending their own nuclear weapons and those of Israel is an especially strong contradiction, since this nuclear weapons constitutes the greatest terrorism of all. And ironically, as pointed out, nuclear weapons cannot even serve as a deterrent against non-state terrorists.

7. Elevation of the rights of the group above the rights of others as each side claims that God is on its side and against the others. In the last few years the contradiction in human rights has become evident in the United States with its use of torture, secret prisons and attacks on the civil rights of its own citizens in the name of fighting terrorism. In this regard, differences have also emerged between the United States and its allies in Europe.

8. Education which teaches that power is based on force and fear. The Islamic terrorists use the educational systems of the mosques to propagate its enemy image of the other side. The Christian and Jewish leaders of the West use the commercial mass media, as well as educational systems, churches and synagogues, to achieve the same result.

### The culture of peace

Although the culture of war analysis was eliminated by the European Union from the UN resolutions on a culture of peace, fortunately, the culture of peace and non-violence was not eliminated. It was adopted in the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace passed, along with other resolutions naming the year 2000 the International Year for the Culture of Peace and the years 2001-2010 the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World. This provides us with a program to eliminate terrorism, both the terrorism of the state and the terrorism of non-state groups. And it includes reference to the non-violence ideology of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King which is a powerful force for change toward a culture of peace.

Although the opposition of the Europeans, Americans and their allies was not enough to block passage of the culture of peace resolution, they managed to remove the provision of funding for a culture of peace. Hence, since 1999, the UN system has not had any culture of peace programs and very little staff resources devoted to the culture of peace and non-violence. Anticipating this limitation, we had written into the resolution a role for the civil society:

*Civil society should be involved at the local, regional and national levels to widen the scope of activities on a culture of peace ... Partnerships between and among the various actors as set out in the Declaration should be encouraged and strengthened for a global movement for a culture of peace. A culture of peace could be promoted through sharing of information among actors on their initiatives in this regard.*

Is the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace making progress? To answer this question, we recently prepared a report at the midpoint of the Decade for the United Nations based on contributions from 700 civil society organizations in 100 countries. Their contributions show that despite being ignored by the mass media and by the United Nations system, the Movement is advancing around the world.

In sum, the culture of peace and nonviolence, as it has been described and adopted in UN resolutions, provides us with a viable alternative to the culture of war and violence which underlie both sides of the terrorist struggles of our times. And the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace provides an historical vehicle for the profound transformation that is needed.

The transition from culture of war and violence to culture of peace and non-violence: Is it necessary? Is it possible?

The initial call for the global movement for a culture of peace was issued by a group of activists, diplomats and staff members associated with UNESCO at a meeting in Central America, who called it "a utopia that is both *viable* and *necessary*."

Nuclear weapons have changed the nature of war to the point that the abolition of war has become *necessary*. War always included terrorism, but the terror and destruction was often confined to the armies themselves. Now everyone is terrorized by nuclear weapons, combatants and non-combatants alike. During the Cold War, it was often claimed that possession of nuclear weapons led to a balance of terror. But more recently, it seems likely that non-state terrorists, even if they are only a few in number, can potentially make and use nuclear weapons. Because of nuclear weapons, states are become more vulnerable rather than more secure.

The old concept of peace as the balance of terror among states is no longer *viable*. It is the very culture of war itself that must be replaced.

The idea that a culture of peace is "*necessary*" echoes the conclusion reached long ago by Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud in their correspondence about war. They considered how modern science had invented such new and more powerful that humanity would either have to abolish war or be destroyed by it. The invention and use of nuclear weapons brought their predictions to pass. As Einstein said afterwards, "Everything has changed except our way of thinking."

But is a culture of peace *possible*? Or is this only a utopian vision? In the North, the term "utopia" is usually considered to be something that is a good idea but not possible to implement in practice. In the South, however, my colleagues assure me, it is possible to conceive of a utopia that is *viable*, in other words, *possible* to implement.

Although, as noted above, the report on the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace indicates that progress is being made, the progress seems insufficient when one considers the enormous resources and power of the culture of war and violence. This perception is magnified by the fact that the mass media regularly report news of war and violence, but they do not report the news of a culture of peace.

To see how a culture of peace is possible, it is necessary to take a dialectical view of history. As one famous revolutionary described it, history proceeds by:

*inner impulses towards development, imparted by the contradiction and conflict of the various forces and tendencies acting on a given body, or within a given phenomenon, or within a given society; a development by leaps, catastrophes, and revolutions; - breaks in continuity";*

We have considered above some of the problems and contradictions associated with terrorism within the present world system of state power, including the contradictory economic, political and military effects of reliance on nuclear weapons, military production, internal culture of war and secrecy. The problems and contradictions appear to be increasing rather than becoming resolved. Hence, when the historical changes come, they may well be catastrophic and revolutionary. The West has seen revolutionary change in its past, in 1789, 1850, 1917, 1946 and 1989. There is no reason to assume that this trend has ceased.

It is my impression from the revolutionary periods of the past that ideologies and consciousness of the citizenry can play a key role in determining the outcome. With this in mind, I submit that the key to transforming our culture from war and violence to peace and non-violence will be the consciousness of the people at the time of the next revolutionary period of history. The transformation will be possible if enough people consider it to be both *necessary* and *possible*.

But here again is a contradiction. Historically, revolution has usually been organized according to the principles of the culture of war. And, as a result, the revolutionary countries that have emerged have been organized on the basis of the culture of war, authoritarian, secretive, male-dominated, exploitative, and militaristic on the basis of "defense of the revolution against its enemies."

To achieve a culture of peace, it will be necessary to transform the principles and the organization of revolutionary struggle. Fortunately, there is a successful model, the Gandhian principles of nonviolence. Systematically, the principles of nonviolence reverse those of the culture of war employed by previous revolutionaries:

- \* Instead of a gun, the "weapon" is truth
- \* Instead of an enemy, one has only opponents whom you have not yet convinced of the truth, and for whom the same universal human rights must be recognized
- \* Instead of secrecy, information is shared as widely as possible
- \* Instead of authoritarian power, there is democratic participation ("people's power")
- \* Instead of male domination, there is equality of women in all decision-making and actions
- \* Instead of exploitation, both the goal and the means is justice and human rights for all
- \* Instead of education for power through force, education for power through active nonviolence

### Conclusion

On the basis of the preceding analysis, the culture of peace and nonviolence is proposed as the *appropriate* response to terrorism. Other responses tend to perpetuate the culture of war which provides the framework for terrorism; hence they cannot abolish terrorism.

Given the danger that war, terrorism and especially nuclear weapons pose to the world, the transition to a culture of peace and nonviolence is a *necessary* next step in history.

To conclude, when the contradictions of history reach a certain point and the consciousness development of the people is sufficiently engaged, it may be *possible* to make the transition from the culture of war to a culture of peace. For this, it is essential to employ the Gandhian principles of active nonviolence.