From a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace and non-violence

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1.   INTRODUCTION

In my remarks today, I should like to speak to three issues: 1) trace briefly the transition from the Seville Statement on Violence to the United Nations initiatives for a culture of peace. 2) look at each of the 8 action areas for a culture of peace and consider them as research challenges; and 3) take a quick look at the development of the global movement for a culture of peace and consider that, also, as a research challenge.

1.1   From the Seville statement on Violence to the culture of peace

The Seville Statement on Violence began at a meeting of ISRA hosted by President Jaap Koolhaas in Haren, Netherlands, in 1980 when the organization was challenged by one of its members, Santiago Genoves, to make a scientific statement on the relation of war to human nature[1]. That led over a number of years to the meeting in Seville in 1986 where the Statement on Violence was drafted by an international group of scientists,

most of whom were leading members of ISRA. In particular, I should like to recall the contributions of John Paul Scott[2], Robert Hinde, Benson Ginsburg, Jo Groebel, Santiago Genoves, Jose Delgado, and Martin Ramirez, some of whom are here at this Congress. Especially, I should like to honor the memory of John Paul Scott, who passed away recently. He was truly a role model for many of us in this organization.

The Seville Statement on Violence states that it is scientifically incorrect to say that war is caused by inherited tendencies, genetic programs, brain mechanisms or "instincts". Instead, it concludes, recalling the words of Margaret Mead, that war was a human invention and that peace, too, can be invented[3]. The Seville Statement remains an important document because of the fact that many young people believe that war is part of human nature and they are consequently less likely to engage in actions that promote peace[4].

The Seville Statement was adopted by UNESCO in 1989 under the leadership of one of its signatories, Federico Mayor[5], and it laid the base for UNESCO's culture of peace programme[6], with which I have been involved since its beginning in 1992. At the present time I am in charge of the United Nations International Year for the Culture of Peace which is the UN theme for the Year 2000.

The Seville Statement made a negative case - stating that war is not inevitable. It made no attempt, however, to identify the cultural factors that lead to war. One of the major challenges of the culture of peace programme has been to take that next step and to identify the cultural factors that underlie the culture of war. In adopting a programme of action for a transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace, in its resolution A/53/243, adopted 13 September 1999, the United Nations General Assembly recognized eight areas of necessary action:

> democratic participation;
> understanding, tolerance and solidarity;
> participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge;
> international peace and security, including disarmament and economic conversion
> education for a culture of peace
> sustainable economic and social development;
> respect for all human rights;
> equality between women and men;

The final document did not make it explicit, but the preliminary UN document (A/53/370) states specifically that each of these eight areas of action provide alternatives to corresponding aspects of the culture of war and violence that has dominated history until now. Before discussing each of

these eight areas, I should like to make two propositions that are implicit in all of the analysis that follows.

2.　　　 TWO TESTABLE ASSUMPTIONS

First, it is assumed that there are strong causal relationships between the behaviour of states and that of their citizens, including a strong modeling influence by the state on the behaviour of its citizens. Although the emphasis in my remarks today will be on the state, which is, after all, the main actor of warfare, it is assumed that when the state moves from the culture of war to the culture of peace, this change will have a very healthy modeling influence on the behaviour of families and of other institutions including schools and the workplace. This is a testable hypothesis and needs to be investigated scientifically.

The second proposition is that aggression, in the form of angry interactions between individuals, is more often positive than negative, and that anger against injustice is essential for achieving peace and non-violence in the world. The research of Averill at the end of the 1970's showed that most episodes of anger were evaluated as positive, even when the anger was directed against the subject[7-8]. This finding needs replication and further study in other social contexts and cultures. Research is also needed on the important role of anger against injustice[9]. The definition of terms needs clarification in this regard. It is useful to distinguish a continuum that runs from conflict and anger without violence at one end to destructive violence at the other end. Most individuals often experience conflict and aggression without violence. However, the situation is confused at the level of international diplomacy because the United Nations uses the word conflict to mean violent conflict and aggression to mean invasion or destructive behaviour of one state against another, hence making it impossible to consider the positive aspects of conflict and aggression. As similar set of distinctions are needed between people whom we consider "opponents" at one end of a continuum (who may simply be someone with whom we have a brief difference of opinion), to people who are considered as "enemies" at the other end of the continuum whom, it may be assumed, should be destroyed.

3.   THE CULTURE OF PEACE AS A FRAMEWORK
              FOR RESEARCH

Let us now examine the eight action areas for a culture of peace defined by the United Nations, considering each as an alternative to a key aspect of the culture of war and as a point of departure for research.

3.1   Democratic participation

This is the alternative to the authoritarian social structures that lie at the heart of a culture of war.   The importance of this is illustrated by a popular question, "What if they ordered a war and no one obeyed?" In fact, all warfare and organized violence depends upon the willingness of people to follow orders.   To the extent that decision-making is truly democratic and participative, it is much more difficult for the state to launch a war. A number of studies in recent years have claimed that so-called "democratic states" do not start wars at all, but one may criticize these claims, because the studies define both democracy and warfare in very narrow and, to my mind, unsatisfactory terms[10]. There is no doubt that this is a research area of great importance and future research, if it overcomes the problems of earlier studies, can be very useful.

A second area of important research concerns the topic of internal military intervention. A few years ago I published a study in the Journal of Peace Research on the history of internal military intervention in the United States[11].   Information from the files of the US Army and National Guard indicated that the rate of internal military intervention - averaging about 18 interventions using 12,000 troops per year - has remained more or less constant throughout the history of the country. It was concluded that the function of the culture of war is as much for internal control as for external defense or aggression.   In the US, during the 19th Century internal intervention was directed against slaves and slave rebellions, American Indians, industrial workers and movements of unemployed workers. During the 20th Century the interventions against industrial workers and movements of the unemployed have continued, and since World War II, they have been directed primarily at the urban rebellions that took place in the 1960's and 1970's and as recently as 1992 in Los Angeles. All of these may be analyzed as situations where the government resorted to force to retain internal control and where democracy has not been tried or has failed.

To place this question in another way, it may be argued that effective democratic participation in a country - not just elections - but participation at all levels - the pupil in the decisions of his school - the worker in the

decisions of his factory - the people as a whole in the development of economic and social decisions of the country - enables the state and its citizens to resolve contradictions without recourse to violence. In fact, it could be argued that if democracy succeeds, internal military interventions become unnecessary and anachronistic.

3.2 Understanding, Tolerance and Solidarity

These are needed to overcome one of the most obvious and essential factors necessary for the culture of war: the identification and labeling of an enemy. If there is no enemy, there is no war - it is as simple as that. Where do enemy images come from? This is a complex problem that needs much more research. In the publication on internal military intervention in the United States, I documented how foreign enemy images were intentionally developed by decision-makers in order to justify internal military intervention against those resisting exploitation within the country[11]. This dynamic was especially strong during the McCarthy period of American history. Anyone who questioned the repression of communists and trade unionists inside the country was accused of aiding the foreign communist enemy. Similar dynamics took place during earlier periods of American history at the turn of the 20th Century and during and immediately after World War I. The mirror image effect was obvious during the Cold War when I visited the Soviet Union. Russians who questioned the internal decisions of the government were accused of aiding the Western enemy. This linkage of internal intervention and enemy images needs further investigation as it is crucial to the transition to a culture of peace.

Once enemy images have become established and have led to violence, it is necessary to embark on processes of reconciliation. In our time, this is most remarkably illustrated in South Africa. In this regard, one may strongly recommend the recent book on their Truth and Reconciliation Commission by its chairman and Nobel Peace Laureate, Bishop Desmond Tutu[12]. Truth commissions have operated in a number of other countries in recent years, especially in Central and Latin America, and there is a great need for research on their strengths and weaknesses. In fact, I was greatly disappointed that the call in the preliminary United Nations document on a culture of peace for such research on truth and reconciliation commissions was eliminated on the insistence of the European Union from the final resolution.

3.3   Participatory Communication and the Free Flow of Information and Knowledge.

The control of information, in particular, secrecy and propaganda, are essential aspects of the culture of war. This is so pervasive that we take it for granted. Once again, we may consider the case of the United States, although it may be assumed that it is equally true of other countries as well. A year or so ago, the US Congress requested a report on how much was being spent by the government to keep secrets: the answer was over 5 billion dollars, but that this sum did not include the secrecy of the CIA because its budget was secret!   The control of information through secrecy and propaganda are closely interwoven with the creation of enemy images, authoritarianism and internal military intervention according to my historical research.   Enemies are accused of "spying" and divulging "secrets" but one cannot know what these secrets are when they are shrouded in "national security".   The researcher is at a disadvantage here; his very attempts to obtain information can be interpreted as spying and endangering the national security.

Research on secrecy is not easy, but I am convinced that it could make a major contribution. My guess, which would need to be confirmed, is that the most basic function of secrecy of governments and inter-governmental organizations is to hide errors, corruption and incompetence. This is profoundly authoritarian! If the people do not know of the mistakes and incompetence of their governments, how can they take participate effectively in the democratic process?

Under this topic, let us turn to the role of the mass media in the culture of war and violence. Several years ago ISRA members from around the world took part in a landmark study of the effects of television violence using a comparative methodology[13]. This research needs to be continued and expanded, although the main lines are clear - there is a causal relation between watching violence on the screen and committing violent acts. The next step that is needed is to find ways of effectively addressing this in a way that will reduce both the quantity and the effects of violence in the cinema and television, and by extension the Internet and video games.   In a document being submitted by the culture of peace and UNESCO to the UN General Assembly, we argue for a broad approach by all concerned to shift the market by reducing demand for violent products and increasing the demand for products that illustrate conflict without violence. Here, too, is an important area for further research.

3.4   Disarmament and Economic Conversion.

At the level of the state, many have argued that the military-industrial complex is itself a force in the culture of war, influencing decision-makers to opt for military solutions instead of negotiation, dialogue and compromise. At the level of the individual, a similar question may be posed: to what extent does the very availability of guns become a causal factor in violence? This is not an easy question, but a very important one that is being increasingly asked by the general public as well as experts.

On the positive side, research is needed on best practices in disarmament and economic conversion. For example, is anyone doing a good analysis of the recent victory of international agreements to ban the manufacture and sale of land mines? It is certainly an important precedent for the future.

3.5   Education for a Culture of Peace

This responds to the fact that education throughout history - beginning with the adolescent initiation rites for young warriors - has been designed to prepare people to live in a culture of war. UNESCO has an important project called "disarming history" which engages sets of countries long engaging in conflict to revise their history books in common and to eliminate enemy images and stereotypes. However, may of us are convinced that even more important than the content of educational curricula is the institutional structure of the educational system which most often is authoritarian and arbitrary. What children learn in school is to accept authority and to follow orders. To what extent can this be changed so that our educational institutions become "schools for democracy"? Studies of best practices are needed. To what extent can students, in coordination with teachers, administrators and community, learn to govern and to choose appropriate governance through their own practice and choice?

The increasingly popular practice of mediation and conflict resolution in schools needs extensive study and research to establish best practices and determine appropriate methodologies. These studies should take into consideration and study if necessary, traditional practices of conflict resolution in the communities concerned.

3.6   Sustainable Economic and Social Development

Although it is generally accepted that extreme poverty causes social violence, this relationship is not often investigated scientifically. In this regard, ISRA members Mel and Carol Embers have found a fundamental cross-cultural correlation between the occurrence of periodic drought and famine and the frequency of warfare[14], a finding that needs to be followed

up and elaborated. Obviously, there has been a relationship between exploitation and the culture of war throughout history, from slavery to colonialism to neo-colonialism.

In the attempt to promote economic and social development in the South, billions of dollars have been spent by the countries of the North for development aid, but without very much good evaluation and research. One former UN resident representative in Africa told me that in his opinion, the development aid to Africa from the North has probably increased rather than decreased violence on the continent, because it has favoured the development of a new elite with associated local inequalities and exploitation. And, of course, this does even address the issue of how military aid from the North to the South can increase the level of violence. Good research is needed on development aid, but it will have to overcome resistance related to the fact that some people have profited handsomely from it - both in the North and in the South - and will not wish to see this made known or challenged. In the development of the UN resolution on culture of peace, at the suggestion of the World Bank, a paragraph was included on the need to link development aid to conflict resolution. Unfortunately, however, it was removed at the insistence of a number of UN ambassadors. On the positive side, research should be carried out on certain experimental programmes of cross-conflict participation in development aid, i.e. where aid has been channeled in such a way that it has to be carried out jointly by the parties in conflict.

3.7   Respect for All Human Rights

This provides an alternative to the economic exploitation that has always been a major driving force towards the culture of war. In this regard, I have been struck in recent years by the importance of collective human rights in the determination of war and peace. In particular, there is the right to be schooled in your mother tongue. This was perhaps the most important single factor causing the outbreak of hostilities in Kosovo - namely that 90% of the population spoke Albanian at home but the children were not allowed to use that language in the school. There is the danger of a similar situation in many parts of Turkey where children speak Kurd at home, but where it is forbidden in the schools. A similar situation in Tatarstan was avoided after breakup of the Soviet Union, where the Tatars declared independence but did not resort to violence and by the time a negotiated compromise was achieved with the Russian Federation they had gone from one to several hundred Tatar language schools in Kazan alone. One might suggest that studies are needed now on the effect of the so-called English-only movement in California and other US states with large Spanish-speaking populations.

3.8 Equality between Women and Men

This responds to one of the most salient aspects of the culture of war: from the beginning of history warfare has been monopolized by men. Since warfare was deeply involved with the origins of the state, this male monopoly in war had enormous consequences for the all subsequent inequality of power between women and men. The term "monopoly" is used advisedly, because in many cultures women have been excluded in a very active way from all aspects of warfare - often expressed as taboos - sometimes with the punishment of death. This is an area in which I have conducted some cross-cultural research, showing that the existence of women warriors can be predicted with high statistical accuracy if one assumes that the monopolization of war by men resolves a fundamental social contradiction between marriage and warfare[15]. In prehistoric times, most war probably took place against neighboring peoples with whom one inter-married. Hence the married woman was caught in a contradiction: in time of war should she support her husband, on the one hand, or her father and brother, on the other? There are many research challenges associated with the relation between the culture of war and the inequality of women and men - and, no doubt, research in this area could prove useful in developing an alternative culture of peace.

Just to mention one other research challenge: what is the effect of the increasing number of women in government? The latest figures from the Inter-parliamentary Union show that women make up more than 30% of the parliament in 9 countries and more than 25% in 11 others. Does this make a difference in decision-making in these countries with regard to war and peace? A first glance at the countries concerned make me think that the answer is "yes," but this needs to be studied in some detail.

4. THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE

The Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace adopted by the United Nations in Resolution A/53/243 provided for a mechanism to promote the transition from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace and non-violence. It called for the establishment of a global movement for a culture of peace through partnerships of the United Nations with its Member States and with the civil society. This is the first time that the UN has ever called for a global movement. This movement is launched by the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000), for which UNESCO is responsible and

will be further developed during the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

As the Director of the Unit for the International Year for the Culture of Peace, I have based the strategy of our team on the research conducted during the 1970's and 1980's and published in my books, The American Peace Movements and Psychology for Peace Activists[16-17]. In particular, we have designed the campaign to engage participants in terms of achieving four stages of consciousness development:

1. Values. This is being accomplished through dissemination of the Manifesto 2000, written by a group of Nobel Peace Laureates on the basis of the set of universal principles for a culture of peace adopted by the Member States of the United Nations in their various resolutions on a culture of peace. The Manifesto 2000 translates the principles into the language of everyday life: respect all life, reject violence, share with others, listen to understand, preserve the planet and rediscover solidarity.

2. Individual action. Individuals are invited to take the first step of action by signing the Manifesto 2000 and making a commitment to follows its principles in everyday life. So far, seven million people have made this commitment. The first two countries to undertake massive national mobilizations and to surpass one million were each countries plagued by violence: Algeria and Brazil.

3. Collective action. Partnerships are developed with international, national and local associations and non-governmental organizations, as well as schools, universities, cities, parliaments and enterprises. They are asked to undertake flagship events and to identify local projects in which individuals may express their commitment and join in collective action. Since the culture of peace is broadly defined with many of its aspects already being promoted by movements of their own, this strategy amounts to the development of a "movement of movements".

4. Global consciousness. It is important that each individual and organizational partner taking part in the movement should become conscious of the fact that their actions are part of global process of historical significance. This consciousness reinforces their actions and contributes to the development of synergy of their actions with those of others. Fortunately, the Internet has become widespread on the planet at this moment of history, allowing us to use the Internet to put in place a number of interactive communication systems that facilitate this process of consciousness development (See http://www.unesco.org/iycp for news of the global movement for a culture of peace).

Just as the strategy for developing the global movement for a culture of peace was based on research, so, too, its further growth depends upon simultaneous action research that can identify its strengths, weaknesses and

potentials. In this regard, I hope to publish an account of the movement as seen from the inside after retiring from the UN system in another year. Others are invited as well, to undertake research along this line.

5. CONCLUSION

To sum up, we have looked briefly at the odyssey, beginning at ISRA in 1980 and the Seville Statement on Violence in 1986, through the UNESCO Culture of Peace Programme to the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence, launched by the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000) and to be continued during the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). Each of the eight programme areas of the culture of peace is a fruitful framework for action, as is also the process of developing the global movement for a culture of peace through values, individual action, collective action and global consciousness.

COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE AND RESPONSES:

The first commentator elaborated on the finding of the Embers noted above and indicated that they had also demonstrated a correlation between the level of external violence of a society and the level of its internal violence, postulating that they were both results of the socialization process[18]. This person went on to state the culture of peace analysis is consistent with recent examples of non-violent "people power" in the Philippines and Eastern Europe. In response, it was further indicated that the events in the Philippines and Eastern Europe were greatly facilitated by clandestine use of modern communication technology (faxes, photocopies, etc), and that the advent of the Internet should facilitate even more dramatic social movements in the future.

The second commentator raised the issue of social justice and the prison system in the United States. In response, it was stated that the incarceration of more than two million people at the present time in the United States, half of whom are African-American, and the increasing sale of prisons to private corporations as a source of profitable labour, is a "sociological time-bomb". It is important to begin to look now for systems of reconciliation to stop the process from spiraling out of control. The truth and reconciliation process in South Africa[12] may provide valuable lessons in this regard.

The third commentator stated that good evidence already exists to show that the violent behaviour of a government increases the level of violence in its citizenry. Phillips[19] has shown that in the days following a public execution in the United States, there is an increase in the rate of homicide. Archer and Gardner[20] have shown that following wars there is a higher level of domestic violence, presumably because the soldiers coming home bring their violent training and experience with them. Related findings that show similar effects have been found by Landau in Israel[21].

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