From the International Year to a Decade for a
Culture of Peace **and Non-violence**

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The General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the Year 2000, at the turn of the millennium, as the International Year for the Culture of Peace and the decade from 2001-2010 as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. In doing this, the UN has recognized the importance of mobilizing public opinion for a culture of peace. In adopting a Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (resolution A/53/243 of 13 September 1999), the General Assembly called for a global movement for a culture of. peace based upon partnerships between the United Nations, its member states and civil society.

The transition from a culture of war to a culture of peace was originally recognized as a priority by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and their definition has been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly as well: a culture of peace

> *...consists of values, attitudes and behcn'iours 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, endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society.* (UNESCO, 1995)

Each of these principles has been a priority of the United Nations since its foundation. What is new is their linkage through the culture of peace and non-violence into a single coherent concept. Linkages have often been made (e.g., democracy, development and peace, equality between women and men with development and peace, etc.). This is the first time, however, that they are all inter-linked so that the sum of their complementarities and synergies can be developed.

The demand for a culture of peace is based on the belief that violence is not inevitable (Adams, 1991). Rather than intervening in violent conflicts after they have erupted and then engaging in post-conflict peacebuilding, it is more humane and more efficient to prevent such violence in the first place by addressing its roots. The norms, values and aims of a culture of peace constitute the basis of a global ethics and show that fundamentally many of the most important values are common to all great moral traditions and that there is no sharp cleavage between values of various groups of countries, between the North and the South, the East and the West.

A Brief History of the Culture of Peace Concept

The concept of a culture of peace arose at the end of the Cold War. For the first time, the objective for which the United Nations was founded, the abolition of war, had become feasible. The culture of peace concept was developed in 1992 at UNESCO as the Organization's response to "An Agenda for Peace" at the United Nations Security Council. It had first been proposed in the Declaration of Yamoussoukro, Cote D'lvoire, 1989.

Reasoning that peacekeeping operations alone might assure the absence of war but could not by themselves bring a positive, dynamic peace, UNESCO argued that this could be done best by engaging those who had been in conflict in common ventures of human development. Acting primarily in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, UNESCO offered its services in post-conflict peace building. Projects were undertaken in a number of countries of Central America, Africa, as well as in collaboration with the government of the Philippines. A comprehensive overview of the culture of peace at this early stage is contained in the monograph, "UNESCO and A Culture of Peace: Building a Global Movement" (UNESCO, 1995).

The transition from the culture of war to a culture of peace was taken up as a priority by the twenty-eighth session of the General Conference of UNESCO in 1995. Having considered the initial experiences of the Culture of Peace Program, which it had established in 1993, the General Conference declared that this transition was the greatest challenge facing the world at the end of the twentieth century and dedicated

UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 1996-2001 to its promotion. This was seen as the contemporary expression of the constitutional mandate of UNESCO which declares that peace requires more than political and economic arrangements of Governments; peace must be founded upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind.

Beginning in December 1995, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolutions on the culture of peace almost every year, culminating with decisions to declare the Year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace, to declare the Years 2001-2010 as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World and the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

The development of the concept of the culture of peace has both theoretical and practical value. It provides a conceptual framework that emphasizes the importance of addressing the deep cultural roots of war and violence, and it constitutes the basis for a coherent strategy for a transformation to a culture of peace and non-violence.

The Development of a Global Movement for a Cult are of Peace and Non-violence

The strategy adopted by UNESCO in its role as focal point in the United Nations system for the International Year for the Culture of Peace has been based upon (1) partnerships, (2) the Manifesto 2000 and (3) new information technology. This provides the basis for a global movement for a culture of peace and non-violence that should be further developed during the decade that follows.

Partnerships between and among the various actors (member states, civil society and the United Nations system, in particular UNESCO) are being encouraged and strengthened for a "global movement for a culture of peace" (United Nations, 1999). In this way, the broad scope of the culture of peace concept can provide for practical coordination and federation of the actions of existing movements, governmental and non-governmental institutions that address only one or a few of the various plans of action. During the initial months of the Year 2000 — the International Year for the Culture of Peace - partnership agreements were being signed at an ever increasing rate. These included partnership agreements between international organizations and UNESCO and between national organizations and national focal points.

Most partnerships are being developed at the level of the member states, where the National Commissions for UNESCO and the field offices of UNESCO are serving as national focal points. In some countries, national committees have been established for the culture of peace involving representatives of the government, civil society and the United Nations. In a few countries, the responsibility of serving as the national focal point has been delegated by the government to particular national non-governmental organizations. A special importance is being given to partnerships with cities, towns and national parliaments that may be encouraged to develop action plans and legislation for a culture of peace and non-violence.

The Manifesto 2000, written by a group of Nobel Peace Laureates on the basis of United Nations resolutions, has been circulated for signature during the International Year for the Culture of Peace in order to engage the largest number possible of individuals to cultivate a culture of peace in their everyday lives. Those signing the Manifesto 2000 commit themselves to following the principles of a culture of peace in their family and community: respect all life; reject violence; share with others; listen to understand; preserve the planet; and rediscover solidarity.

Millions of people have signed the Manifesto 2000 through a concerted campaign undertaken within the framework of the organizational structure of the International Year for the Culture of Peace, including National Committees, National Commissions for UNESCO, UNESCO field offices, United Nations coordinators and partner non-governmental organizations. Schools and school children have taken the lead in this campaign.

New information technologies, especially the Internet, are being used extensively for information exchange. This corresponds to paragraph 7 of the United Nations resolution, which states:

> *A culture of peace should be promoted through sharing of information among the various actors on their initiatives. New information technologies provide an unprecedented tool for the coordination of local efforts by partners throughout the world, and they make possible the development of a "global consciousness" that all of these local efforts are part of a global movement.* (A/53/243)

The Internet has been used to diffuse and gather signatures on the Manifesto 2000 and as a system of information exchange between UNESCO and its partners - both international organizations and national local points. Internet also provides the public with an up-to-date description of the state of the movement. Readers are encouraged to go to the site hrtp://www.unesco.org/iycp.

New initiatives are being developed to take advantage of the potential of Internet for participative, interactive communication. Each person signing the Manifesto will be invited to take part in local projects promoting one or more of the eight action areas of a culture of peace and non-violence. This will be made possible by a participatory Internet communication system providing information on the local projects undertaken by the partners that have signed agreements for the International Year for the Culture of Peace. Each project, in addition to providing a brief description of its action, describes what it can give and what it would like to receive in exchange from other projects -making the system an "on-line" market place for local projects.

Another initiative under development is the Culture of Peace News Network. Each signatory of the Manifesto will be invited to be a reporter (and, if they wish training, a moderator) in a global network of multi-lingual Internet sites providing information on news and media events that promote one or more of the eight action areas of a culture of peace. Moderators at each site help the reporters by e-mail to rewrite their reports in order to correspond to the criteria ("rules of the game") so they can be put on-line. Priority will be given to the involvement of schools and school children in this network.

Towards a Curriculum for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence

The fundamental framework for any curriculum for a culture of peace and non-violence should be based on the eight action areas of the program of action for a culture of peace adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution 53/243:

1. Culture of peace through education
2. Sustainable economic and social development
3. Respect for all human rights
4. Equality between women and men
5. Democratic participation
6. Understanding, tolerance and solidarity
7. Participatory communication and the free flow of information and
    knowledge
8. International peace and security (disarmament, etc.)

Each of these action areas corresponds to a particular transformation needed from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace and non-violence. The transformation process is briefly described in following sections taken from the draft program of action, General Assembly document A/53/370.

Culture of peace through education
Education is the principal means of promoting a culture of peace. This includes not only formal education in schools, but also informal and non-formal education in the full range of social institutions, including the family and the media. The very concept of power needs to be transformed - from the logic offeree and fear to the force of reason and love. Education should be expanded so that basic literacy is joined by the "second literacy" of "learning to live together." A global effort of education and training, supported by the United Nations, should empower people at all levels with the peace-making skills of dialogue, mediation, conflict transformation, consensus building, cooperation and non-violent social change. This campaign should be based upon universal principles of human rights, democratic principles and social justice, and at the same time, build upon the unique peace-making traditions and experiences of each society. It should be linked with other peace education campaigns already launched on regional and national levels.

Sustainable economic and social development
It is increasingly recognized that in the long term, everyone gains from the implementation of sustainable human development for all. The poverty and exclusion of some increases the vulnerability of 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. As declared by the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, social development, social justice and the eradication of poverty are indispensable for the achievement and maintenance of peace and security within and among our nations (United Nations, 1995). In turn, these cannot be attained in the absence of peace and security or in the absence of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Respect far all Human rights
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 behaviors which would benefit exclusively the clan, the tribe or the nation towards those which benefit the entire human family. Hence, the promotion of human rights at both individual and collective levels is at the heart of actions to promote a culture of peace and non-violence.

Equality between women and men
As recognized by the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, in 1995, there is an inextricable linkage of peace with equality between women and men. Only this linkage of equality, development and peace can replace the historical inequality between men and women that has always characterized the culture of war and violence. As pointed out at the Conference, it is necessary to promote women's political and economic empowerment and equal representation at every level of decision-making so that women's experience, talents, visions and potential can make their full contribution to a culture of peace. The analysis is becoming generally accepted in the world today that women themselves have always been anti-war and against violence in view of their roles as mothers and wives, and in times of conflict, women and children have always been the victims. The foundations for an enduring and sustainable culture of peace require the full integration of women at all levels of the decision-making processes including the political arena, peace building and resolution and prevention of conflicts.

Democratic participation
The fostering of democratic participation and governance is essential for the development of a culture of peace and non-violence. This is 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. As stated by the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development:

> *...democracy and transparent and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society are indispensable foundations for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development [which, with social justice] are indispensable for the achievement and maintenance of peace and security within and among our nations.*

Understanding, tolerance and solidarity
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. Only by celebrating the tapestry of our diversity, the common threads of human aspiration and social solidarity that bind us together, and by ensuring justice and security for everyone who makes up the warp and woof of the cloth, can we truly affirm that we are weaving a culture of peace. Therefore, a renewed commitment is needed to the actions proposed by the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance (UNESCO, 1995) and other actions which promote "intellectual and moral solidarity" which, as declared by the UNESCO Constitution, is the only secure basis for peace.

Participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge
Freedom of opinion, expression and information, recognized as an integral aspect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, is a vital factor in the strengthening of peace and international understanding. It is needed to replace the secrecy and manipulation of information, which characterize the culture of war. In this regard, the media can be a powerful partner for the construction of a culture of peace. Its technological advances and pervasive growth have made it possible for every person to take part in the making of history, enabling for the first time a truly global movement for a culture of peace. At the same time, however, the media is sometimes misused to create and disseminate enemy images, violence and even genocide against other ethnic and national groups, and to portray and glorify violence in many forms. Also secrecy is on the increase, justified in terms of "national security" and "economic competitiveness," whereas in fact more transparency is needed in governance and economic decision-making. Therefore, actions are proposed in support of this aim, which realize the positive potential of the media to provide essential information and to promote, via participatory communication, the values, attitudes and behaviors of a culture of peace.

International peace and security
International peace, in the sense of the absence of war and the presence of security between nations, is a

necessary condition for the full establishment of a culture of peace. At the same time, however, only the establishment of a culture of peace can provide an effective basis for the prevention of war and violence and the ensuring of long-term security. Therefore, actions to promote a culture of peace need to be fully integrated with those to promote international peace and security, such as peace diplomacy, peacekeeping, disarmament and military conversion.

Conclusion

Experience with pedagogical application of this outline show that the eight areas in question are both sufficient and necessary. They are sufficient in the sense that repeated discussions with a wide variety of audiences and specialists indicate that they cover the full range of aspects of a culture of war and violence that need to be transformed if one is to achieve a culture of peace and non-violence. There is no other area of action that is often cited and that has been overlooked in this analysis. They are necessary, in the sense that a culture of war and violence cannot be transformed into a culture of peace and non-violence without transformations in each of the areas indicated. The eight areas are synergistic in that lack of progress in any one area weakens those that remain. The synergistic interaction of the various areas needs to be kept in mind in any curriculum, so that the eight areas are not treated in isolation, but rather part of an overall process.

Given the fact that research has only begun to touch the relevant issues, it is important that a curriculum should be presented as very open-ended, inviting students and teachers to further refine the analysis, thereby treating it as collective "problem-solving" in the pedagogical approach of Paulo Freire.

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