

The time is now: Re-commit to Peace

A shared statement by peacebuilding organizations

International Day of Peace, 21 September 2020

Peace is under threat. In 1945, the United Nations was founded to ‘save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.’ But the steady progress that has been made towards building, keeping and sustaining peace is now threatened. While COVID-19 and its economic effects have had a direct impact on human lives, some actions by governments and others are making things worse. Responses to crisis that increase violence, injustice and exclusion, that set aside ‘the dignity and worth of the human person’ and ‘the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small,’ will exacerbate development losses and human suffering, leaving many behind. The lessons of the UN Charter are being forgotten.

Our hearts go out to those suffering today, in the sober knowledge that this may turn out to be but a foretaste of the disruptions that may arise in the years to come, including from climate change and environmental degradation, and growing inequalities and exclusion. If we are to meet the challenges of tomorrow, we must recommit to peace today.

Focus on peace, justice and inclusion, both during crises and longer-term. We must re-dedicate ourselves to the vision of a global partnership of all stakeholders to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies, so clearly articulated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This approach is not only the route to lasting gains in development, human rights and peace, but must be embraced as the foundation of an effective humanitarian and security response in times of crisis.

As organizations devoted to building peace around the world, we call on the international community to take these steps:

- **Mainstream peace in the response to COVID-19.** It is time to explicitly embed people-centered and sustainable strategies for peace at the heart of the response to COVID-19. We call on the Secretary-General to issue guidance for the UN system to prioritize conflict-sensitive and risk-informed approaches in the planning and monitoring of all activities taken to address COVID-19, and to align these efforts with the relevant longer-term plans to foster peace, justice and inclusion within development frameworks. Furthermore, Member States should support allocating 5% of the funding for the COVID-19 response to ensuring that conflict sensitive and risk-informed approaches are mainstreamed. It is particularly important that support is given to fostering social resilience, including strengthening local, national and international mechanisms for addressing difference and grievances. Building peace is never more important than at times of crisis.
- **Prioritize inclusion in analysis and action.** Prioritizing the meaningful inclusion and public participation of all groups, including women and girls, youth, and local communities, is vital to our peace and development efforts. Recent months have starkly demonstrated the disproportionate impact of entrenched and systemic patterns of exclusion at times of crisis. Increases in gender-based violence and race-based abuses (as highlighted in the recent Human Rights Council resolution on people of African descent), are evidence of this. Additionally, civic space must be protected and guaranteed. Inclusion is just as important in the midst of crisis as in longer term efforts, and critical to developing more effective approaches that can have a lasting impact.
- **Make space for building peace.** We support the Secretary-General’s call for a global cease-fire to enable humanitarian access and make space for building peace. But governments and other international actors can do more to step aside from the machinery of war. Cease-fire efforts can be expanded to make the choice to avoid all forms of violent coercion. Military spending should be reduced, and nuclear weapons eliminated, freeing up critical resources to save lives and support the most vulnerable. Within countries, governments must avoid using state violence as a response to large-scale unemployment and displacement, and state and nonstate actors alike should eschew violence as a shortcut to achieving political and economic ends.
- **Reaffirm multilateralism and international norms as a safeguard for the most vulnerable.** At times of global crisis, in an environment of increasing fragility and fragmentation, it is vital to reaffirm international norms, to support responsible trade, reduce arms flows, promote constructive financial, tax and investment practices and bolster adherence to international human rights and humanitarian law. In crisis, more than ever, states should seek to uphold a rules-based system, the underpinning of an enabling environment that privileges the long-term development, peace and dignity of all people and communities.

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+Peace

ACCORD

ACT Alliance

AFRICAN YOUTH ACTION NETWORK-AYAN

Africans Rising for Justice, Peace and Dignity

Agrupación de Familiares de Ejecutados Políticos - Chile

All Anglophone Union for Peace and Development (AAUPD)

Alliance for Conflict Transformation (ACT)

Alliance for Peacebuilding

Alyansa ng Kabataang Mindanao para sa Kapayapaan (AKMK)

American Friends Service Committee - AFSC

Asociación Española para el Derecho Internacional de los Derechos Humanos

associat.tunisienne des droits de l'enfant

Association For Promotion Sustainable Development

ASSOCIATION RAYONS DE SOLEIL

Badhon Manob Unnayan Sangstha

CAFSSO-WRAG for Development

Camp for Peace Liberia

Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)

Care and Development Centre

Carrefour Développement (CAR.D)

Casa Generalizia della Società del Sacro Cuore

CENADEP

Center on Conscience & War

Centre de Défense des Droits de l'Homme et Démocratie

centre des jeunes bolingo, CJB

Centre d'études stratégiques et de sécurité internationale (CESSI)

Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

Centre for Sustainable Development and Education in Africa

Centre for Youth and Development

Centre pour la Gouvernance (CEGO)

CESAMORG

CESSI

CHARI-CONGO

Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy

Civil Society Platform for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (CSPPS)

Community Empowerment for Progress Organization-CEPO

Community Empowerment for Progress Organization-CEPO, South Sudan

Community of Christ (British Isles)

Community of Christ Europe

Comunidad Ecuánica Martin Luther King

Conciliation Resources

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

Denver Justice and Peace Committee (DJPC)

Dirigentes de mi Comunidad (DICOMU)

Epikieia Observatorio Universitario de Derechos Humanos

Female Prisoners Support Trust

Femme Affranchie pour le Développement Durable et la Protection de l'Environnement -FADPE-

Forum des femmes oeuvrant pour la gouvernance des ressources naturelles en RDC "FFGRN"

Forum National sur la Dette et la Pauvreté (FNDP)

Franciscans International

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Friends World Committee for Consultation – World Office (Quakers)

FriEnt-Working Group on Peace and Development

Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa

Gender Network and women's rights "GEDROFE"

Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ

Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP)

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)

Global Peace and Development Organization

Globethics.net

Glokala Sjuhärad Association, Sweden

Great Lakes Peacebuilding Initiative -GLPI

Greenspring Development Initiative

Helping Hand for Survivors

Interfaith Forum for Peace Harmony and Solidarity

International Alert

International Center on Conflict & Negotiation

International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)

International Federation for Peace and Sustainable Development

Interpeace

Inwelle Study and Resource Centre

Jerusalem Peacebuilders

Just Peace Advocates

KENYA ECONOMIC YOUTH NETWORK (KEYNET)

Loretto Community (Sisters of Loretto)

Maison des Organisations de la Société Civile (MOSC)

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Mennonite Central Committee United Nations Office

Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute Foundation, Inc.

Minnesota Peace Project

MISERE, SORS!

Modern Advocacy Humanitarian Social and Rehabilitation Association (MAHSRA)

Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies

MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology

Nigerian Women Agro Allied Farmers Association.

Nonviolent Peaceforce

North Country Access to Health Care Committee

Nova Scotia Voice of Women for Peace

NYU Center on International Cooperation

NYU Peace Research and Education Program

Observatorio de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad de Los Andes

Observatorio por el Cierre de la Escuela de las Américas - SOAW Chile

Odbor za ljudska prava

Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity/Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Initiative (OLPHI)

Pacific Conference of Churches

PartnersGlobal

Pax Christi International

Peace And Justice Alliance

Peace Direct

Peace Initiative Network

PEACE WARRIORS ORGANISATION

Peacifica

Peckham Rights!

Phoenix Nonviolence TruthForce

Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA)

Quaker Peace & Social Witness

Quaker Service Australia

Quaker Service Norway

Quaker United Nations Office

Quäker-Hilfe Stiftung

REFADEC

Regina Peace Council

Regional Center for International Development Cooperation (RCIDC)

Religions for Peace

Religions for Peace International

REPAOC

Réseau "Jeunes dans le Monde pour la Paix" - RJMP/ASBL-

RESEAU FEMMES ET PAIX

RIKO (Council for International Conflict Resolution)

Saferworld

School of the Americas Watch (SOAWatch)

Science for Peace Canada

SCOFIELD ASSOCIATES

Search for Common Ground

SECURITAS CONGO

SecurityWomen

SEMA

Sisters of Charity Federation

Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership

Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Western Province Leadership

Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy

Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace

Social Economic and Governance Promotion Centre (SEGP)

Solidarité avec les Victimes et pour la Paix-SOVIP

Solutions for Humanity International (SFH)

STOP FUELLING WAR

swisspeace

Talitha Project, Tonga

The Anglican Communion

The Carter Center

The Cora di Brazzà Foundation

The Graduate Institute of Peace Studies, Kyung Hee University (S. Korea)

The Lutheran World Federation

The Metta Center for Nonviolence

The Peacebuilding Project

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia

The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society

Transparency, Accountability & Participation (TAP) Network

Trippinz Care Inc

Trippinz Care International Foundation

Ukana West 2 Community Based Health Initiative (CBHI)

Union des Amis Socio Culturels d'Action en Développement (UNASCAD)

Unitarian Universalist Association

United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries

United Network of Youth for Peace and Diplomacy UNYPD

Universal Rights Network

VIVAT International

War Prevention Initiative

WASH-Net Sierra Leone

Win Without War

Women for Peace and Gender Equality Initiative

Women in Alternative Action-WAA Cameroon

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom WILPF/DRC

World Federalist Movement - Canada

World Federalist Movement/Institute for Global Policy (WFM/IGP)

Youth and Small Holder Farmers Association.

Youth for change initiative YOFCI

Youth Partnership for Peace and Development