Anuvrat Global Organisation (ANUVIBHA)

Peace-Building in an Unstable World

Innovative approaches to world peace in 21st century

Third International Nonviolence Leadership Training Camp

5th to 7th February 2010

Anuvibha's Children's Peace Palace
Rajsamand (Rajasthan) Near Udaipur (INDIA)

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Introduction

Thanks Anuvrat Global Organisation (ANUVIBHA), Acharya Mahapragya and Dr. S.L. Gandhi for inviting me to speak at the Non violent leadership training camp. It is indeed a pleasure to be among peace activists who are a driving force for change in our world. The concept of enriching and evolving one's life through non violent lifestyle, including the philosophy of least harm to other human beings and all species in our planet is an admirable one. One of the best contributions of Jainism is the golden rule of life. "A person should treat all creatures as himself would be treated" Mahavira, Buddha, Gandhi, Confucious have alluded to the golden rule of life which is the underlying universal and enduring power of morality for positive actions.

Thousands of years of conflicts and wars span over history of world civilisation. Humanity has been subject to religious, tribal, territorial and resource wars bringing endless bloodshed, misery and suffering, without much success in peacekeeping.

Peace is a prerequisite for building a safer society which can live in harmony. The world is getting more and more violent and there are wars in 30 locations in the world. United Nations is deploying 120,000 peacekeepers in 18 countries. War paralyses all progress and the worse victims are women and children. Wars and violence affect our capacity to address global challenges of crushing poverty, protecting the environment, eliminating nuclear weapons, terrorism and refugees on a large scale, displaced in different parts of the world. Security situation today is more dangerous now than the cold war. We live in an interconnected and interdependent world. Violence and wars have to be consigned to history for humankind to make progress for a peaceful future.

As UNESCO, declaration of a culture of peace says "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men, that the defences of peace must be constructed." If Jihadis can be trained for mass killing we can also train our consciousness to nonviolence and thereby change our world. We need to develop love, compassion, kindness, friendship, brotherhood and sisterhood – the positive manifestations of nonviolence (Ahimsa). Non violence implies an ability to transcend one from an ordinary daily life to become an agent of change, to serve the universe.

I will examine present global crisis and future outlook of the world, what drives conflict, root causes of violence and put forward innovative approaches in promoting a culture of peace and non-violence for peace building in the 21st century. We will also be exploring how the concept of building peace and non violence in an unstable world can be broadened to enrich not only ones life, but it can be expanded to help others by our actions. "Be the change you want to see in the world" said Mahatma Gandhi Ji.

Present Global Crisis and Future Outlook of the World

Citizens, governments and international organizations are confronted with an array of security challenges including new forms of terrorism and international criminal activity; security implications of environmental degradation; instability in the financial system; militarization of space; unregulated flows of small arms, nuclear technologies and illicit goods; and fragile and failing states. These security dilemmas require innovative thinking beyond traditional national security approaches to examine 21st century security challenges and explore responses.

The global system for finance, economic growth and development have collapsed, with food prices rocketing, leaving millions on the brink of starvation. The global warming and climate change crisis has put the planet in peril.

Global economic balances are shifting fast in all domains- manufacturing, trading, and financial with emerging giants China and India tilting the balance. Both of these countries are developing at an unprecedented scale and will leave behind the economies of America and any individual European country. There will be a big struggle for getting oil, water and skilled labour. As China and India become more wealthy and powerful, they will react differently to world events on democracy, freedom and rule of law.

With unprecedented development in information and technology, terrorists can develop or perhaps able to buy weapons of mass destruction and hold countries to ransom. Same is true of rogue governments, if they get their hands on nukes, they could create mayhem and chaos on a large scale. However, the west and the north will be pushing for global non-proliferation and containment of terrorism. The influence of America, European Union, Japan, and Russia in the next 10-15 years will be gradually diminishing on world affairs.

The influence of different faiths and religions will gradually increase by a religious renewal especially in the Muslim world. If this influence is wrongly used, it can breed extremists and fundamentalists who might use tactics to contain powerful countries.

Root Cause of violence and War - What drives conflicts – civil, international and future wars. How Peacekeeping works?

The **culture of violence** pervades our society, glorifying war rather than educating for peace, non-violence, and international cooperation. The continued military spending (USD $1.4 trillion per annum) in our society perpetuates a culture of violence and hostilities. Military spending in armed conflicts, involvement of Pentagon and Military Industrial Complex's 'war of aggression,' has a direct vested interest in the perpetuation of such conflicts is a major cause of ongoing wars. Afghanistan and Pakistan is an example of that.

The common assumption that **violence and warfare are inherent in human nature**. **Violence in local communities** paves the way for conflicts at national and international levels.

Escalation of small arms and lights weapons (800 million in circulation) both start and prolong conflicts, causing millions of deaths. Production of new mini nukes, buster bunker bombs and stockpile of existing 30,000 nuclear warheads, along with proliferation of nuclear and biological information and technology can result in terrorism, indiscriminate mass killing and destruction.

Terrorism, fundamentalism and radicalism are producing continued, unrelenting attacks on civilian and military targets around the world.

Economic globalisation has marginalised broad sections of the world's population, further widening the gap between rich and poor.

The **over use of environmental resources** is neither sustainable nor equitable. The world's dominant consumers are overwhelmingly concentrated among the well off, but the environmental damage from it falls most severely on the poor, over consumption of the earth's resources can result in ecological mayhem.

Increasing colonialism and neo-colonialism is evident in indigenous and un-represented people who are suffering from the suppression of their right to self-determination, ethnic and cultural genocide, and the violation of their cultural, language and religious freedoms, and the militarisation and nuclearisation of their lives, lands and waters.

Ethnic, religious and racial intolerance, and nationalism are among the principal sources of modern armed conflict. In the past holy wars were conducted under the shield of just war theory. Today as well religious wars are waged extremist ideologies under the pretext of extremist and militant ideologies.

The costs of the **gender injustice and machismo** that still pervades most societies are high for men whose choices are limited by this standard, and for women who experience continual violence both in war and in peace.

Lack of protection and respect for children & youth continue to be exploited and victimized, particularly in violent conflict situations where harming children have become not only a consequence, but frequently a strategy of war.

The **lack of democracy and just global governance** at all levels of society are causing conflicts and replacing the rule of law with the rule of force.

The **role of media in one dimensional reporting**, and thus, misrepresenting the facts and flaring conflicts and hostilities. The glorification of violence as expressed through commercial entertainment can contribute to the approval of violence as a normal and acceptable condition.

Another danger to world peace and security is **the level of poverty and hunger of the one sixth of the world's population,** who are under nourished and live in developing countries and are prone to conflicts over resources.

Refugees and internally displaced populations (IDPs) are a increasing source of violence and tension in the communities. According to UNICEF 2006 estimates, more than 1 billion children under the age of 18 are living in areas of conflict or emerging from war. There is a problem of mass displacements caused by conflicts (IDPs) which is linked with problem of population displacement and "one sided violence" committed by armed forces against civilians.

A major threat to global stability is **the food crises in poor countries which causes government collapse turning into a failed state.** Global warming is causing a shortage of freshwater, the loss of topsoil and rising temperatures, all of which reduce food production.

States fail when national governments can no longer provide personal security, food security and basic social services such as education and health care. They often lose control of part or all of their territory. After a point, they can become so dangerous that food relief workers are no longer safe and their programmes are curtailed (for example, Somalia and Afghanistan).

Failing states are an international problem because they are a source of terrorists, drugs, weapons and refugees, threatening political stability everywhere. Somalia is a failed state and has become a base for piracy; Iraq is a hotbed for terrorist training and Afghanistan is at war and is the world's leading supplier of heroin. Following the massive genocide in Rwanda, refugees from that failed state, thousands of armed soldiers among them, helped to destabilize neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo. Once states fail, no one assumes responsibility for their debt to outside lenders. If enough states disintegrate, their fall will threaten the stability of global civilisation.

Civil wars, International wars and future wars

There are some 20 civil conflicts burning around the world from Iraq to Columbia, to Pakistan. A civil war is one fought within a society or civil war as one fought within internationally recognised borders, then throughout history civil conflicts have tended to outlast international wars by 20 times. Civil wars can be ended by outside intervention, as in the Balkans. Sometimes such intervention may only prolong wars as in Iraq.

International wars raging in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq with tragic consequences to hundreds of innocent civilians who have been killed by American unmanned aerial vehicles or drones as they are popularly called. Future wars now are mainly guerrilla wars, insurgencies and terrorism. Pentagon has a different view of future wars. Future wars will be resource wars which will see over population and resource scarcity which will be the direct cause of confrontation, conflicts and wars. The conflict in Darfur – Sudan is one such example.

Peace and non-violent ideas, actions and examples to stop violence and wars.

How can we actively adopt a stance of nonviolent behaviour in the light of the trends of rising violence in the personal, public and international global contexts?

The alternatives can be described as supporting role of UN peacekeeping operations, tackling terrorism, promoting reasons to avoid war, pre-conflict and post-conflict peace-building, faster and better peacekeeping enforcements, adhering to UN charter and International Law, disarmament and non-proliferation, humanitarian intervention, sanctions, prevention of war, activism, education, culture of peace and more robust allocation of funds for peacekeeping.

Support role of UN Peacekeeping operations which deploys 120,000 people in 18 locations on five continents in the world. At certain places UN has kept peace over 50 years like Kashmir and in other places it's struggling to maintain peace as in Darfur and Congo. UN is one of the best examples of enforcing, keeping and building peace in the world. The demand for effective peacekeeping outstrips of availability of human and other resources. Achieving UN goals would mean building up the capabilities of regional peacekeeping players, including the European Union and the African Union."

States should comply with the UN Charter as they have signed and agreed under Chapter 7 provisions of the UN Charter, and have accepted not to go to war which in other words, make the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan illegal.

Bringing Security Council reforms for fair representation, more democratisation and increasing the peacekeeping budget. Accelerating preventative measures to concentrate on pre-conflict and post-conflict policing, following the recommendations of the peacebuilding commission.

The UN Security Council should craft the mandates and determine the character of each new UN peacekeeping deployment which is achievable. Where peacekeeping is not appropriate, it is also the Security Council that can authorise the deployment of a non-UN peace enforcement mission.

Tackling Terrorism

Build a just and equal society that addresses the root causes of the disaffection of the minority who are victims of the excess of the majority. Discrimination against people because of their nationality or religion leads them to extreme actions and terrorist attacks. Bring mechanisms to eliminate incitement and hatred for building a stable and peaceful society.

Promote reasons to avoid war and make 21st Century the century of Soft Power

In the 20th century we saw hard power in the form of warfare and a long cold war that risked nuclear holocaust. One estimate suggests that some 180million people died in the wars of the last century. But there exists a large "soft power deficit" that the world's civilizations must fill.

There are many good reasons to avoid war - in this context used to include extensive conflicts involving physical violence within countries as well as those between countries, whether or not war has been officially declared. Civilians, who may have little interest or involvement in the dispute, suffer when conflicts, whether between countries, or between communities within a country, escalate into physical violence and war.

Economic grounds. War is expensive and one needs to r**educe the military spending, adopting a culture of peace and the prevention of Warfare.** It is obvious that this huge military spending and the method of war and militarism are not bringing any real human security. In desperation, military engagement is what drives many people to violent conflict. There is little point in peacekeeping operations if we cannot reduce military spending which is increasingly spent on nuclear and conventional weapons. Governments should spend more funds on prevention of war and changing gun culture in pre conflict and post conflict situations. At present, the difference in money spent on prevention of war is staggering 2000 per cent less than military spending. Most conflicts today are fought with small arms and light weapons. They are weapons of choice in civil wars and for terrorism, organised crime, and gang warfare. Dismantle some of the war mongering institutions like NATO and Pentagon. NATO is still finding a reason to exist after the cold war. Military, Industrial Complex, mercenaries, Ministry Of Defence and all war departments should be replaced by Ministries of Peace.

Violent conflict can be prevented with Rapid Reaction Force or a civilian peace mission. Opportunities to avoid the human suffering and economic costs of war have been missed. The armed forces have expertise and a role to play in these situations. Rapid Reaction Force should be formed with trained civilians which can be rapidly deployed to help

prevent weak states from collapsing and preventing deadly conflicts. The role of army should be changed from warfare to peace operations and conflict resolution should become a priority.

Nonviolent Peaceforce should be sent to conflict areas to prevent death and destruction and protect human rights, thus creating the space for local groups to enter into dialogue and to seek peaceful resolution to local conflicts. The vision of civilian peace mission should be to have large-scale unarmed civilian peacekeepers using proven nonviolent strategies as a viable alternative in preventing, addressing, and mitigating violent conflicts worldwide.

Support discussion and dialogue leading to inter-cultural and inter-religious harmony for a safer future.

We must deepen the quality of these dialogues so that they produce specific actions and go beyond discussions amount like-minded moderates. A true dialogue must address age-old grievances and confront false stereotypes. Indeed, the best dialogues are respectful and honest, open-ended and constructive, intense and solution oriented. These were the quality of dialogues held in Indonesia between Muslims and Christians in conflict zones in Poso and Maluku, which culminated in a commitment to peaceful reconciliation.

Applying Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine and international law (under ICC) to stop genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. R2P, which has been agreed by the UN, can be applied for failed states, chronic low-grade conflicts, and ungoverned spaces (Somalia and Rwanda).

When genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes or crimes against humanity are being committed, it is important that world governments respond with quick, concerted diplomatic action, and, if necessary, that the UN Security Council give swift authorization for the deployment of a non-UN peace enforcement operation, with or without the consent of the host government.

Treating citizen groups as representatives of society instead of warring parties which marginalises the military should be a priority. The UN should support the Responsibility to Protect as a global norm and use diplomatic resources to advance the concept among countries.

Holding Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) to prevent future conflicts like the one in South Africa, Peru, East Timor and Morocco. The tribunals for Rwanda and Yugoslavia are other examples. It brings into open grievances of the warring tribes, nations and religious about the misgivings of different communities. It brings forward the fact that inside all of us, we are essentially the same – human beings, standing up for our Human Rights and civil liberties, pursing the same goals of peace and happiness. We need TRC's for Burma, Sri-Lanka, Middle-East, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan to bring open the violations of international law, and the persecution of minorities.

Campaigning to ban US military bases as in Iraq, Afghanistan and other places around the world. America is a global bully with 750 bases in 130 countries. It is a military juggernaut intent on world domination and in partnership with Military Industrial Complex continues to wage conflicts on a permanent basis.

Protecting civilians in armed conflict and avoid cover-ups. In modern warfare 80% casualties are civilians and 20% combatants (soldiers) There are a large number of civilians, refuges or internally displaced person from armed conflicts in the Gaza, Sri Lanka

and Somalia. It is the duty of the International Community to protect these helpless millions who are victims of humanitarian catastrophe.

Promote the work of the Peacebuilding Commission to help bridge the gap in co-ordination of peace building activities in countries just a emerging from violent conflicts. It should be corner stone of UN peacekeeping. It helps post conflict recovery, reconstruction, institution building and sustainable development.

Campaign for article 9 of the Japanese constitution (which rejects war and militarism) to be discussed and adopted by the UN General Assembly, thereby encouraging member states to move away from war and militarism, towards non-violent conflict prevention and resolution.

Promote education and non-violent ways of ending conflicts build on arms control treaties, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Also Protect Human Rights violations and environment from destruction as both lead to maintaining long term peace and security.

One of the solutions to stop wars could be **to promote culture of non-violence and non-killing for replacing the gun culture.** The task is challenging but for peace to prevail we have to reverse the trend of killing through hating violence, war, and mass psychological transformation for creating harmony, peace and love. Promote reasons to avoid war like war destroys environment, hinders development and hampers the desire for decent living.

Leaders should promote international co-operation to end long running disputes. One wonders why long running conflicts are not resolved in different parts of the world—Africa, Europe and Middle –East. The hurdles in peacekeeping lie in the slow progress made by Security Council. The decisions by the Security Council are blocked by veto power countries. Most of the world problems today of peacekeeping, conflicts, development, climate change and human rights are inter-related and should be dealt in tandem. Lasting peace cannot be achieved if we concentrate solely on peace when all the inter-related issues are destroying our environment, creating a shortage of food, leading to conflicts and chaos. What we urgently need is a global collective security agency to tackle all these inter-linked problems in co-operation with UN and regional bodies. It is worth noting that players in the conflict zone can take a decisive role to contain the conflict.

Talking to terrorists and learning from the Northern Ireland Peace Process. The peace agreement in Northern Ireland is now held up as a beacon for conflict resolution around the world.

On the basis of the British experience in Northern Ireland, it is now widely agreed that talking to terrorists and all parties in the conflict is a pre-requisite for peace, and that governments should avoid rigid pre-conditions in their attempts to bring extremists into the political process.

Too many of the players in any dispute are locked into extreme, unjust and unsustainable positions for too long – fed up by continuing violence. The extremists in any conflict need to be marginalised and identified and the mainstream needs to move forward with conviction to solve in seeking sensible solutions.

After 30 or more years of violence the people of Ireland North and South, Nationalist and Unionists, Catholic and Protestant were weary of the war. The power sharing agreement and the laying down of the arms by loyalist Para-military and decommissioning is a historic

achievement for the society in Ireland without conflict and bloodshed, a place without guns and violence in the society.

Promoting the role of activism for an active campaign against the policy of governments/politicians leading their countries to war, using preventative diplomacy against the surge of war.

Bringing into prominence acts of compassion and loving kindness for promoting global civic culture.

Supporting holistic solutions to all the interrelated issues and taking responsibility to deal collectively and have a multilateral approach in dealing with threats and challenges of today.

Linking the agenda of development, environment and disarmament together by building partnerships at national and global level.

Endorse **working towards phasing the elimination of nuclear weapons.** For decades nuclear non-proliferation treaty has saved the world from extinction. We should ensure and cooperate with other countries to maintain the nuclear disarmament and restrict the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Promote the work of human rights council for dealing more objectively and credibly with human rights violations and build a global conscience to help humanity in crisis.

Spread the Wealth of Globalisation

It is essential to make globalisation work for all. I do not accept the idea that globalisation produces winners and losers. Globalisation can be harnessed to make winners for all. There can be no genuine harmony among civilisations as long as the majority of the world's 1.3 billion people feel marginalised and unsecured.

Promote completion of millennium development goals, fight against poverty and debt relief. To make reducing the global incidence of wars and military spending a new Millennium Development Goal (MDG). War retards development, but conversely development retards war. Around 50% of the conflicts of the past 20 years have reoccurred within five years of the peace agreements. Getting rid of war is not a utopian dream. There already exists in the world large regions for example, European Union, within which war is inconceivable.

To work towards using resources for peaceful and environmentally sustainable purposes. At present the global arms trade, and its accompanying glut of military spending, continues to represent the single most significant perversion of worldwide priorities known today. For the sixth year military spending rose to the trillion dollar mark while billions of people who never see more than $1 or $2 a day are held hostage to unconscionable poverty.

To make 21st century about governments giving power to the people. A united civil society should use its strength for stopping politicians using their power unilaterally in violation of law and international treaties.

To work for promoting democracy, good governance and multilateralism which paired with rule of law can deliver civil liberty, economic opportunity, and security which can change life in a positive way. For **strengthening democratic institutions** and development

of pluralistic media, civil society should increase popular participation and ensure that people are able to exercise their democratic rights. **Good governance** at the national level must be matched by the commitment to practice good governance at the international level, to establish a dynamic and enabling international economic environment.

It is very important to **introduce universal education, multiculturism and tolerance for** spreading ideas which can be very influential in disseminating knowledge for everybody's use for nurturing a globalised information and knowledge economy and society.

Spreading peace and nonviolence by our actions.

There are many examples in history where non-violent struggle has been successful, and nonviolent strategies proved to be more powerful than guns. Some of the examples are below:

- The Indian Independence Movement, whereby Gandhi's campaign of non-violent action ousted the British from India.
- The US Civil Rights Movement.
- The Polish Solidarity Movement of the 1980s that ended Soviet control of Poland.
- Philippines dictator Marcos overthrown in 1986.
- The non-violent movement that ousted the Chilean dictator Pinochet in 1987.
- The collapse of Communist governments in eastern Europe – the "Velvet Revolution" organisation.
- South Africa: the 600 civic organisations that avoided civil war and supported Mandela and De Klerk to end Apartheid.
- The student-led movement that ousted Serbian dictator Milosevic in 2000.
- The Rose Revolution in Georgia, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and so on.
- Fall of Berlin War and reunification of Germany.

I would like to suggest three actions by which our actions can make a difference in our community city, country and wider world.

1) **Making your borough a Borough of Peace or your city a culture of Peace City and work for building a Peace Museum.**

We can change our own city or borough into a culture of peace, which can organise events and festivals for celebrating and building peace. Culture of peace can also be taught in schools and universities, civic and community organisations.

The UNESCO Declaration and Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace, establishes that the culture of peace is an interweaving of values, attitudes, and behaviour that reflect a respect for life, the human being, and human dignity.

The Plan of Action contains measures based on education, race, development, and freedom of expression that must be put into practice to bring about the great transition from force to the word: to foster education in peace, human rights, democracy, mutual tolerance, and comprehension, national and international; to fight every form of discrimination; to promote democratic principles and practices in every area of society; to fight poverty and bring about a form of development that is indigenous and sustainable and that benefits everyone and grants all people a decent life; to mobilise society in order to ignite in the young a burning desire to find new ways of living based on reconciliation, tolerance, and generosity, and to reject all forms of oppression and violence, the just distribution of wealth, the free flow of information and shared learning.

The 2000 Manifesto of the International Year for a Culture of Peace, signed by more than 110 million people around the world, establishes "the commitment in my daily life, in my family, my community, and my region, to respect all lives, reject violence, free my generosity, safeguard the planet, reinvent solidarity, and listen to others in order to understand them".

This should serve to involve us and implicate us personally in this process that can lead in a few years to a brightening of the horizons that are so dark today and make possible a peaceful coexistence of all inhabitants of the earth.

There have already been many regions, countries, and municipalities that have incorporated the culture of peace into their constitutions and statutes.

It can also take the shape of Peace Museums which can display history of peace making in pictures, paintings, documents and other art forms.

It is very important that this trend spread, though even more important is the awareness among people that the moment has come to stop accepting the imposition of and blind obedience to power. Citizens are ceasing to be spectators and becoming actors. They are abandoning silence and fear and becoming agents of peace instead of vassals.

Peace is both a condition and a result, both seed and fruit. It is necessary to identify the causes of conflict to be able to prevent it. Avoiding conflict is the greatest victory.

UNESCO, the United Nations organisation charged explicitly with building peace through education, science, culture, and communication, recalls in the preamble of its constitution that it is the "democratic principles" of justice, liberty, equality, and solidarity that must illuminate this great transition from a culture of violence and war to a culture of dialogue and reconciliation.

   2) **Creating a Peace and Non Violent media centre.**

Internet online services and social media are in more than one ways changing the society rapidly. Around two billion people across the world are connected to the internet via Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace. The success of the social media can be seen by the recent happenings around the Iran election where the totalitarian regime is sticking to power in the run up to a fraudulent election. Because of the traditional channels closed by government, the whole world came to know about the wrong doing of the government by the social media, including Twitter.

The message of peace through non-violence can be made aware in a concerted way with the help of social media. Lectures, workshops, campaign presentations and other events can be organised online. All the major issues of the 21st century can be highlighted and a successful campaign can be started for a safer and sustainable future for our planet by the aid of the media.

Today long-distance participation via mobile phone, SMS, and the Internet has made possible a radical change in the fundamental component of all democracies – the expression of the will of the people.

   3) **Global Peace and Nonviolence Leadership Summits and Ambassadors of Peace**

- Teach people by inspiring and educating a new generation of leaders who can meet the challenges of 21st century and make a difference.
- Future leaders with a love for learning, sense of possibility, and understanding of world around them – can serve the world and bring greater opportunities for future generations.
- Leaders can spread the message of peace and non-violence to the wider society. Survey after survey has concluded that most of the people in the world wish to live in a peaceful and safer society. However, the leaders and governments of certain countries in partnership with military industrial complex and military generals have kept the world on a permanent war footing, engaging in war from one country to another.
- Leaders should be trained in the art of nonviolent persuasion, dialogue, diplomacy and reconciliation for building a society free from guns and violence.

One of the best examples of leadership and Ambassadors of Peace is Ashoka, king of India in 269 BCE who became a Buddhist. Ashoka, prior to his conversion, had been an active military leader, but in a number of ways he changed when he became a Buddhist. In terms of military activity, he reduced this considerably, only using force when it was absolutely necessary to restrict incursions and aggressive activity by other rulers. He did not engage in the hunting of deer and other animals, and both he and his courtiers were largely vegetarian.

So what we should do is to have a program of global leadership summits and Ambassadors of Peace for achieving a less violent world.

Conclusion

Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell warned us in their 1955 manifesto that the human race has a choice. We can renounce war or we can bring about our own end.

This is even clearer now than it was half a century ago. Knowing this, countless millions round the world ardently want peace. The people of Britain want peace. Yet the British government and our allies, the Americans, insist on trying to have their way through war by creating a global political atmosphere of fear and insecurity and depend on military solutions to global issues. This is intolerable. By what right do our leaders continue to impose the curse of war on an unwilling world?

The leaders of the world need to exercise restraint in the use of force. If one has to transform society, our ways of working and lifestyle has to change. Only by self-restraint and applying the principle of non-violence, we can achieve lasting peace.

Peacekeeping to be effective is combination of several factors which include dialogue and mediation at the pre-conflict stage, enforcement of peace during the war, giving parties breathing space to reach an agreement, and post-conflict reconstruction when the warring parties entered a peace agreement and trying to work things together for a future free of violence.

However, I will argue that the reconciliation and neutralising the tensions in the pre-conflict mode is the most important for not only finding causes for tensions and hostilities but also for resolving disputes before they become full-blown war. This is the sign of a successful peacekeeping operation. It not only saves millions of lives which are lost in a nasty war, but also saves billions of dollars ($7 billion dollars at present spent on

peacekeeping) and free much needed valuable resources (food, water, energy, etc) which are increasingly in short supply owing to global warming.

There is book called 'The 33 strategies of war' by Robert Greene. It describes the horrific and brutal way wars are fought and won. The lesson from that book I learnt is that Generals and great warriors demonstrate prudence, agility, calm and keen understanding of conducting their armies in the battlefield, so that they can defeat their enemies. Similarly we need to organise ourselves on a massive scale and apply our resourcefulness, acumen, patience, dialogue, negotiation and diplomacy for making successful peacekeeping operations, otherwise peacekeeping will always remain a dream and a distant reality.

The priority is for the International Community, United Nations and its agencies is to live up to the UN's original mandate, which was to bring all nations of the world together to work for peace and development, based on the principles of justice, human dignity and the well-being of all people.

The message is simple – To spread peace and nonviolence by your actions in your city, country and international level. The nonviolent actions can change things dramatically as it once did for Gandhi Ji in India and Dr. Martin Luther King in America. The sheer ability of nonviolent ideas and ethics can help powerless people gain a lot of power to change things around for better in a nonviolent way. People can bring change not through violence, not through money but strength of their ideas, personality, ethical and moral stance. We should begin to take the burden of change upon ourselves in a nonviolent way to change society.

Let me conclude by saying that we have just drawn down the curtain on the bloodiest century in human history. We cannot repeat the same mistakes by bombing and killing our way to security. Let us make the 21st century less violent than the one before and I have outlined the innovative ways and the tools to achieve Peace-Building in an Unstable World .

Thank you for listening

Notes

The following publications were consulted and excerpts have been taken from them during the writing of this article:

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The full version of this speech can be downloaded from:

VM Centre for Peace   www.vmpeace.org
Action for UN Renewal   www.action-for-un-renewal.org.uk

Vijay Mehta is president of VM Centre for Peace www.vmpeace.org , Founding Trustee of Fortune Forum Charity www.fortuneforum.org , Chair of Action for UN Renewal www.action-for-un-renewal.org.uk and co-Chair of World Disarmament Campaign. He is an author and global activist for peace, development, human rights and the environment. Some of his notable books are The Fortune Forum Summit: For a Sustainable Future, Arms No More, and The United Nations and Its Future in the 21st Century.

His latest book is on Global Warming and is called 'Climate Change IQ,' which is available to download free of charge in electronic form from the website www.climatechange365.co.uk

He along with his daughter Renu Mehta founder of Fortune Forum charity held two summits in London in 2006 and 2007. The summits raised over a million pounds for charity and attracted a worldwide audience of 1.3 billion people (one fifth of humanity) including print and media coverage. The keynote speakers for the first and second summit were Bill Clinton, former US President and Al Gore, former US vice-President, and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize 2007.

Vijay Mehta has appeared in various TV programmes including BBC World, Press TV, Ajtak-24 hour Indian news channel, and Think Peace documentary, Canada, among others. The Sunday Times, Independent, Observer and Guardian newspapers, among other journals have written about him. His life is devoted to the service of peace, humanity and our planet