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NGO DPI Briefing

Culture of Peace: Amplifying the Unseen and Unheard Voices of Peace

A Culture of Peace is not only the absence of war but the presence of human security and justice.

1. How do you get from a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace?
2. And don't we need another UN resolution, with your help, that would help us get there?

Why is OWS relevant? Because the NY and Moscow General Assemblies just drafted a Joint Declaration saying that "Nuclear weapons do not bring security- ... and do nothing to enhance human security. Nuclear Power, the evil twin of nuclear weapons – poses a threat to life on earth." They say "No to Nuclear!" If all the hundreds of Occupies adopt that Declaration would that contribute to a Culture of Peace?

The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century...www. What does www mean? World without war. www.haguepeace.org... says: A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and struggle for justice non-violently, live by international standards of human rights and equity, appreciate cultural diversity, and respect the Earth and each other. Such learning can only be achieved with systematic education for peace. [www. peace-ed-campaign.org](http://www.peace-ed-campaign.org)

"In order to combat the culture of violence we need a radically different education- one that does not glorify war but educates for peace, non violence and international cooperation".

Many people invoked Martin Luther King on Monday. Did they know he believed that, "A true revolution of values will lay hands on the world order and say of war, this way of settling differences is not just."

Peace education is teaching for and about: human rights, gender equality, disarmament, social and economic justice, sustainable development, non violence, international law, and traditional peace practices. How did your grandmother settle her differences with your grand pa...kill him? If there was a problem, my grandmother used to say, eat first and talk later. She should have taught conflict resolution.

Peace education requires participation, critical inquiry and reflection.

Security Council resolution, 1325, on Women Peace and Security also calls for Participation... participation of women at all levels of governance and at all peace-making tables. Would that contribute to a Culture of Peace? Damn right.

Three remarkable women are Nobel Peace laureates for their peacemaking achievements. Yemen's Tawakkul Karman spoke directly to the unseen people and unheard voices of peace when she said, "To all those women whom history and the severity of ruling systems have made unseen, ...who have made sacrifices, who are stumbling on the path to freedom.....I say thank you.

Leymah Gbowee of Liberia said, "...women used to be the silent victims and objects of men's powers....women are throwing down the walls of repressive traditions with the invincible power of non-violence...." Read their Nobel speeches.

Does recognizing women as Nobel Peace laureates contribute to a Culture of Peace?...you bet.

Steven Pinker's op ed, War Really is Going out of Style, provoked a remarkable dialogue in the NYTimes as to whether we really live in less violent times. Counting the dead no longer can define violence and war. The Culture of Violence today is filled with the hungry, the poor, the violated, unemployed, people without health care, without education, those subject to economic and sexual exploitation, people suffering from nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, radiation victims from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And add those exposed to the nuclear power meltdown at Fukushima who are considered contagious from radiation poison.

We still have the Sword of Damocles hanging over our heads with over 20,000 nuclear weapons. Torture is practiced widely and victims barely survive. Drones kill in what Dr Robert J Lifton calls, "numbed technological violence". The killer pulls the trigger thousands of miles away from the targeted victim. Is that a Culture of Peace?

Is it a Culture of Peace to spend, according to Brown University, \$3.7 trillion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan? That comes to \$12,000 per American. \$1Billion spent on the military creates 2 and a half times fewer jobs than spending on education. Which represents the Culture of Peace?

No chance you could be raped in front of your family and community without guns. 875 million small arms in circulation and an additional 7-8million more made each year. Billions are spent in arms transfers. Achieving the MDG's would be between 40-\$60B a year from 2011-2015. Which would help a Culture of Peace?

A woman arrested in Bahrain begged Nick Kristof..."don't sell them arms. When you sell arms to dictators who are repressing people seeking democracy you ruin the reputation of America".

SANTIAGO DECLARATION ON THE HUMAN RIGHT TO PEACE

Do we have a Human Right to peace? The Charter says We the peoples.... determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...The Universal Declaration says we have the right to education, to life, to a roof over our heads, etc. If all those rights were fully implemented we might have a culture of peace. But nowhere does it say we have a right to peace.

A group of Spanish lawyers has drafted a resolution on the Human Right to Peace. The Santiago Declaration. This civil society initiated, civil society drafted and vetted resolution with Articles and obligations has machinery for monitoring, is before the Human Rights Advisory Committee. The Declaration will be used by an open ended Drafting Group which will report out their findings in June to the Human Rights Council. Civil society and supporting countries have moved this process forward. Some notable countries oppose it. We need to be sure the Advisory Council seeks civil society opinion. You need to follow this process. Once the imprimatur of the UN is on it, we can use it.

Included is the right to education for peace: the right to human security and to live in a safe and a healthy environment; right to food; to development and a sustainable environment; it says that weapons that damage the environment, especially, radioactive are contrary to international humanitarian law; etc.

It is a gendered declaration. Women are included. To read it all, Google, Santiago Declaration on the Human Right to Peace. Scroll down and at the bottom right column, there is a pdf English for the text of the Declaration.

Remember: www. No human security- no Culture of Peace.