

EDITORIAL

Reaching for Global Peace, Bridging Peoples

By Arnedo Valera, Esq.

For hundreds of years, man has always sought peace. But peace has been very elusive because men and governments continue to embrace it as a mere conceptual abstraction.

The Migrant Heritage Commission as one of the core partners of the Global Peace Festival recently held in Washington D.C., shares with all the peoples of the world their warm and heartfelt message of Global Peace based on JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND EQUALITY OF ALL MEN.

Global peace will remain remote unless all nations understand peace as not just the absence of war or armed conflict but addressing its roots. In many of today's small wars and armed conflicts numbering around 50, peace process is ongoing. We urge those engaging in peace process not to pay lip service to the need to address the roots of war and conflict.

In many countries, the roots of the present wars and hostilities – and those that will take shape in the future – can be summed up in one principle: The civil and political freedoms, as well as social, economic, and cultural rights of peoples enshrined in the United Nations Declarations and

several Human Rights instruments are not protected. People are denied access to life, food, jobs, health, education, shelter and other fundamental rights and resources.

As a result, about 25,000 people die of hunger every day. Of the world's 6.5 billion population, three billion - of whom 1 billion are children – live on less than two dollars a day. In 90 countries considered as among the less developed, at least 150 million suffer catastrophic health care costs. Moreover, nearly one out of three children of primary school age is not in school; only one adult in two is literate.

Indeed, armed conflicts aggravate these problems. Conflicts have led to the increase in the number of internally-displaced persons (IDPs) to 26 million by the end of 2007. These numbers do not include refugees or evacuees dislocated by development aggression, extreme poverty, and other humanitarian disasters. The rate of cross-country migration rose to more than 200 million in 2006, nearly half of them women; yet there were only 82 million migrants in 1970. Global poverty and unemployment are driving hundreds of millions of families – and their governments – to depend on migrant and expatriate remittances.

People are denied access to rights, freedoms, and resources due to unequal social and economic structures often engendered by repressive regimes. Such structures are even more deepened by foreign debt and other impositions

of powerful multilateral organizations. We call upon all leaders of the world to be peace advocates not war mongers, to uphold justice and not act as human rights violators.

To reach Global Peace requires building the blocks of total human security that is anchored on the basic rights and freedoms of individuals and states. Peace is when life and human dignity is respected.

But people should not wait for peace to take place because peace, although universal in meaning, is neither an offering nor a gift.

Peace is attainable when people FIGHT for it. Peace is realizable when people are empowered and the very iniquitous structures, impositions, and aggressions that enslave and oppress people and divide nations into rich and poor are ended.

Global peace is when people, regardless of race, religion, and politics commune and act together in solidarity and as global citizens. Peace is realized when peace treaties are forged to mean not only the cessation of wars but more so to effectively and comprehensively address the roots of wars toward a just and lasting peace.

As global citizens, MHC calls upon you to support millions of migrants around the globe as we advocate policies promoting racial harmony, job security, and people-centered immigration policies. We call for one America, one world, one family under God.



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