

THE “HUMAN RIGHT” TO PEACE & INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE

DECEMBER 10
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY



December 10th is United Nations “Human Rights Day” commemorating the date in 1948 when the evolutionary **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** was adopted by the General Assembly (GA) in response to the barbarous acts experienced by the peoples of the world during World War 2. For more information: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day> .

Surprisingly, PEACE was not listed among its original thirty human rights articles! In my early 2006 UN NGO work, I learned about that stunning omission through an international civil society alliance seeking to correct this flaw at the UN . The Spanish Society for Advancement of Human Rights Law was promoting its LUARCA DECLARATION for civil society to declare Peace a Human Right. This was controversial at the UN as it might legally make waging war harder. Peace as a Human Right is important for it gives purpose to our UN NGO work building the Culture of Peace via Departments, Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace [I4P] worldwide.

Canadian diplomat, Douglas Roche, who in 2003 wrote the seminal book **The Human Right to Peace**, was a leader in this alliance. He said: “*The right to peace is unique. It is the major precondition for all human rights, transcending all other rights, enabling their exercise and offering the innovation needed to lift up society and allow it to achieve its full potential in an interconnected world. Indeed, without basic security of person, other human rights are but an illusion.*” He further wrote that UN documents “*affirm the right of states to peace **through a “peace system”** with the primary goal being the preservation of peace and a respect for human rights as essential to the development of friendly relations among nations. A “peace system”* such as a Department, Ministry or other national or international Infrastructure for Peace.

According to *The Right to Peace Foundation*, “**the universal Right to Peace is the right of individuals and communities to live free from the intentional use of physical force or power (threatened or actual) that either results in (or has a likelihood of resulting) in psychological harm, mal-development, deprivation, injury or death. The nature of violent acts can be psychological, physical, sexual, involving deprivation or neglect.**” Given this definition and today’s ever-escalating culture of violence which thwarts development in larger freedom, humanity still has much more work to do to realize this basic right. Which is why the UN must lead efforts globally to establish Ministries, Departments and other I4P worldwide.

There was an evolutionary leap in consciousness at the UN in the last 30 years when the right to peace finally became recognized and proclaimed as being self-evident. In 1978 it began to take shape in a formal way when the GA adopted the **Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace**. Then in 1984 they passed a more definitive **Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace** (resolution 39/11) solemnly proclaiming the peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace. Its article 4 *“appeals to all states and international organizations to do their utmost to assist in implementing the rights of peoples to peace through the adoption of appropriate measures at both the national and international level.”* This was the first UN mandate that justifies and gives credence to the value of our Culture of Peace and I4P work.

Early in the new millennium, the international civil society Luarca Declaration alliance petitioning did much to raise this issue to prominence at the UN. In 2014 the UN chose RIGHT TO PEACE for the International Day of Peace theme. Then on 19 December 2016, the **Declaration on the Right to Peace** was ratified by the GA in a majority vote by its Member States. *This Declaration will be remembered in UN history for being the first peace Declaration adopted by the GA in this new millennium. Article 1 states that “Everyone has the right to enjoy peace such that all human rights are promoted and protected and development is fully realized.”*

This was a critical milestone but realizing its goals will require global transformation towards the Culture of Peace per implementation of the **UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace** (A/RES/53/243). To assist in this implementation, the Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP) advocates for governmental Departments, Ministries and other Infrastructures for Peace to build the Culture of Peace -- **as a means to enable the Human Right to Peace. Hence, a next step in peace consciousness evolution at the UN lies in GA passage of a resolution urging all Member States to establish Departments, Ministries and other Infrastructures for Peace worldwide.**

Now is the time to go from ratification to realization through Culture of Peace Programme of Action implementation. This calls for lawyers who actively specialize in the Human Right to Peace. For in a real Culture of Peace -- humanity would live safe, secure, civilized lives beyond war and the unenlightened resolution of conflict through violence. Throughout history humanity has mistakenly believed that *peace comes through strength*, no matter how many wars have been fought that prove otherwise. In fact, the opposite has proven true -- **strength comes through peace -- the old Gandhi adage “there is no way to peace, peace is the way.”** Humanity and planet earth now live in a volatile culture of violence at all levels that impedes civil society advancement into the Culture of Peace. *An evidence-based way to accelerate building the Culture of Peace – **TO FULFILL HUMANITY’S RIGHT TO PEACE** -- is thus to establish Governmental Departments, Ministries and other Infrastructures for Peace worldwide.*

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