

## **PEACE ARTICLES**

**Author :** [Charles Mercieca, Ph.D.](#)

**Audience :** Public

**Published Date:** 2008/11/14

1)

***By Charles Mercieca, Ph.D.  
President, IAEWP***

The **18th IAEWP World Congress** took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, October 29-31, 2008. It was attended by educators from across the very continent: North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. Needless to say, this well organized peace event proved that people from every walk of life and profession, as well as from every culture and religious orientation can live together in perfect harmony and peace.

### **Discussed Themes**

Among some of the major themes discussed at this peace event were: The Crime of War in Iraq, Peace Education that focused on medicine and tonic for non violence, Culture of Peace and Cost of War, Pathways to World Peace, Importance of an Inter-Connected World, Islam as Recipe for Peace, Harmonious Education and Global Peace, Bad Governance and War in African Countries, in addition to other topics that are constructive and vital to human life. Some felt that their life would never be the same as a result of this great event.

Additional topics included: Peace in the Middle East, Cuba and World Peace, Hindu Contributions to World Peace, Role of Peace Volunteers in Building a Democratic Society, and Ethnic Relations leading to World Peace in Malaysia as well as Tolerance and Compassion in Building a more Constructive and Progressive World Community. This world peace event had the full support and participation of a number of Malaysian government officials most of whom sent highly encouraging messages to all participants.

The major theme of the world peace event was: "Education for Peace: The Best Investment for Future Generations." Throughout this entire ethnic congress, education has been directed to the full development of the human character and personality as well as the strengthening of respect for human rights and basic freedoms. Such topics have stimulated numerous discussions that were of great benefit to every single participant. The proceedings of this inspiring event would be very suitable for a course in peace education studies and programs.

Every presentation was followed by extensive discussions. Some viewed the importance for the United Nations to return to the original purpose, namely, to become once more a federation of nations rather than of governments. Also, in promoting peace we need to remember that the governments are the servants of the people and not the other way round. Unfortunately, a substantial number of governments today do not even tend to listen to what their people have to say. After all, we need to keep in mind that the people are the backbone of the nation.

## **People's Right for Peace**

Like former U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower said to the U.S. Congress in his farewell address: "Remember that all people of all nations want peace, only their government wants war." This means that the governments have a sacrosanct duty to provide all means towards the eventual achievement of such an end. To do otherwise would be a betrayal of the people they claim to serve and protect. This is not something to be taken lightly since the achievement and preservation of peace is a moral and sacrosanct obligation of every government.

It was figured out that if 50% of the money put on weapons and wars were to be put on positive and constructive purposes many world problems would be solved over night. In fact, many believed that wars should by all means be criminalized and that those who promote wars should be viewed as criminals. All nations have the obligation to safeguard the environment from air and water pollution. This way numerous diseases could be eliminated in the best interest of everyone involved and concerned.

An international program of disarmament and arms control is a sine qua non condition for the promotion and achievement of world peace. This would also include the abolition of nuclear weapons and landmines. We need to keep in mind that a strong nation is not measured by the amount of weapons and military equipment it may reveal to possess but by the health of the people and their education. It is measured by the quality of life provided to every single citizen without exception.

All human beings have certain basic and indispensable rights which each government should provide by all means. Among such human rights we find free health care and education as well as the provision of adequate home facilities for those who are homeless. In addition, every government has a moral obligation to establish a permanent peace budget to facilitate the peace-work of thousands of humanitarian agencies. Such a budget should match that of the military and even exceed it. Let us keep in mind that in peace everyone is a winner while in war everyone is a loser.

The present role of the military should be changed from one of destruction into one of construction, from one that instigates wars to one that preserves peace. We need always to keep in mind that violence breeds violence and more violence breeds more violence. This explains the traditional saying that what goes around comes around. We should never do to others what we do not want others to do to ourselves.

## **Education Programs and Studies**

The Malaysian Peace Congress participants stressed the importance for schools around the world to develop peace education programs and studies. Such programs should focus on peace and reconciliation among all people without exception. The concern of all of us should focus on the dire vital needs of peace everywhere. The establishment of a peace philosophy should become an integral part of every school curriculum.

Fortunately, we are already equipped with several websites on peace and harmony, international good relations, along with peace philosophy and ideology. We need to capitalize on such facilities that we already have at our disposal and keep on moving forward. Some peace organizations, like the Lama Gangchen Peace Foundation, have already taken gigantic steps in this direction in a number of countries.

During the Malaysian World Peace Congress, October 30 was established as a day of peace. This would give us the opportunity to concentrate on war and violence and on how to avoid them, to pray and meditate on the topic of peace, to send friends messages of peace and love, and to find ways that would lead to our forgiveness of others.

Regardless of anything, wars remain negative by their very nature as revealed in their destruction of nations and killing of innocent people. The participants of this peace event felt grateful to the members of the IAEWP Executive Committee in Malaysia, the Grandmasters of the International Martial Arts Festival that became an integral part of this event, and all government officials who really contributed to the success of this World Peace Congress.

<http://iaewp.org/modules/AMS/article.php?storyid=9>