1. Teaching for International Understanding, Learning for Peaceful Futures

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Building a Culture of Peace

In 2000, innumerable peoples and projects worldwide commemorated the United Nations International Year for a Culture of Peace. In past decades, partly due to the anti-war movements such as the campaign against the Vietnam War and the nuclear arms race, peace has tended, in popular thinking, to signify the absence or prevention of war. In this Declaration of the International Year for a Culture of Peace, the United Nations is reminding the world community not only of the scourge of wars and other manifestations of direct physical violence. The UN is also calling on humanity to overcome violence in all its multiple physical and non-physical forms and levels. As UNESCO has emphasized in its pioneering transdisciplinary programme established in 1992,

a culture of peace is a growing body of shared values, attitudes, behaviors and ways of life based on non-violence and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, on understanding, tolerance and solidarity, on the sharing and free flow of information and on the full participation and empowerment of women. While it does not deny the conflicts that arise from diversity, it demands non-violent solutions and promotes the transformation of violent competition into co-operation for shared goals. It is both a vision and a process, a vast project, multi-dimensional and global, which is linked to the development of positive alternatives to the functions previously served by war and militarism.

Over the next ten years, undoubtedly there will be similar initiatives under the auspices of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and
Nonviolence for the Children of the World. Both UN Declarations clearly signal a historic appeal by and for all nations and peoples to transcend violence and the destructive conflicts of the past centuries, which have caused tremendous suffering and pain. But most importantly, these Declarations are an affirmation and recognition of the innumerable individual or organizational efforts and movements worldwide that have struggled over many decades to build a culture of peace. Amidst the din of violence in all its forms, the Declarations echo a global yearning for a non-violent, just, sustainable and compassionate world.

Just as the idea of a culture of peace is complex and multidimensional, so too must be the necessary task of education for building a culture of peace. Here, we need to acknowledge the complex and multiple meanings, goals and purposes of peace education that are rooted in various sources of inspiration, role-models and practices located in specific historical, social, cultural, economic and political contexts. Thus, a major strand has as its focus the long-standing albeit increasingly destructive problem of militarization. The various peace, or more specifically, disarmament movements across continents seek to build a world free from arms and where nations or groups can learn to live together according to values and principles of nonviolence. Often, such movements can draw on local or indigenous belief or values systems (faith, spirituality) for guidance and inspiration.

Another long-standing expression of educating and acting for a more peaceful planet is anchored in the concept of human rights. Although it faces continual elaboration, a significant theory-practice gap and frequent challenge as to its validity, the universality of human rights received a strong affirmation at the 1993 Vienna world conference. While the Declaration noted the need to take into account specific social and cultural conditions, it is understood that cultural or social practices cannot justify human rights violations. Peace surely also means that the rights, dignities and freedoms inherent in all human beings be respected and promoted.

A third substantive inspiration for peace education has emerged from the global struggles for peoples in both South and North against structural violence or the violence caused by social and economic injustices. Unless the paradigm of development ensures that peoples basic needs and quality of life are met under conditions of justice, equity, participation and
sustainability, then a vast majority of human beings will remain marginalized and continue to live a non-peaceful existence. As is often said, peace is not the mere absence of war or, there can be no peace without justice. But at the same time, development educators clearly see the negative impact of militarization on authentic human development.

A fourth general source for peace education theory and practice is found in the broadly labeled field of international education or education for international understanding, although a more focused term could be intercultural education. Through the work of United Nations and other educational and professional agencies, the goal of building more peaceful societies and international/ global order is in part met by improving understanding and respect between and among diverse cultural/ethnic groups or nations. Eliminating racial, ethnic and cultural discrimination and intolerance constitute some essential bases for peaceful and harmonious relationships between peoples and nations.

More recently, the vigorous environmental movement since the 70s has challenged all of humanity to live more peacefully with our natural environment. Personal and social practices that inflict ecological destruction can only undermine human survival in the present and future generations. Indeed, conflicts arising out of the competitive control, use, and distribution of environmental resources portend a new wave of peacelessness in today’s world ruled by the logic of growth and globalized competition.

Each of these fields or movements dedicated to building more peaceful futures for humanity and mother earth inevitably have their own dynamics and autonomy in terms of theory and practice, including an educational dimension (viz. disarmament education, education for nonviolence, human rights education, development education or education for social justice, education for international understanding, intercultural education, non-racist education, environmental education or education for sustainable development, etc). Each clearly has contributed to the overall vision and mission of educating for building a culture of peace. However, over time, there is also increasing recognition and consensus-building on the value of sharing ideas and strategies, especially given the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of problems and issues of violence, conflicts and peacelessness. Thus, educating for saving the environment necessarily raises problems of development which not only unsustainably exploits natural
resources but also magnifies structural violence against vulnerable peoples, notably, the poor, women, children and indigenous peoples. Education for disarmament integrally overlaps with human rights education as the rights of diverse groups are usually violated in militarized contexts, not least civilians caught in the middle of armed conflicts or peoples living under repressive regimes. Education against discrimination of all forms needs to understand the multiple sources of discrimination in terms of societal or even international injustices, human rights exclusions (e.g., women, indigenous peoples, and ethnic minorities), and modes of development displacements.

In sum, it is advocated here that a holistic paradigm of education for international understanding and for peace education is meaningfully built on the insights, practices and role-models that can be drawn from the diverse and increasingly convergent or at least consensus-building fields or movements of local, national and global transformation. Today, when networks or communities of peace educators gather whether at the grassroots or in international forums, there is a healthy dialogue and openness to an ever spiraling and complex framework of peace education. A conception of the goals and purposes of peace education that is underpinned by the preferential option of unity in diversity may therefore be stated as follows;

Recognizing the interrelatedness, interconnectedness and indivisibility of a multidimensional concept of peace, peace education, through appropriate educational processes, seeks to:

- promote a critical understanding of the root causes of conflicts, violence and peacelessness in the world across the full diversity of issues and problems and from macro (national, regional, international, global) to micro (local, interpersonal, personal) levels of life; and
- develop simultaneously an empowered commitment to values, attitudes and skills for translating that understanding into individual and societal action to transform selves, families, communities, institutions, nations and world from a culture of war, violence and peacelessness to a culture of peace and active nonviolence.
Education for Peaceful Futures: An Eightfold Path

As reflected in the exemplars I highlighted at the outset, education for peaceful futures towards building a culture of peace is slowly being practiced in all contexts and levels of life. It is just as relevant and essential in formal classrooms of basic level schools and tertiary or higher institutions of learning, as in nonformal or community contexts. Indeed, both contexts and modes of education for compassionate citizenship need to be seen as complementary and mutually reinforcing. Worldwide, adults have expressed an urgent wish for the children to form values at the earliest age and grow up to be adults oriented towards a culture of peace. We should not, however, overlook the realities that it is today adults (the parents and elders of our youth) who are planning and implementing policies, which often lay the seeds of conflicts, violence and peacelessness. Adult citizens, after all, have often been socialized into the values and habits of the mainstream paradigm of citizenship. Hence, they too need to experience a process of critical awareness and empowerment so that alternative peaceful futures may find a place in their consciousness. With deep respect for all the faiths and spiritualities represented in this gathering, may I borrow a metaphor from Buddhist cosmology to illuminate the key themes of education for compassionate citizenship, namely the eightfold path.

- One: Dismantling the Culture of War

In spite of the post-Cold War era, where a peace dividend was supposedly to be reaped from the reduction of superpower tensions and arms race, tragic symptoms of a culture of war continue to bring untold suffering, hardships, pain and death. Through the 90s, five million people killed and over 50 million refugees tell a brutal tale of armed conflicts, increasingly internally based. Slowly, some societies are still painfully recovering from the ravages of internal wars and armed conflicts resolved through negotiation and political settlement, although the troubled Middle East peace process illustrates the challenges of implementing peace accords. American plans for a nuclear missile defence shield are heightening fears of a renewed arms race, while horizontal proliferation of weaponry is a growing problem.

Clearly, in the face of these ongoing manifestations of a culture of war, there continues to be a great need for citizenship education that focuses on nonviolent resolution of armed conflicts and disputes. While governments and
combatant parties have shown some willingness to negotiate peace settlements to end wars and armed conflicts, the increasing role of citizen peacemakers in the peaceful resolution and transformation of conflicts needs to be acknowledged as inspiring role-models in peace education. Whether it be the Buddhist-inspired 1993 Walk for Peace and Reconciliation in Cambodia to empower Cambodians to work towards a peaceful post-civil war future; or the Coalition for Peace and other Philippines peacebuilding networks that worked with grassroots peoples' initiatives in creating peace zones; or the inter-communal dialogues in Israel and Northern Ireland, all these exemplify that critical education and empowerment of ordinary citizens to participate in the peace-building process has been vital in the steps towards building nonviolent societies.

As armed conflicts and wars are being waged, and even after cessation of hostilities, there is little doubt those most severely affected are the children, innocently caught not only in the crossfire but also increasingly recruited as child soldiers. A post-armed conflict challenge for peace education is therefore not just the physical rehabilitation of traumatized and scarred children but also their psychological and emotional healing. In war-torn countries, NGOs and relief agencies are gently helping children to heal and to regain trust and faith in a culture of peace.

A specific dimension of such disarmament education and advocacy lies in the campaign to abolish the arms trade that fuels the engines of wars while diverting scarce national resources into weapons of death rather than meeting basic human needs. NGO-led campaigns have educated and mobilized citizens in some arms-producing societies to demand policies from their governments and industries for reducing and eliminating the sale of weapons across borders. Rather than reinforce a culture of death and violence, countries should be investing in life and nonviolence (e.g., conversion of arms industries to civilian production and other arms reduction treaties)

The culture of war persists not only in such macro contexts, but also in the more micro spheres of life in all societies. Domestic violence and physically harmful practices at interpersonal, familial, institutional and community levels have also been challenged by nonformal and formal educational campaigns and programs, such as the campaign to stop the proliferation of gun ownership and a deepening vigilante mentality in many North societies. The role of media, cyberspace, and other cultural and social agencies (e.g., entertainment and
schooling) and even the toy and video game industry likewise are being
demystified by peace educators for their explicit or indirect support of a culture
of war and physical violence. Through public and school-based critical literacy,
adults and children are empowered not to consume media violence or war toys
or to be trapped by sites of violence on the Internet. Government and private
sectors are also being lobbied to enforce or adopt relevant policies and
regulations.

In many formal schooling systems, especially in North but also increasingly
in South contexts, the integration of nonviolence principles in policies, programs,
curricula and teaching-learning environments has expanded in recent decades.
Episodes of tragic school shootings in the U.S.A. as in the Columbine massacre
have fuelled anxieties and pressures for action. Responding to heightened
concerns over a culture of violence (e.g., bullying, assaults, corporal punishment,
gang fighting, teacher victimization, etc.), these programs essentially promote
values and practices of conflict resolution and violence-prevention. Examples are
educating students in peer mediation and conflict resolution interventions;
nonviolent school discipline/behaviour codes and pedagogical policies;
collaboration between schools and external agencies (e.g., police, justice, legal
and social services); and teacher intervention in domestic violence against
children. Increasing research evidence shows that conflict resolution education is
helping to create safer and more caring schools.

**Two: Living with Justice and Compassion**

Since the beginning of the modern era, propelled by the industrial,
technological and lately the information revolution, the dominant voices about
human progress have envisioned and implemented the concept of development
in very specific ways. This modernization paradigm of development embraces
the faith that economic growth especially via the free-market system is central
to national and international development, producing goods and services that
will trickle down to all citizens. The primary goal of development is for all
societies to catch up and become like the advanced industrialized
mass-consumerist nations of the North. South societies fail to develop largely
due to internal deficiencies such as the lack of capital, thriving free markets,
modern infrastructures, advanced technologies, expertise, educated and skilled
human resources, and even modern economic/political values. Consequently, the
North can help the South overcome these deficiencies through aid, trade and
investments, which collectively integrate the South in the growth-centred global economy, marketplace and political order. In recent years, these modernization themes have been boosted even more vigorously by the forces of globalization and liberalization controlled by the powerful nation-states, transnational corporations and international agencies or regimes (e.g., IMF, World Bank, GATT/World Trade Organization, APEC, and NAFTA).

Yet, after several decades of development under the aegis of the modernization paradigm, the realities of the heralded progress raise serious questions about theory and practice. As the countless voices of ordinary peoples in marginalized contexts have passionately revealed that modernization and globalization have accentuated structural violence against the poor majorities. A number of modernization successes, especially the NICs (Newly Industrializing Countries) may be cited, and in some countries some citizens have gained jobs and GNP per capita has increased. But within most societies, the income-wealth gaps have worsened between the elites and the poor, including farmers, fisherfolk, factory workers, child labourers, and indigenous peoples. Structural injustices and economic exploitation have combined with undemocratic and elite-controlled political systems to undermine entitlements and opportunities for the majorities to meet even their basic needs, resulting in needless hunger, ill-health, low life expectancy, homelessness, landlessness, unemployment or under-employment, oppressive labour conditions and illiteracy. These internal inequities within the South (and increasingly in the North as well) are interconnected simultaneously with international and global structures of injustices whereby the North disproportionately benefits from regimes of trade, investment and even aid. A plethora of global agencies (especially the IMF and World Bank system, transnational corporations and trading/financial regimes) nowadays support North-South inequities with policies of structural adjustment, inequitable trading/financial relationships and the crippling debt trap.

Confronted with these realities of a structurally violent paradigm of development, ordinary peoples, NGOs, peoples’ organizations, social institutions (e.g., religious and education), global networks of advocates and some critical political and governmental representatives have been mobilizing and implementing alternative thinking and strategies for a development paradigm with the acronym PEACE: participatory, equitable, appropriate (in values and technology), critically empowering and ecologically sustainable. Education for more peaceful development that considers the basic needs of all citizens and
rethinks the goals of high consumerist, technologically advanced progress is clearly a major pillar of education for compassionate citizenship. In many indebted South countries, Freedom from Debt NGOs have helped to raise the consciousness of marginalized peoples to their nations' entrapment in the global debt machinery, and to lobby for debt-cancellation or at least debt-capping. The worldwide Jubilee campaign that united South and North networks demonstrated the energizing spirit of joining minds and hearts in dismantling the debt trap.

In many North societies, a whole spectrum of aid and development NGOs have grown over the decades to promote links of solidarity with South peoples, especially NGOs and POs engaged in grassroots peace-oriented development. These NGOs and networks are advocating for alternative aid, trade and other foreign policies of their Governments that would reverse North-South inequities. The growing movements for global justice are vigorously challenging global organizations and globalization forces and regimes (e.g., IMF, TNCs, WTO, free trade blocs or agreements) that further marginalize poor and vulnerable majorities. The development/global education being undertaken by such North-based NGOs raises critical consciousness of North peoples about their responsibilities and accountabilities for world poverty and underdevelopment, including rethinking unsustainable consumerist lifestyles. Citizen campaigns (e.g., consumer boycotts and ethical investment) have also helped to pressure corporations to practice greater social responsibility, while fair trade has given North citizens options to consume South products produced under conditions of human rights, ecological sustainability, and equity.

But the question of development in education for compassionate citizenship cannot be focused only on the South. For citizens of the North, affluence and economic growth have not necessarily benefited all sectors of society. In the rush of neo-liberal economic and globalization policies, we are witnessing mounting signs of poverty, homelessness, and rich-poor gaps, even in countries like Canada which has been ranked first in the UN Human Development Index for successive years. Hence, citizens also need education to understand how elite-centred social and economic policies can also cause greater social tensions and conflicts within their own backyards.

In formal educational systems worldwide, especially in North contexts, programs and projects have infused curricula and pedagogies with structural violence issues and problems aimed to empower teachers and learners to
participate in North-South solidarity activities for building a just and sustainable world system. In Canada, the teacher initiated Global Education Projects through the 90s provided in-service education and curriculum resources for thousands of teachers to integrate global perspectives into their classrooms. As I earlier recounted, one Canadian high-school student, Craig Keilburger, has embarked on a student-centred awareness and action project to advocate for governmental, corporate and consumer policies which would overcome the exploitative conditions of millions of child labourers.

Three: Lighting the Candles of Dignity

The enormous challenges of promoting and respecting human rights can be likened to trying to keep alight candles in the midst of a storm, where the candles refer to the inherent dignities that all human beings deserve in the spirit of the Universal Declaration and successive covenants, conventions and charters. However, the power entrenched in structures of state, private interests, socio-cultural systems and global agencies still blow strong winds trying to snuff out the light of human rights and dignities. The risk-taking and dedicated work of human rights campaigners to educate and mobilize citizens and institutions to resist violations and assert their rights in all spheres and levels of life is certainly a vital dimension of education for critical citizenship. As ordinary peoples experience critical literacy and empower themselves to participate actively in building a strong civil society to which agencies of state and private power must be accountable, so will their human rights be better protected and promoted. A proper recognition and affirmation of the role of human rights education in peace building needs, however, to acknowledge the evolving complexity and maturity in its theory and practice.

Key themes in this emergent global consensus include the need to: uphold the indivisibility and inter-relatedness of all rights, thus avoiding earlier emphases on individual civil and political rights to the neglect of social, economic, cultural, group, peoples and solidarity rights; move beyond legal or juridical dimensions of human rights teaching; legitimize the role of NGOs and POs in promoting human rights; accord equitable space to South interpretations and voices albeit within a universalist consensus; address root causes rather than symptoms of human rights violations; and educate for human responsibilities as much as rights.

The following exemplars illustrate such current themes in human rights
education as well as how educating for human rights is also educating for compassionate citizenship. In Bicol, one of the poorest regions of the Philippines, a women-centred NGO initiated project infused issues of women’s human rights into income-generating activities, reproductive health education and services, and their domestic empowerment vis-a-vis traditional male-dominant gender roles and relationships. As the women’s economic independence and health/reproductive literacy improved, they also developed assertiveness in building more equitable, less sexist domestic relationships in nonviolent ways. Similar experiences have been found among women’s education and empowerment projects or programs in other South countries where the promotion of women’s human rights has created more just, sustainable and gender-equitable development environments so fundamental to personal and societal peace.

In Asia, Latin America, Africa and increasingly in North contexts, the expanding world of child labourers and the street-children phenomenon have given impetus to the implementation of the historic Convention on the Rights of the Child. NGOs have engaged in critical education and empowerment of child workers themselves, as well as of adult citizens including parents and policy makers, to defend children against exploitation and violence (economic, sexual, cultural, social, domestic). It is indeed inspiring and hopeful to see street-children acquiring alternative economic and social resources, or bonded child labourers organizing to assert their rights and freedoms.

In formal educational institutions, advocacy for integrating human rights education into teaching and learning has borne fruit, not only in North states where political systems are more disposed to notions of rights and freedoms. No doubt, in some contexts, the ongoing debate over universalism versus cultural relativism poses a barrier for such formal programs given the need for official endorsement. Nevertheless, where possible, both formal and nonformal NGO-based educators have been able to justify spaces in various curricula for promoting student awareness of local, national and global realities of human rights, and catalyzing empowered action to protect and respect human rights in their societies or abroad. But the formation of compassionate citizens well-versed and committed to promoting human rights clearly also needs consistent school cultures and classroom spaces. If their everyday experiences in schools do not uphold the human rights principles they are being educated in, the dissonance will likely pose obstacles for building commitment.
■ Four: Active Harmony among Cultures

Conflicts between peoples of different cultures, and ethnic/racial identities, while not new in human history, are posing major problems of peacelessness and violence in the context of a militarized and structurally violent world. Often, contestation for resources and territories and for redressing historical injustices are the underlying causes of such conflicts rather than cultural difference per se. As earlier noted, modernization and globalization is further marginalizing indigenous or aboriginal peoples who are portrayed as standing in the way of progress led by activities like logging, mining, and agribusiness. Education for compassionate citizenship hence needs to grapple with the challenge of promoting cultural solidarity or what a Filipino-based inter-faith educator and activist has called active harmony. Through critical dialogue and collaborative activities, conflicting or divided cultural/ethnic/racial groups, communities, and nations are able to understand the root causes of their divisions, cultivate respect for each others beliefs and traditions, and seek reconciliation or healing of differences. In facilitating such intercultural respect and ties of solidarity, education for compassionate citizenship contributes to a culture of nonviolence as it prevents cultural conflicts from escalating into violent outcomes.

As the following exemplars illustrate, peace education to promote active harmony among cultures is as much needed in North as in South contexts. In many North multicultural societies, formal school curricula and institutional environments have been integrating principles, values, and strategies of intercultural or multicultural education. Such programs as teaching a more inclusive perspective of countries and world history, consciousness raising on cultural differences and the need for equitable respect and non-discrimination, and skills training to reconcile existing intercultural conflicts nonviolently, demonstrate that a peaceful world is not feasible without the ability and willingness of all groups to live nonviolently in unity amidst diversity. Peace educators however are also critical of versions of multicultural education that merely celebrate cultural differences in superficial ways without promoting critical understanding of and solidarity in resolving root causes of intercultural disharmony (e.g., racism, discrimination, structural injustices, historical oppression). In this regard, First Nations or aboriginal education movements also would not consider intercultural education valid if it does not promote
their identity and wisdom traditions, so crucial to their cultural survival in a world pushed by the forces of global cultural homogenization.

There is also the long-standing historical question that weighs heavily on the relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in societies like Australia and Canada. Unless indigenous peoples’ claims to ancestral lands and economic compensation, as well as rights to autonomy or self-determination are addressed, citizenship education and formation in our societies will be deficient. In this regard, it is hopeful to learn about the concerted reconciliation movement underway in Australia. Such efforts will help build a more holistic framework for compassionate citizenship, in part parallel to the new South Africa’s experiment in truth and reconciliation.

Increasingly, representatives of diverse faiths, religions and spiritual traditions are meeting to promote inter-faith, inter-religious or ecumenical dialogue deemed crucial to developing greater active harmony of peoples within and across societies. Thus in the Philippines, various NGOs and religious leaders have promoted peace education through dialogue between Muslims and Christians, as a way to complement ongoing peace building processes. While the Muslim-Christian conflicts stem more from economic, political and social causes of territorial conquest and structural violence, there is also today a need to build harmony from a faith perspective, so that religious beliefs do not become a motivating force for further violent divisions. Similar principles of peace education through intercultural harmony are also evident in the Arab-Jewish conflict in the Middle East and the long-standing conflict in Northern Ireland. Likewise, on a global level the World Conference on Religions and Peace and the Parliament on the World’s Religions provide an educational and empowering forum for diverse faith leaders and followers to work for nonviolent and just interfaith and intercultural relationships. Education for compassionate citizenship that builds intercultural harmony also acknowledges the vital role of indigenous or traditional social-cultural ways of resolving conflicts.

Last but not least, compassionate citizens are very mindful of the accelerating forces of cultural homogenization fueled by globalization from above. It is true that a shrinking global village, due to the technological revolution, can facilitate closer and faster contacts between societies and cultures. This, in turn, can foster greater openness and sharing across borders. However, simultaneously, the borderless world as well as the powerful forces
exerted by corporate-controlled exchanges, has also led to dominant cultural systems overpowering and assimilating other cultures. Peaceful citizens should play a critical role not only in cultural survival, but also in promoting equitable sharing of wisdoms and values across civilizations, societies and regions.

- **Five: Caring for the Seven Generations**

Even before the 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development, the impact of the environmental movement on individual citizens, institutions and governments was clearly noticeable. Mobilized by grassroots initiatives as in the famous Chipko campaign among tribal Indians to save their forests and hence their social, economic and cultural survival, or the highly publicized strategies of Greenpeace and other global environmental NGOs against environmental destruction (e.g., nuclear testing, deforestation, toxic waste dumping, and reduction of biodiversity), citizens in virtually all regions and countries have been empowered to speak out and act to live in peace with mother earth. Many governments, states and even corporations are also adding their voices on behalf of environmental protection in response to the deepening problems of global warming, ozone layer destruction, and other symptoms of the ecological crisis. Yet, as the Rio Conference outcomes and the 1997 Earth Summit indicated, determined action by governments and private sector agencies to promote ecologically sustainable development remain limited by the overriding principles of growth-centred globalization. Just a few days ago, the decision of the Bush administration to withdraw from the Kyoto accord on global warming spells great difficulty ahead in unified global action on such a critical issue with grave impact on billions of people worldwide.

From the perspective of education for peaceful futures, educating for saving the environment and for sustainable development needs therefore to go beyond individual and state action to recycle, limit greenhouse gases emission, efficient energy use, or save species from extinction. Rather, as the wisdom of indigenous people worldwide advises, we need to live in ways that care for the seven generations. Unless human beings relate to the natural environment according to the ethic of inter-generational responsibility, future generations will not be able to survive. Peace-oriented environmental education, hence, raises basic questions of over-materialist lifestyles and consumerist ideology propagated by modernization and globalization. Secondly, it must talk about green justice, so those environmentalist agendas simultaneously enable peoples to meet their
basic needs and rights free from structural violence. Likewise, North-South relationships must also be just so that earthly resources can be sustainably used for improving the quality of life for all peoples rather than the quality of life of a few.

As the following exemplars demonstrate, environmental education and action can decisively contribute to a culture of peace. In many African countries, women in particular who have borne the brunt of environmental degradation, have been empowered through critical education and organizing by NGOs and POs to save their local environment such as planting green belts in order to reverse ecological destruction and sustainably meet the basic needs of their families and communities. Similar stories of how grassroots centred education and empowerment have drawn on women’s indigenous resources and wisdom to link environment with just development as well as women’s human rights abound in all South regions. Parallel tales of peace-oriented environmental education and action can be told by the followers of ecological martyr Chico Mendes and the indigenous people’s of the Amazon forests, the Chipko-inspired movements in India, social Buddhist-led campaigns in Sri Lanka and Thailand, the severely repressed Ogoni peoples struggles for protection and compensation from the oil TNCs in Nigeria, and the struggles of the First Nations and aboriginal peoples in the North context to save their ancestral domains.

In most North and increasingly South formal educational systems, environmental education has become a regular theme in school curricula and pedagogy. While initial emphasis has been placed on educating children to be personally and socially green and for schools to be environmentally friendly (e.g. recycle, reuse, reduce, save animal and plant species), there is a recognition that a holistic perspective to environmental education must dig deep into the roots of the crisis. Hence, personal earth caring must integrate principles of structural justice and rights between groups and nations, and challenge unlimited growth and consumerism.

**Sixth: Renewing Roots of Inner Peace**

While the multiple dimensions of educating for peace explored thus far focuses on visible relationships and structures of human life, there is a growing consensus that the inner dimensions and sources of peaceful values and practices should not be ignored. In cultivating inner peace, peoples from diverse traditions, faiths and cultures are better prepared ethically, emotionally and
spiritually to work for outer or societal peace. There is also a basic assumption here that core values and root principles of diverse cultures and/or faiths provide guidance and inspiration for developing a culture of inner peace. As reflected in the holy texts, doctrines, oral wisdom and body of practices across many faiths including indigenous spiritualities and new age conceptions, it is through a constant cultivation and renewal of such roots of inner peace that individuals can grow spiritually.

It is important however to raise concerns over some popular models of education for inner or personal peace which can limit individual’s or group’s to be primarily content with their progress in attaining personal peace. Whether through praying, meditating or other faith or spirituality activities, the yardstick of this paradigm of peace education is an individuals or groups feeling of having attained greater personal peace, and of closer communion with ones creator or god. But from a holistic peace education framework, is it meaningful or authentic to feel inner peace unconcerned with the multifold problems of outer peacelessness and violence? Would this not then reduce inner peace to a self-centred over-individualistic satisfaction, instead of an inner peace that interacts dialogically with an aspiration to work simultaneously for societal and global peace. For instance, a sense of inner peace may motivate individuals in advantaged socio-economic positions to feel pity for the marginalized and to engage in acts of pity (e.g., charity). But will this help to dismantle structures of violence and injustice? Education that renews the roots of inner peace, while indeed essential, hence needs to integrally link with empowerment for structural transformation. Education for peaceful futures does promote inner peace but also reminds learners that the inner and the personal is infused with the social and structural, and vice versa so that social action for peace draws deeply on inner peace values and spiritualities. As the Buddhist teacher Thich Nat Hanh aptly reminds us, we are not just being; we are inter-being.

- Seven: A holistic vision

Peaceful education for peaceful futures rests centrally on the principle of holism. As in the Buddha’s conception of an eightfold path, all the paths of right thinking, right speech, right concentration, right action and so on, are deeply inter-connected and inter-dependent. A holistic framework of a culture of peace always tries to clarify possible inter-relationships between and among different problems of peacelessness, conflict and violence in terms of root causes
and resolutions. Holism also applies in not isolating various levels and modes of peace education as being more superior or inferior. All modes and levels are equitably valuable (e.g. formal, nonformal, children to adults, social, economic and cultural groups) and most importantly, complement, sustain and support each other. For instance, formal peace education is strengthened by linking students' understanding to concrete realities and practices of peacelessness and peace building in the community and nonformal sectors. Alternatively, nonformal peace education is facilitated if students in schools are empowered to show solidarity for societal transformation, while in the longer term, the present children and youth graduate from formal institutions to assume positions of influence in society with attitudes, knowledge and skills supportive of peace building.

Likewise, peace education needs to be well spread among all sectors and levels of society and the global community (world order) if it is to be holistic in advocacy and transformation. Education for peaceful futures must transcend class, gender and all other dimensions of life ways. Peace education cannot be limited to the very marginalized and oppressed. By reaching out to the non-poor, advantaged, governing and elite sectors of society, it may be possible to develop allies for transformation and reveal points of potential influence.

Another important dimension of holism in a schools context lies in infusing education for international understanding and peaceful futures across all curricular and extra-curricular areas. We need peaceful citizens in science, technology, business, and law as much as in the social sciences and arts.

**Eight: Critical empowerment:**

An eighth path to guide education for peaceful futures calls on all educators to bridge theory and practice, reflection and action, a linkage that is found in all faiths, spiritual belief systems, and critical social theory. In the language of citizenship education, this means the formation of active rather than passive citizens. From the perspective of critical educators like Paulo Freire, it requires that learning becomes empowering rather than leave learners and educators in a state of helplessness. Empowerment, of course, is not something simply given by teacher to learner. Rather it rests on the value and strategy of dialogue. It would be a contradiction if educating for peace becomes an exercise in banking, as teachers assume the role of authoritarian experts and learners become passive imbibers of peace knowledge. A dialogical strategy however
cultivates a more horizontal teacher-learner relationship in which both dialogically educate and learn from each other. The realities and voices of learners yield essential inputs into the learning process, and collaborative analysis between and among teachers and learners create opportunities for critical reflection leading to a self-reliant political position in relation to transformation. Among even peace educators, and peace-builders, the processes of dialogue are crucial to build stronger consensual positions on the whys, whats and hows of transforming towards a culture of peace.

Understandably, creative and participatory teaching-learning strategies have been found to be more effective in dialogue based learning. This mode optimizes cooperative opportunities for learners to first voice their realities, experiences, understandings, biases, commitments, hopes, despairs and dreams, which are then facilitated by the teachers to critically engage with a range of alternative paradigms or perspectives on the issues under consideration. The learning processes thus simultaneously surface personal commitments and state of awareness, while offering possibilities for dialogue within a learning community and critical analysis leading to self-reliant choices about peaceful transformation.

Dialogue also is very necessary in the efforts of peace educators to influence especially official and powerful private agencies and institutions. As experiences in the Philippines and other South or North contexts demonstrate, creating and sustaining dialogue with state, political and bureaucratic representatives is never an easy task. At the global level, similar concerns have been raised about the sincerity of international agencies (e.g. World Bank, IMF) in implementing the outcomes of dialogue between them and NGOs/POs as in the consultative working committees.

Education for critical citizenship also emphasizes the crucial role of values formation through its pedagogical processes. Recognizing that all knowledge is never free of values, the peace educator constantly encourages learners to surface innermost values that shape their understanding of realities and their actions in the world. Clearly, peace education needs to be very explicit about its preferred values, such as compassion, justice, equity, gender-fairness, caring for life, sharing, reconciliation, integrity, hope and active nonviolence. Hope is vital; otherwise we can begin to feel overwhelmed, falling into a sense of helplessness or powerlessness as we confront the massive problems of violence. A strong indicator of peaceful pedagogy is that it stirs hopefulness, a faith that
ordinary peoples can exercise patience, commitment and courage in transforming their realities.

But dialogue per se is also limiting if it stops there. It needs to, as Freire has articulated, promote conscientization or in somewhat simpler terms, critical empowerment. While dialogical, participatory and non-banking pedagogies and methodologies are crucial, they are not sufficient. Thus if peace education is not able or willing to try to move not just minds but also hearts and spirits into personal and social action for peace-building, it will remain largely academic. It may then also be co-optable by forces interested in preserving the status quo. In short, educating for peace and compassionate citizenship is educating for critical empowerment, through which we engage in a personal struggle to develop a critical consciousness that actively seeks to transform the realities of a culture of war and violence into a culture of peace and nonviolence.

While the nonformal community sector is often seen as the natural site for critical empowerment, the formal education institutions should also challenge learners towards transformation. In the Philippines, for example, schools and universities link formal curriculum in peace education to advocacy activities and projects, such as the bury war toys campaign; peace marches and vigils for a culture of peace and for a gunless society; lobbying Congress to pass peace-oriented legislation; declaring schools and neighbouring communities as peace zones; peace fairs and public exhibitions of children painting for peace; petitions to Government in solidarity of grassroots actions for justice and human rights. In North contexts, youth like Craig Keilburger and others have initiated student-run clubs advocating human rights, people-centred development, anti-racism and ecological sustainability. In global education and active citizenship programs, teachers feel empowered to challenge and catalyze but not to indoctrinate students in considering possibilities for action to build possible alternative futures.

**Concluding Thoughts**

In my concluding reflections, I feel it is important to highlight the institutional conditions that will facilitate education for international understanding towards peaceful futures. Apart from the requirement of educating in pedagogically consistent ways, there is of course the basic challenge of educating the citizenship educators/promoters themselves, whether in formal or nonformal contexts. For peace education work in nonformal
environments, there is already an advantage in that grassroots NGO and PO organizers and workers often already have values, skills and critical awareness appropriate for empowering community citizens. As the many exemplars illustrate, critically empowered action for transformation is the hallmark of peace-oriented NGOs and POs. This is not to imply however that all NGO or PO organizers necessarily understand alternative paradigms of development, human rights, intercultural relationships and other culture of peace issues. But the realities of their community-based responsibilities provide a rich and direct source of concerns for the training to proceed in a deep and immediately relevant way. Furthermore, given the specific focus of many current nonformal peace educators (e.g. development, human rights, and disarmament), an essential aspect of their formation will be a need to see the interconnectedness of the multiple dimensions of a holistic peace education framework.

In the case of formal educators, however, the challenges are great in that firstly, those already teaching will need adequate in-service education that challenges and empowers them to rethink established knowledge, understanding, skills, and teaching strategies. At the same time, the new generation of teachers will also need appropriate education to prepare them for the tasks of integrating peace education into their curricula and pedagogies. Worldwide, there is a consensus that rather than confining educating for a culture of peace to a separate subject, the infusion or integration of peaceful perspectives across the whole curriculum (including extracurricular activities, e.g. sports, students clubs) is the preferred strategy. In both cases, there are two vital supportive pillars for such education/training of formal peace educators/promoters to successfully bear fruit: the provision of relevant curriculum and teaching resources (e.g., texts, kits, audiovisuals), and most importantly the understanding and support of school administrators without which peace educators will be constrained, discouraged and as experience shows, even repressed.

Depending on the levels at which the formal peace educators or promoters are working, the requirements for teacher-education will place demands on different agencies. Thus, for school-based teaching, the Colleges and Faculties of Education will need to be committed to integrating peace education into their undergraduate curriculum. At tertiary levels, peace education will need to be infused in graduate studies and research programs, so that future professors or lecturers can integrate culture of peace perspectives into their own teaching. In this regard, tertiary institutions are responsible for producing many of the
highly credentialed citizens likely to play significant leadership and implementation roles in society (including political positions). The constructive role which can be played by encouraging student extra-curriculum activities (e.g. outreach immersion programs among marginalized communities; UNESCO Associated Schools projects; human rights groups, etc.) must also be fostered.

Despite significant obstacles, ordinary peoples everywhere, including educators at all levels and modes, are empowering themselves as active citizens entitled to shape how their communities, societies and even the world order ought to be shaped to promote the rights, freedoms and basic dignities of all living beings in dialogical harmony with planet earth. In April, 1999, I was deeply inspired and renewed by the gathering of over 7000 peace-builders and educators from all corners of the world, meeting under the one roof at the Hague Appeal for Peace a global assembly of unified yet creatively diverse local/global citizens committed to the vision and mission of building local and global cultures of peace. If we are indeed teaching for international understanding, then we surely will be fostering a deep learning for peaceful futures.