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[without reference to a Main Committee (A/53/L.79)]

53/243 A. Declaration on a Culture of Peace

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Charter of the United Nations, including the purposes and principles embodied therein,

Recalling also the Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which states that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed",

Recalling further the Universal Declaration of Human Rights /1 and other relevant international instruments of the United Nations system,

Recognizing that peace not only is the absence of conflict, but also requires a positive, dynamic participatory process where dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation,

Recognizing also that the end of the cold war has widened possibilities for strengthening a culture of peace,

Expressing deep concern about the persistence and proliferation of violence and conflict in various parts of the world,

Recognizing the need to eliminate all forms of discrimination and intolerance, including those based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status,

Recalling its resolution 52/15 of 20 November 1997, by which it proclaimed the year 2000 as the "International Year for the Culture of Peace", and its resolution 53/25 of 10

November 1998, by which it proclaimed the period 2001-2010 as the "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World",

Recognizing the important role that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization continues to play in the promotion of a culture of peace,

Solemnly proclaims the present Declaration on a Culture of Peace to the end that Governments, international organizations and civil society may be guided in their activity by its provisions to promote and strengthen a culture of peace in the new millennium:

Article 1

A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life based on:

- a. Respect for life, ending of violence and promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation;
- b. Full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law;
- c. Full respect for and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- d. Commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts;
- e. Efforts to meet the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations;
- f. Respect for and promotion of the right to development;
- g. Respect for and promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men;
- h. Respect for and promotion of the right of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion and information;
- i. Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations; and fostered by an enabling national and international environment conducive to peace.

Article 2

Progress in the fuller development of a culture of peace comes about through values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life conducive to the promotion of peace among individuals, groups and nations.

Article 3

The fuller development of a culture of peace is integrally linked to:

- a. Promoting peaceful settlement of conflicts, mutual respect and understanding and international cooperation;
- b. Complying with international obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law;
- c. Promoting democracy, development and universal respect for and observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- d. Enabling people at all levels to develop skills of dialogue, negotiation, consensus-building and peaceful resolution of differences;
- e. Strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring full participation in the development process;
- f. Eradicating poverty and illiteracy and reducing inequalities within and among nations;
- g. Promoting sustainable economic and social development;
- h. Eliminating all forms of discrimination against women through their empowerment and equal representation at all levels of decision-making;
- i. Ensuring respect for and promotion and protection of the rights of children;
- j. Ensuring free flow of information at all levels and enhancing access thereto;
- k. Increasing transparency and accountability in governance;
- l. Eliminating all forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;
- m. Advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity among all civilizations, peoples and cultures, including towards ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities;
- n. Realizing fully the right of all peoples, including those living under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, to self-determination enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and embodied in the *International Covenants on Human Rights*,² as well as in the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples* contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960.

Article 4

Education at all levels is one of the principal means to build a culture of peace. In this context, human rights education is of particular importance.

Article 5

Governments have an essential role in promoting and strengthening a culture of peace.

Article 6

Civil society needs to be fully engaged in fuller development of a culture of peace.

Article 7

The educative and informative role of the media contributes to the promotion of a culture of peace.

Article 8

A key role in the promotion of a culture of peace belongs to parents, teachers, politicians, journalists, religious bodies and groups, intellectuals, those engaged in scientific, philosophical and creative and artistic activities, health and humanitarian workers, social workers, managers at various levels as well as to non-governmental organizations.

Article 9

The United Nations should continue to play a critical role in the promotion and strengthening of a culture of peace worldwide.

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Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

107th plenary meeting
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Notes

1/ *Resolution 217 A (III)*.

2/ *Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex*.

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