

# Triangle Centre Newsletter September 2007

Dear Friends,

Greetings! This newsletter focuses upon Peace and Ecology, or perhaps more accurately, "The Ecology of Peace" since division of the two is really an artificial one, reflecting two sides of a larger dilemma rooted within the way we harm the earth and thus all living systems and how we treat one another in the same way.

We are living in a time of immense turbulent change, struggling to envision a way forward which truly identifies with planetary need and deep respect for all the kingdoms of nature and their evolutionary potential.

But what if that great vision or Plan is well under way permeating the web of life through 'bottom-up' movements which are reimagining and remaking the world – bringing forward ideas and values that expand possibilities and liberate from concentrations of power?

Paul Hawken's latest book *Blessed Unrest* researches, identifies and celebrates "How the Largest Movement in the World came into Being" and why no one saw it coming. It resonates deeply with the need and metamorphosis of the times ([www.blessedunrest.com](http://www.blessedunrest.com)).

The three articles in this letter give us a "peep" into examples of fundamental shifts in global consciousness.

Hawken uses a metaphor, where he describes an emerging "global complex and self-organizing system" as being humanity's immune response to political corruption, economic disease and ecological degradation.

Our three contributions celebrate peace hope and emergence through practical service. Barbara Gibb's report on a Ministry of Peace gathering in Wellington, Gita Brooke's overview of the work and impulse of Peace Through Unity presented to the Ministry of Peace and lastly, a riddle for you.

*What is it? It came on the wings of archangel Gabriel,  
was birthed by a Virgin, became a Mandela  
and has twelve apostles?*

Check it out in this newsletter!

International Day of Peace will be celebrated on Friday September 21st.

In 1981, The United Nations General Assembly designated that its opening annual session in

September be officially dedicated and observed as the International Day of Peace "devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace within and among all nations and peoples".

Linking with you in the climate of Peace and Service on International Peace Day

Your Triangle Centre Co-workers

## Towards a Ministry for Peace

*A public meeting on the proposal to establish a Ministry for Peace was held on Saturday 21 July 2007 at the Centre for Global Action, Wellington.*



The event included individuals from a range of ethnic communities, representatives from civil society organizations (peace, women, labour and human rights), city officials and parliamentary representatives.

Presentations were made by Kate Smith (Operation Peace Through Unity), Chelsea-Anne Phillips (Youth Delegate for Operation Peace Through Unity), Dame Laurie Salas (United Nations Association), Keith Locke (Member of Parliament, Foreign Affairs Spokesperson for the Green Party) and Alyn Ware (Peace Foundation and International Peace Bureau). This was followed by a general discussion on the proposal. Key themes expressed included:

- the importance of grassroots engagement in the process
- the need to educate about peace as a process happening at all levels of society – not just at the international level
- the need to link and highlight existing activities for peace in the community
- possibilities for a phased approach to establishing a Ministry, including the possibility of a Peace Commission (similar to the Human Rights Commission, Families Commission and Children's Commission)
- the role of establishing Peace Cities as a step towards a Ministry and as a positive model of government and civil society collaboration
- accountability in a Ministry to ensure it was not captured by the political leanings of the government (or become an Orwellian institution)

*Goodwill is the touchstone that will  
transform the world*

- scope of the Ministry including whether it could be a Ministry for Peace, Disarmament and Human Rights

Delegates also discussed structure of the campaign in Aotearoa-New Zealand, representation in the Global Alliance and promotion of the initiative amongst key constituencies.

The following decisions were made:

1. An Aotearoa-New Zealand Network for a Ministry for Peace was established. Any organization or individual can join. The network will enable sharing of information about activities undertaken by the various groups in support of a Ministry for Peace. The network is not an organization and so will not establish any formal oversight or committee structure. Key member organizations will work together on aspects of the campaign including the arranging of national meetings as appropriate (It was recommended that these take place twice per year).
2. The 5 point proposal of Operation Peace Through Unity (see 5 points in Newsletter) would be circulated to all and would be adopted after group discussion
3. The Peace Foundation would maintain the membership/contact list for the network
4. A delegate will represent the network at the Global Alliance Summit in Japan Sep 21–25.

The following proposals were made and received general support:

1. A petition calling for a Ministry for Peace be developed as a tool to engage public, build support and enable parliamentarians to raise the proposal in parliament.



**Photographer:** Jose Toledo



## **NUCLEAR FREE POSTAGE STAMPS**



The paintings submitted for the 2006 Schools Peace Week competition were so good that five have been made into peace stamps which you can use to post letters, promote Nuclear Free New Zealand and brighten the day of the recipients (and the postie as well).



A book of ten 50 cent stamps sells for \$7 and First Day Covers cost \$10 each plus P&H (includes a donation to the Peace Foundation).

Get your stamps from the Peace Foundation Wellington Office

phone (04) 496 962

<http://www.peace.net.nz>



2. A special consultation be organized with Government Departments to discuss how a Ministry for Peace would relate to their departments, and to build inter-departmental support. This should include the ministries of education, youth development, justice, social welfare, women's affairs, foreign relations, police, and defence, as well as the commissions for human rights, race relations, families and children.
3. Prior to the establishment of a Ministry for Peace, the Network and its members develop and implement aspects of such a Ministry as components of a 'virtual' Ministry for Peace.
4. The Ministry for Peace campaign encourage citizens and member organizations to promote the establishment of Peace Cities as such a component of a 'virtual' Ministry and as a stepping stone towards the establishment of an actual Ministry for Peace
5. A national speaking tour to promote a Ministry for Peace be undertaken. Such a tour could include youth reps, respected New Zealanders and possibly a high-level overseas guest (such as U.S. Presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich).
6. The Network, and its members, should do more concerted outreach to church, religious and spiritual organizations.

# Operation Peace Through Unity

*Accredited NGO in association with the  
UN Department of Public Information*

The 1999 United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (A/RES/53/243) makes it emphatically clear that “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”.

It also urges that the United Nations, its Member States, and ‘We, the Peoples of the United Nations’ work together towards this end.

The Declaration has energized and inspired the increasingly powerful groups in the UK, Canada, USA, Australia, Nigeria, Costa Rica and many other countries belonging to the Global Peace Alliance, who are lobbying their governments for the establishing of ministries or departments of peace.

Among achievements can be mentioned the bill, which is presently before the US House of Representatives, hoping (with public pressure) to make it into law; the Solomon Islands that already has a Minister for Peace; and Nepal which has just established a Ministry for Peace and Reconstruction.

Although our goal is ultimately the same as these other campaigns, the New Zealand proposal has chosen a slightly different approach:

We would like to think that such a ministry would signify the beginning of a new type of governance, i.e. a full, open and dynamically interactive working relationship and partnership between peoples and government, the result of which would be a type of democracy that will leave no one out, and for which we are all mutually responsible;

Moreover, we suggest that this ministry be called a Ministry for a Culture of Peace. Although a longer name, it will keep reminding us that for peace to have

any meaning it will need to become a strong and vibrant culture, demonstrated in the way we all live and relate to each other.

In May 2006 Peace through Unity (OPTU) tabled a paper for a panel discussion on this subject, organized by the UNANZ Wellington branch, which contained some background information on the ministry for peace initiative, and also a 5-point proposal for a NZ Ministry for a Culture of Peace. The text of these points is based on the UN Declaration and Plan of Action on a Culture of Peace. (Paper enclosed)

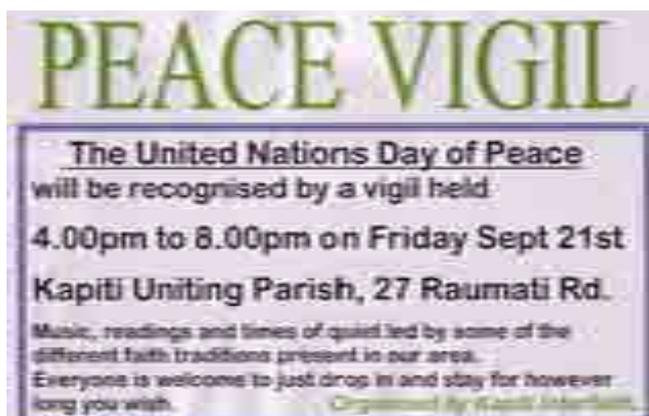
We hope that these five points will serve as a basic structure, a skeleton so to speak, on which – through comprehensive community consultation and contribution – the whole body of this new organism can begin to be shaped. There is increasing agreement worldwide that it is the peoples of the world, who will need to breathe life and real meaning into the concept of democracy – becoming its heart and soul.

A small committee is emerging, currently consisting of OPTU, UNANZ branch members, teachers and Youth representatives, who are in the process of arranging consultations within schools and community groups in the Wanganui region and beyond. We warmly invite you and your group to participate in this consultation process and hope you will consider using the 5-point proposal as a basis for your thoughts, comments and suggestions as to how you think such an effective and comprehensive working relationship could come about. The outcome: a mutually agreed proposal for a NZ Ministry for a Culture of Peace to be presented to the Government of New Zealand.

## *OPTU's Five-point Proposal*

The primary aim of a New Zealand Ministry for a Culture of Peace would be to act as an instrument for the building of a culture of peace in accordance with the guidelines of the UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, through:

1. identifying root-causes of conflict, disharmony and hostility within and between peoples, cultures and nations;
2. actively promoting the employment of conflict-resolution, mediation, negotiation and other peacebuilding/peacemaking skills, and encouraging that these skills become common practice;
3. acting as a focal point for comprehensive, consistent and constructive cooperation and consultation between government (and its various departments) and interest groups within the various parts of society (education, health, environment, industry, unions, science, arts, culture, laws, media, police, military, volunteers, local government etc.) ensuring that the legislative process of formulating any specific law takes into account the effect it may have on the community in its entirety;



4. forming working partnerships with international institutions and co-workers for the building of a culture of peace worldwide;
5. keeping the government and the general public aware of the UN resolutions which our Government has committed itself and us all to implement.

Some relevant quotes:

*"The secret of success in all group action lies in complete unity of purpose and intention, plus diversity of expression and method."* (DK)

*"We are in the midst of a fundamental shift that will impact new governance. It recognizes the rise of the 'third sector' – civil society – and that it has a certain economic value" To make the most of this breakthrough opportunity civil society will need to meet three challenges, which are: Consciousness – Conscientiousness – Competence."*

Lester Salamon, Director, Centre for Civil Society Studies, John Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies

A democratic system is not enough. We need to learn to live with each other, *"horizontal democracy is as important as vertical democracy"* B.H. Levy, French philosopher

Democracy: *"government of the people, by the people, for the people"* Abraham Lincoln

We hope very much that you will consider participating in this process of consultation on the possibility of establishing a future Ministry for a Culture of Peace, and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal with you at your convenience.

**Gita Brooke**

*Co-founder Operation Peace through Unity (OPTU)  
On behalf of the organizing committee*

### Triangle Centre Book Price List

*Current price list of books & Roerich prints is attached.*



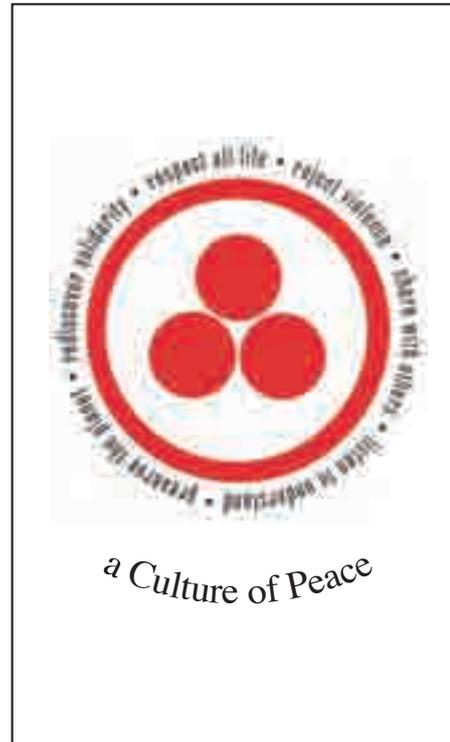
*Remember – Nicholas Roerich*

*Peace banners available from Triangle Centre for \$70.00 plus \$6.50 package and postage.*

*phone 04 902 1667  
[library@trianglecentre.org.nz](mailto:library@trianglecentre.org.nz)*

## Banner of Peace Symbol

This sign of the triad which is to be found all over the world may have several meanings. Some interpret it as a symbol of past, present and future, enclosed in the ring of Eternity; others consider that it refers to religion, science and arts held together in the circle of Culture. But whatever be the interpretation the sign itself is of the most universal character.



The oldest of Indian symbols, Chintarnani, the sign of happiness, is composed of this symbol and one can find it in the Temple of Heaven in Peking. It appears in the Three Treasures of Tibet; on the breast of the Christ in Memling's well-known painting; on the Madonna of Strasbourg; on the shields of the Crusaders and coat of arms of the Templars. It can be seen on the blades of the famous Caucasian swords known as "Gurda".

It appears as a symbol in a number of philosophical systems. It can be found on the images of Gessar Khan and Rigden Djapo; on the "Taruga" of Timurlane and on the coat of arms of the Popes. It is to be seen in the works of ancient Spanish painters and of Titian, and on the ancient ikon of St. Nicholas in Bari and that of St. Sergius and the Holy Trinity.

It can be found on the coat of arms of the city of Samarkand, on Ethiopian and Coptic antiquities, on the rocks of Mongolia, on Tibetan rings, on the breast ornaments of Lahul, Ladak and all the Himalayan countries, and on the pottery of the neolithic age.



It is conspicuous on Buddhist banners. The same sign is branded on Mongolian steeds. Nothing, then, could be more appropriate for assembling all races than this symbol, which is no mere ornament but a sign which carries with it a deep meaning.

It has existed for immeasurable periods of time and is to be found throughout the world. No one therefore can pretend that it belongs to any particular sect, confession, or tradition, and it represents the evolution of consciousness in all its varied phases.

When it is a question of defending the world's treasures, no better symbol could be selected, for it is universal, of limitless antiquity and carries with it a meaning which should send an echo in every heart.



October 5-8 2007  
The Arts Centre - Christchurch  
A Conference for Humanity

## IDEALISM IN ACTION

Bringing together community, practical idealists and spiritual thinkers to network ideas, ideals and strategies to create inspiration and initiate change.

**Nicky Hager** - Politics in the Future  
**Rev. Maurice Gray** - Maori Spirituality  
**Andy Pratt** - Cosmobiology  
**Helen Palmer** - Psycho-Synthesis  
**Claire Beynon** - Soul Based Creativity  
**Sheldon Hughes & Halina Bak-Hughes** - Global Values Shift  
**Lawson Bracewell** - A School for the Future +Ideals  
**Wim Oosterhoff** - Sacred Geometry  
**Michael Robbins** - Ideas as Living Beings  
**Tuije Robbins** - Preparing for the Reappearance of the Christ  
**Dick Taylor** - Overcoming All - Winning Gold  
**Julie Ewer** - Meditation, Making Ideas Reality  
**Orest Tarnawsky** - Poetic Creativity, Meditation, Expressing Joy  
**Julia Tarnawsky** - New service and Collaborative synthesis  
**Daryl Fell** - The Soul's Mythology  
**Tim Ewer** - Alternative Healing  
**Youth Dialogue** - Our Vision for the Future

**ALL WELCOME**

*\$50 Registration Fee - limited seating*

Sponsored by: Christ College of Trans-Himalayan Wisdom

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## Nelson Mandela Launches Elders to Save the World

Greeted by a 30-strong choir and hailed by a line-up of fellow elder statesmen eager to embrace him, Nelson Mandela celebrated his 89th birthday yesterday with a new initiative demonstrating the moral authority he still carries deep into his retirement.

The former South African president will be the leading figure in the "Global Elders", a group of "12 wise men and women" who will address global problems by offering expertise and guidance.

A frail yet still magnetic figure, Mr Mandela was greeted in Johannesburg at South Africa's Constitutional Court – where he was once held prisoner - by a choir that sang his praises before he outlined the Elders' objectives.

"The Elders can become a fiercely independent and robust force for good, tackling conflicts and intractable issues, especially those that are not popular," said Mr Mandela.

The group will "speak freely and boldly, working both publicly and behind the scenes, working wherever our help is needed".

He added: "This group derives its strength not from military, political or economic power, but from the independence and integrity of those who are here."

The club's members will comprise former presidents, elder statesmen, leaders and activists and probably five Nobel laureates.

There will eventually be 12 Global Elders – but the exact make-up of the group was in flux right up until yesterday's announcement.

As well as Mr Mandela and his wife, Graca Machel, the group comprises Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town; Jimmy Carter, the former American president; Mary Robinson, the former Irish president; Kofi Annan, the former secretary general of the United Nations; and Muhammad Yunus, the Nobel laureate economist and founder of the Green Bank in Bangladesh, where he is known as “banker to the poor”. All were at the launch in Johannesburg yesterday.

Li Zhaoxing, until two months ago the foreign minister of China, has also been invited to join, along with Ela Bhatt, the Indian activist and founder of a women’s association. Gro Harlem Bruntland, formerly prime minister of Norway and director of the World Health Organisation, may also become a member.

An empty chair was set on stage yesterday and will be reserved at all Elders meetings for the Burmese opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, who is now the prisoner of the military junta despite her victory in a democratic election in 1990.

The initiative was the brainchild of Sir Richard Branson and the musician Peter Gabriel. As long ago as 2001, they approached Mr Mandela to ask if he and his wife would lead the project.

Sir Richard, Gabriel, the United Nations Foundation and a number of private benefactors are funding the initiative. The Elders should meet twice a year and maintain regular contact via video conferencing.

Archbishop Tutu emphasised that much of their work is likely to take place behind closed doors. “There may be things we can accomplish because people have been able to use their persuasive abilities in confidence. One of the ways to be effective is that no

one gets to know precisely what we have done,” he said.

But if their work is in private, it will be hard to gauge the Elders’ success or failure.

Sceptics ask whether a group of 12 ageing and largely retired figures can possibly exert real influence over the world’s most intractable conflicts. Mr Mandela himself rarely leaves Johannesburg and has ceased giving regular speeches.

Instead, much will rest on his moral authority, as well as his ability to generate enthusiasm for tackling injustice and hardship.

“Together we will work to support courage where there is fear, foster agreement where there is conflict and inspire hope where there is despair,” he said.

Mr Mandela also emphasised that he is now “trying to take my retirement seriously”, and his role is likely to be symbolic and inspirational rather than practical.

Certainly there was little doubt yesterday just how inspiring a figure he remains. His colleagues among the Global Elders paid a series of warm, if sentimental, tributes to him.

Muhammad Yunus spoke of how being on the same platform as Mr Mandela was “the proudest day of my life”, while Li Zhaoxing demonstrated a surprisingly poetic sensibility by turning to Mr Mandela and reciting the first verse of Shakespeare’s 18th sonnet: “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day...”

But the last word went to Archbishop Tutu who, visibly moved as the frail figure of Mr Mandela was helped offstage, murmured rapturously into the microphone: “Isn’t goodness beautiful?”

*Telegraph*



**Global Elders** [from left]: Peter Gabriel, Muhammad Yunus, Mary Robinson, Kofi Annan, Nelson Mandela, Jimmy Carter, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Sir Richard Branson

## Earth's Ten Commandments

*Thou shalt love and honour the Earth for it blesses thy life and governs thy survival.*

Thou shalt keep each day sacred to the Earth and celebrate the turning of its seasons.

**Thou shalt give thanks for thy food to the creatures and plants that nourish thee.**

Thou shalt not hide from thyself or others the consequences of thy actions upon the Earth.

*Thou shalt not steal from future generations by impoverishing or poisoning the Earth.*

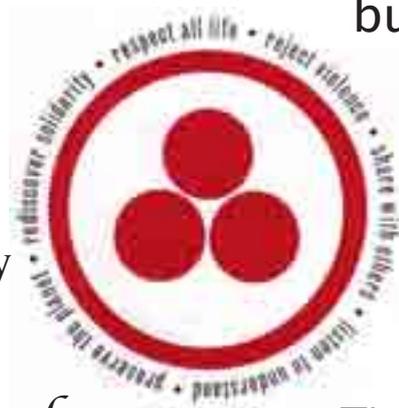
**Thou shalt consume material goods in moderation so all may share Earth's bounty.**

**Thou shalt not hold thyself above other living things nor drive them to extinction.**

Thou shalt limit thy offspring for multitudes of people are a burden to the Earth.

**Thou shalt not kill nor waste Earth's riches upon weapons of war.**

Thou shalt not pursue profit at the Earth's expense but strive to restore its damaged majesty.



**Ernest Callenbach**

*Goodwill is the touchstone that will  
transform the world*



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