

Ways for a better world

Ideas for action, inspiration and timeless wisdom

May these ideas enter your being and resonate within you, so that you are awoken to action.

May the truth of these ideas awaken your logic, wisdom and compassion.

May it be the catalyst for action for achieving a world of peace and harmony.

Poverty and development

“Recall in the face of the poorest and most helpless person whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him, will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to control over his life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj¹, self-rule, for the hungry and also spiritually starved of our countrymen? Then you will find your doubts and yourself melting away.”

“Be the change you want to see in the world.”

“Almost everything you do will seem insignificant, but it is important that you do it.”

¹ A sacred word, a Vedic word, meaning self-rule and self-restraint, and not freedom from all restraint which 'independence' often means.

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Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) *Indian leader of satyagraha, theory and practice of nonviolent resistance. He led the peaceful Indian resistance to British rule.*

“Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.”

“Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils.”

Nelson Mandela, *former South African President*

“Part of winning the war on terrorism is winning the war on poverty. We've had the wake-up call. If we stand by and watch [Africa] go up in flames, the price won't be paid solely in African lives.”

Bono, *U2 lead singer*

“In our interconnected world a future built on the foundations of mass poverty in the midst of plenty is economically inefficient, politically unsustainable and morally indefensible.”

“Today, for the first time in history, we have the means to end global poverty. All we need is will power and the resolve to do it.”

“Completion of Millennium Development Goals² is essential for lifting millions out of poverty. Work together in unity, win the broadest sections of society to work for development.”

² 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by half, 2. Achieve universal primary education, 3. Promote gender equality and empower women, 4. Reduce child mortality, 5. Improve maternal health, 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, 7. Ensure environmental sustainability, 8. Develop a global partnership for development.

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“Extreme inequality between countries and within countries is identified as one of the main barriers to human development and as a powerful brake on accelerated progress towards the MDGs.”

“Recognise differences of people in society, respect of their ethnicity, religion, and language. Champion diversity and promote cultural freedoms, so that all people can choose to speak their language, practice their religion, and participate in shaping their culture.”

“The range of human development in the world is vast and uneven, with astounding progress in some areas amidst stagnation and dismal decline in others. Balance and stability in the world will require the commitment of all nations, rich and poor, and a global development compact to extend the wealth of possibilities to all people for the completion of the MDGs.”

“Politics is as important to successful development as economics. Sustained poverty reduction requires equitable growth-but it also requires that poor people have political power for building strong and deep forms of democratic governance at all levels of society.”

“Make human rights compulsory principles of accountability and social justice to the process of human development.”

“Being global markets, global technology, global ideas and global solidarity which can enrich the lives of people everywhere and the benefits are shared equitably”.

“Harness the power and potential of technology and information which present great opportunities.”

“Eradicating poverty everywhere is more than a moral imperative - it

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is a practical possibility. The world has the resources and the know-how to create a poverty-free world in less than a generation.”

“The quality of economic growth, if not properly managed, can be jobless, voiceless, ruthless, rootless and futureless, and thus detrimental to human development.”

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Environment

“There is a sufficiency in the world for man's need but not for man's greed.”

Mahatma Gandhi

“Our reservoir of life is shrinking. Before it is too late I think we need to put our environmental house in order.”

Mikhail Gorbachev, *former Soviet leader*

“The key is actually discarding the idea that has dominated economic policy-making, which is: in order for a country to get rich, stay rich and get richer, you have to put more greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. That isn't true and it hasn't been true for years.”

Bill Clinton, *former US President*

"The supreme reality of our time is...the vulnerability of our planet"

John F. Kennedy, *former US President*

“The environment is very important in the aspects of peace because when we destroy our resources, they become scarce and we fight over that.”

Wangari Maathai, *environmentalist and awarded the Nobel Prize*

"Only when the last tree has died and the last river been poisoned and

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the last fish been caught will we realise we cannot eat money."

Cree Indian Proverb

"Because we don't think about future generations, they will never forget us."

Henrik Tikkanen, *Finnish author and artist*

"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children."

Native American Proverb

"Destroying rainforest for economic gain is like burning a Renaissance painting to cook a meal."

Edward Wilson, *explorer and physician*

"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."

Albert Einstein, *(1879-1955) physicist and awarded the Nobel Prize, 1922*

"If you live according to nature, you never will be poor; if according to the world's caprice, you will never be rich."

Publilius Syrus (42 BC), *Latin writer*

"Nature uses as little as possible of anything."

Johannes Kepler, *German mathematician and astronomer*

"Nature does nothing uselessly."

Aristotle *Greek philosopher*

"Men argue; nature acts."

Voltaire *French writer*

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“After a visit to the beach, it's hard to believe that we live in a material world.”

Pam Shaw, *author*

“This curious world which we inhabit is more wonderful than it is convenient, more beautiful than it is useful; it is more to be admired and enjoyed than used.”

Henry David Thoreau, American writer (1817-1862)

“If we once, and for so long, lived in balance with nature and each other, we should be able to do so again.”

John Zerzan, *American philosopher*

“In the United Kingdom no one lives more than 75 miles from the sea. For us, as an island nation, the sea has an all-embracing presence. Spiritually and physically we are intimately connected with our shores. The sea has immense power, which we ignore at our peril.”

National Trust '*Shifting Shores - Living with a changing coastline*' (2005)

“The question facing the world's governments, businesses and green groups is thus not simply how best to tackle the world's growing environmental crisis, but how to do so in a manner that does not at the same time hamstring national economies, especially those of the world's poorest nations.”

“Environmental destruction, population growth and poverty are intricately connected. Aid from industrialised nations and internal education and reform are both needed. A new world view in which all things are seen as connected and all human beings are equal is the ultimate solution.”

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“To work for environmental protection to make a contribution to the world by teaching the importance of caring, sharing and living in harmony, and bring forth the inherent dignity of the individual.”

“Energy security will not become a reality without diversification, which most importantly means the expansion of types of energy in use into low-carbon alternative power, renewables, and innovations.”

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Disease

"The global HIV/AIDS epidemic is an unprecedented crisis that requires an unprecedented response. In particular it requires solidarity -- between the healthy and the sick, between rich and poor, and above all, between richer and poorer nations. We have 30 million orphans already. How many more do we have to get, to wake up?"

Kofi Annan, (1938-) *Secretary-General of the United Nations*.

"It's time to make the connection between debt relief and epidemic relief. If the international community relieves some of their external debt, these countries can reinvest the savings in poverty alleviation and AIDS prevention and care. If not, poverty will just continue to fan the flames of the epidemic."

Peter Piot, *Executive Director of UNAIDS*

“It’s really a tragedy that the world has done so little to stop this disease that kills 2,000 African children every day,”

Bill Gates *Founder, Microsoft*

“AIDS and malaria and TB are national security issues. A worldwide program to get a start on dealing with these issues would cost about \$25 billion... It's, what, a few months in Iraq.”

Jared Diamond *Writer*

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“This is a crucial moment in the history of HIV/AIDS, and an unprecedented opportunity to alter its course. The international community has the chance to change the history of health for generations to come and to open the door to better health for all.”

“What is needed now is political will to implement national plans, together with international cooperation to align resources, harness knowledge and build robust health systems for treating and preventing disease and promoting population health.”

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Peace and Education

“All humanity is one undivided and indivisible family, and each one of us is responsible for the misdeeds of all others.”

“If we are to teach real peace in the world we shall have to begin with children.”

“There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.”

Mahatma Gandhi

“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.”

UNESCO, *Declaration of a culture of peace*

“I have been asked a question many a time, ‘who is your hero?’ I say, my hero does not depend on the position a person occupies. My heroes are those simple men and women who have committed themselves to fighting poverty wherever that is to be found in the world.”

Nelson Mandela

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“You cannot simultaneously prevent and prepare for war.”

“War cannot be humanised. It can only be abolished.”

Albert Einstein

“Sometimes there's truth in old cliches. There can be no real peace without justice. And without resistance there will be no justice.”

Arundhati Roy, *Indian writer*

“All war represents a failure of diplomacy.”

Tony Benn, *retired British MP*

“If the world could end apartheid the world can end war.”

Archbishop (Ret.) Desmond Tutu (1931-) *Johannesburg, South Africa, founder of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 1984.*

“Wars make poor tools for carving out peaceful tomorrows.”

“It is not the violence of a few that scares me, it is the silence of the many”

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) *U.S. Christian Minister and leader of the U.S. civil rights movement, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, 1964.*

“We cannot have it both ways. We can't be both the world's leading champion of peace and the world's leading supplier of arms.”

Jimmy Carter, *former US President.*

“War must cease to be an admissible human institution. The abolition of all war must be our ultimate goal.”

“For the concept of a war-free world to become universally accepted

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and consciously adopted by making war illegal, a process of education will be required at all levels; education for peace, education for world citizenship. war is not an inherent element in human society.”

Sir Joseph Rotblat (1908-2005), *Nobel Peace Prize, 1995.*

“In this new century, we must start from the understanding that peace belongs not only to states or peoples, but to each and every member of those communities. Peace must be made real and tangible in the daily existence of every individual in need. Peace must be sought, above all, because it is the condition for every member of the human family to live a life of dignity and security.”

“There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and want and that they grow up in peace.”

Kofi Annan

“Peace begins when the hungry are fed.”

Anonymous

“It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.”

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962), *American human rights activist, stateswoman; First Lady of the United States (1933-1945).*

“The pacifist’s task today is to find a method of helping and healing which provides a revolutionary constructive substitute for war.”

Vera Brittain, (1893-1970) *Pacifist, best known for her book Testament of Youth.*

"Local, regional and world leaders must accept the fact that we cannot let the free market rule the international arms trade. We must

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not enrich ourselves through the commerce of death. Rather, we must realise that the arms trade is most often a friend of dictators and an enemy of the people. The time has come to choose human lives over arms."

"Peace is not the product of a victory or a command. it has no finishing line, no final deadline, no fixed definition of achievement. Peace is a never-ending process, the work of many decisions."

Dr Oscar Arias, *Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, 1987.*

"A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems; have the skills to resolve conflict constructively; know and live by international standards of human rights, gender and racial equality; appreciate cultural diversity; and respect the integrity of the Earth. Such learning can not be achieved without intentional, sustained and systematic education for peace."

Global Campaign for Peace Education.

"Militarism must be recognised as idolatry. The way in which it is looked at shows that it is more than a system and even an ideology."

World Council of Churches (WCC), *Report of the Consultation on Militarism and Disarmament (1989)*

"To tackle the underlying roots of violence and conflict, we need a massive international effort to reduce poverty and injustice, and to promote development, democracy and human rights."

Clare Short, *Former UK International Development secretary*

"Nothing can bring you peace but yourself."

Ralph Waldo Emerson *Writer*

"If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other."

Mother Teresa *Nun & Nobel Prize Winner*

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“All education is for peace.”

“Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war.”

Maria Montessori, *Italian philosopher and physician*

“To suggest that war can prevent war is a base play on words and a despicable form of warmongering. The world has had ample evidence that war begets only conditions that beget further war.

Ralph Bunche, *American diplomat*

“Imagine all the people living life in peace. You may say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one. I hope someday you’ll join us, and the world will be as one.”

John Lennon *Former Beatles band member*

“More than an end to war, we want an end to the beginning of all wars – yes, an end to this brutal, inhuman and thoroughly impractical method of settling the differences between governments.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt *Former US President*

“These are all our children. We will all profit by, or pay for, whatever they become.”

James Baldwin, *author*

“Our children and grandchildren – and unborn generations to come – are depending on us...to make the wise decisions that will determine their future. The choice is in our hands.

James P. Grant, *former executive director of UNICEF*

“No one has yet realized the wealth of sympathy, the kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child.”

Emma Goldman, *Lithuanian anarchist*

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“To have peace we must end economic and military competition and acknowledge our planetary interconnections and must consider the needs of all humankind.”

“The Culture of Peace consists of values, attitudes and behaviours that reject violence. In a peaceful world, we solve problems through dialogue and negotiation.”

“The key to peace is reaching out and educating the youth, as they are the next generation who can ensure a more peaceful future for the world.”

“What use is war? Let us all work together for peace and non-violence.”

“To me culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes and ways of life based on principles of freedom, equality, justice, tolerance, solidarity, and human dignity. By forging together respect for diversity, dialogue and understanding we can bring about the transformation from a culture of war to a culture of peace.”

“Peace education should be linked to the wider expression of ideas.”

“Peace hero’s, rather than military hero’s, should be made more visible in our cities, monuments and museums.”

“Peace begins when the hungry are fed, poor are clothed, children are fearless, human rights are protected, non-violence becomes a way of life and human dignity and justice prevails”

“The ultimate purpose of education is to serve and benefit humanity by developing qualities of love, compassion, generosity and tolerance.”

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“Teaching peace takes a lot of time and hard work. But if you continue and keep the goal in mind then Global peace, harmony and happiness can not be far away.”

“The best way to educate and get the message to the illiterate is through music and the visual arts. Art should be used to tear down road blocks and pave the way for progress.”

“Global public opinion is considered a superpower in its own right. We have a responsibility to use it in a positive way for a just, peaceful and sustainable future.”

“Peace education in schools is essential and through a national database, can be used as a way of networking and informing the general public. At a global level, the role of UNESCO is important to spread its message of a *culture of peace* to overcome violence and conflicts.”

“Moving from a culture of war a culture of peace means vast internal transformations in individuals as well as nations. We must move from an era of cultural imperialism, in which powerful nations impose their will on weaker countries, to an era of cultural exchange and respect.”

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Disarmament

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, represents, in the final analysis, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.”

Dwight Eisenhower, *General Commander Allied Forces, World*

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War 2 and US President, 1952-60.

“I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.”

Albert Einstein

“The life of active nonviolence is the fruit of an inner peace and spiritual unity...”

Mairead Maguire, *peace activist and co-received Nobel Peace prize with Betty Williams*

“Religion is essentially the art and the theory of the remaking of man. Man is not a finished creation.”

Edmund Burke, *English philosopher*

“Call for the dismantling of the institution of war just as the world has abolished the institutions of slavery, colonialism and apartheid.”

“Ultimately, we must end our reliance on weapons. Ending our trust in arms is the only way to bring trust among peoples. The solidarity and action of common people can bring about total disarmament.”

“Working for the abolition of nuclear weapons has a strong moral basis. It has the truth and humanity on its side. There is no such thing as ‘overriding’ morality.”

“Divert the \$1000 billion military spending and instead feed, house and educate all the peoples of this world.”

“Global norms for disarmament are vital to the sustainable development, quality of life, and ultimately the survival of this planet.”

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“Sowing the seed of peace for the next generation of leaders requires educating today’s younger generation the value of coexistence, respect and human dignity for each other.”

“Demilitarise the global economy by reducing military budgets and shifting resources toward human security programs.”

“Things we need to do is dialogue, discussion, diplomacy, and disarmament for peace and harmony.”

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Timeless wisdoms

“If you think you are too small to change the world, try sleeping with a mosquito.”

“Love, compassion and tolerance are necessities of life. Without them humanity cannot survive.”

Dalai Lama, *Spiritual Leader of Tibet*

“As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world, as in being able to remake ourselves.”

Mahatma Gandhi

“It is not power that corrupts, but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it.”

Aung San Suu Kyi (1945-) *Nobel Peace Prize, 1991.*

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead, *American cultural anthropologist*

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“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

“The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life.”

Jane Addams (1860-1935) *Nobel Peace Prize, 1931*

“In separateness lies the world’s great misery; in compassion lies the world’s true strength.”

The Buddha. *Founder of the Buddhist philosophy, born around 565 B.C. in Nepal. Buddha means “enlightened one”.*

“I believe that the widespread use of cross-cultural dialogue will foster the global community we so earnestly seek.”

Michael Nobel, *consultant to UNESCO and great grandson to Alfred Nobel*

“Teaching our children to treat others as they wish to be treated is one of the most fundamental values we adults can pass on. We would have a different country and world if this lesson was learned and followed.”

Marian Wright Edelman, *president and founder of Children’s Defence Fund*

“Heroism has nothing to do with skin color or social status. It is a state of mind and a willingness to act for what is right and just.”

Maya Angelou, *American poet*

“I hear people talking about the community, and I stop and think and I feel that we each use a different language. Community means balance.”

Rigoberta Menchu Tum, *indigenous Guatemalan and recipient of the Nobel Peace prize*

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“At a time when people of very different traditions, faiths and ideals have come into sudden and close contact with one another, the survival of humankind requires that people be willing to live with one another and to accept that there is more than one path to truth and salvation.”

Arnold Toynbee, *historian*

“A single, all-embracing global civilization has arisen.”

Vaclav Havel, *former President, Czech Republic*

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.”

Archbishop (Ret.) Desmond Tutu

“The love of one's country is a splendid thing. But why should love stop at the border?”

Pablo Casals, *Spanish cellist*

“Our human situation no longer permits us to make armed dichotomies between those who are good and those who are evil, those who are right and those who are wrong. The first blow dealt to the enemy's children will sign the death warrant of our own.”

Margaret Mead

“Throughout history, religious differences have divided men and women from their neighbours and have served as justification for some of humankind's bloodiest conflicts. In the modern world, it has become clear that people of all religions must bridge these differences and work together, to ensure our survival and realize the vision of peace that all faiths share.”

H.R.H. Prince El-Hassan bin Talal, of Jordan

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“The foremost treasure of sentient beings is none other than life itself...When you light the path before another person you brighten your own.”

Buddhist – Nichiren

“Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you.”

Confucius – Analects

“You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”

Jewish – Leviticus

“A person should treat all creatures as he himself would be treated.”

Jainism – Sutrakanga

“Not one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”

Islam - Fourth Hadith of an-Nawawi

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”

Christian – Matthew

“This is the sum of duty: do nothing to others which would cause you pain if done to you.”

Hindu – Mahabharata

“Youth is the first victim of war, the first fruit of peace. It takes twenty years or more of peace to make a man; it takes only twenty seconds of war to destroy him.”

King Baudouin I, King of Belgium

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered;
Forgive them anyway.

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If you are kind, People may Accuse you of Selfish, Ulterior motives;
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true
enemies;

Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you;

Be Honest and Frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight;

Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous;

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow;

Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have,

and it may never be enough;

Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis,

it is between you and God;

It was never between you and them anyway.

Mother Teresa

“What will the role of nations be in the new millennium? Work for
equality, mutual respect and peaceful coexistence.”

“There are dozens of major religions in the world and thousands of
belief systems by which people guide their lives, design ethical codes
and find happiness. Learn to use one another’s religious beliefs as a
way to connect, no as reasons for conflict.”

“All spiritual teachings and religions of the world call for universal
and eternal truths of love, peace, kindness and harmony. They call to
promote self control, sacrifice, harmony, non-violence and
understanding. Follow their teachings, all conflicts can be avoided
and we can create a heaven on earth.”

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“Humanity needs hero’s, exemplary human beings, who set forth on a lonely and frightening quest. But eventually they bring something of immense value to our society. We need such hero’s to change the course of history, by bringing holistic, multilateral and universal approach to the ills of our society.”

“No peace without justice. No justice without forgiveness and no forgiveness without compassion.”

“Among many prerequisite, in a situation of conflict resolution, are meaningful dialogue, active listening, honest conversation, accepting the other’s view without agreeing or disagreeing, and acknowledging the other’s pain.”

“In today’s world there is a dire need of ethical and multi-faith dialogue. There are common values that human beings share, irrespective of religion, nationality or ethnicity.”

“Everyone will be judged by their intentions and actions. A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history.”

“End violence against women in times of armed conflict and stop the use of child soldiers.”

“Protect human rights defenders, humanitarian workers and whistleblowers.”

“Promote increased public knowledge, teaching and understanding and enforcement mechanism for enforcement of international law and human rights.”

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“Build upon the successes and failures of truth commissions and political amnesties.”

“Establish a universal and effective system of Habeas Corpus.”

“Subject warmaking to democratic controls and strengthen the United Nations' capacity to maintain peace.”

“Prioritise early warning and early response in situation of conflict. Promote the training of civilian peace professionals.”

“Utilise the media as a proactive tool for peacebuilding and promote for the implementation of a global action plan to prevent war.”

“Be kind, respect the Earth, walk in a forest, plant a tree and speak for a healthy planet.”

“Support the United Nations, the International Criminal Court and read and act out the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

“Be constructive, let someone else go first, plant seeds of peace, change a potential enemy into a friend, be positive.”

“Send sunflowers to world leaders, and call for a world free of armaments and conflicts.”

“Oppose technologies that harm the environment.”

“Value diversity, walk softly on the Earth, appreciate the power of the sun, and speak out for global disarmament.”

“Perhaps only deep conviction with a morally-based vision can open the gates to a rational and truly democratic new world order.”

“The seed, hidden in the heart of an apple, is an orchard invisible.”

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“Halt the decline of morality, the absence of truth and virtue - bring back the lost path of righteousness.”

“Traveller, there is no Path. Paths are made by Walking.”

“Every one is a drop that makes the ocean”

Vijay Mehta