

THE DREAM OF A PEACEFUL WORLD

The new millennium has heralded a new message in profound terms that 'Peace' shall be the key word for human survival. In a changing international order, swept by the tide of globalisation, the term 'Peace' has assumed a new significance which goes beyond the political rhetoric or mere sermonising. A new global initiative, involving civil society in a big way, has been launched to identify the challenges to peace and harness the avenues to usher the world in a peaceful environment.

This is not to deny the harsh reality that the changing matrix of international relations, spinning new alliances, is posing new challenges to the global peace. It would be unrealistic to expect that such a situation is going to change in a big way in future. States refuse to learn from history. Thus, the mindless violence, death and devastation, which could be avoided, continues to take place.

The absence of an universal resolve to stand against such a behavior on the part of states provides an opportunity to perpetrators of violence to continue with their strategies resulting in death and destruction. The recent developments indicate the helplessness of the world body, the United Nations, to stand up against such a behavior. It raises some crucial questions: Shall the overwhelming majority of peace loving people across the globe be a silent spectator to this death and destruction? Shall we allow the arrogance of a few to impose their whims on their states from within and without and ignore the public opinion against supporting or sponsoring the actions detrimental to peace and human security? It may be noted that the states who thrive in sponsoring turmoil and violence in the places outside their sovereign control are astute enough to create a social atmosphere in which the dissenting voices from within are muted. Thus, generating the perceptions of 'fear' 'threat' or 'security' are floated.

This provides an opportunity to civil society to comprehend the real challenges to peace emanating from within and without. The onward march of education, science and technology has spread an enlightenment in which people are the best judges to analyze and take a determined position on the issues. The advance of democracy has made it possible for civil society to make effective contributions to security and foreign policy of a state and not to leave these issues to the exclusive domain of a privileged elite. Therefore, in order to realise the dream of a peaceful world, the civil society has to rise from within and restrict the advances of sponsors of global conflict. In a democratic world order, the state behavior has to be shaped according to the visions and perceptions of the vast majority of the people in the society. It is well recognised that hearts of the majority of people in any part of the world beat for 'Peace'. Let us all join them. Let us pool our energies and raise our voices to strengthen the structures, institutions and bodies devoted to realise the dream of a peaceful world.

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