

If there is light in the soul, there will be beauty in the person.
If there is beauty in the person, there will be harmony in the house.
If there is harmony in the house, there will be order in the nation.
If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.
Chinese Proverb

Excerpt from ‘The Global Community’ By his holiness the Dalai Lama

Nonviolence and International Order

1. Every day the media reports incidents of terrorism, crime and aggression. I have never been to a country where tragic stories of death and bloodshed did not fill the newspapers and airwaves. Such reporting has become almost an addiction for journalists and their audiences alike. But the overwhelming majority of the human race does not behave destructively; very few of the five billion people on this planet actually commit acts of violence. Most of us prefer to be as peaceful as possible.
2. Basically, we all cherish tranquility, even those of us given to violence. For instance, when spring comes, the days grow longer, there is more sunshine, the grass and trees come alive and everything is very fresh. People feel happy. In autumn, one leaf falls, then another, then all the beautiful flowers die until we are surrounded by bare, naked plants. We do not feel so joyful. Why is this? Because deep down, we desire constructive, fruitful growth and dislike things collapsing, dying or being destroyed. Every destructive action goes against our basic nature; building, being constructive, is the human way. I am sure everybody agrees that we need to overcome violence, but if we are to eliminate it completely, we should first analyze whether or not it has any value. If we address this question from a strictly practical perspective, we find that on certain occasions violence indeed appears useful. One can solve a problem quickly with force. At the same time; however, such success is often at the expense of the rights and welfare of others. As a result, even though one problem has been solved, the seed of another has been planted.

3. On the other hand, if one's cause is supported by sound reasoning, there is no point in using violence. It is those who have no motive other than selfish desire and who cannot achieve their goal through logical reasoning who rely on force. Even when family and friends disagree, those with valid reasons can cite them one after the other and argue their case point by point, whereas those with little rational support soon fall prey to anger. Thus **anger is not a sign of strength but one of weakness**. Ultimately, it is important to examine one's own motivation and that of one's opponent. There are many kinds of violence and nonviolence, but one cannot distinguish them from external factors alone. If one's motivation is negative, the action it produces is, in the deepest sense, violent, even though it may appear to be smooth and gentle. Conversely, if one's motivation is sincere and positive but the circumstances require harsh behavior, essentially one is practicing nonviolence. No matter what the case may be, I feel that a compassionate concern for the benefit of others—not simply for oneself—is the sole justification for the use of force.
4. **"The genuine practice of nonviolence is still somewhat experimental on our planet, but its pursuit, based on love and understanding, is sacred. If this experiment succeeds, it can open the way to a far more peaceful world in the next century.**
5. I have heard the occasional Westerner maintain that long-term Gandhian struggles employing nonviolent passive resistance do not suit everybody and that such courses of action are more natural in the East. Because Westerners are active, they tend to seek immediate results in all situations, even at the cost of their lives. This approach, I believe, is not always beneficial. But surely the practice of nonviolence suits us all. It simply calls for determination. Even though the freedom movements of Eastern Europe reached their goals quickly, nonviolent protest by its very nature usually requires patience.
6. In this regard, I pray that despite the brutality of their suppression and the difficulty of the struggle they face, those involved in China's democracy movement will always remain peaceful. I am confident they will. Although the majority of the young Chinese students involved were born and raised under an especially harsh form of communism, during the spring of 1989 they spontaneously practiced

Mahatma Gandhi's strategy of passive resistance. This is remarkable and dearly shows that ultimately all human beings want to pursue the path of peace, no matter how much they have been indoctrinated.

Zones of Peace

7. I see Tibet's role in such an Asian Community as what I have previously called a "Zone of Peace": a neutral, demilitarized sanctuary where weapons are forbidden and the people live in harmony with nature. This is not merely a dream-it is precisely the way Tibetans tried to live for over a thousand years before our country was invaded. As everybody knows, in Tibet all forms of wildlife were strictly protected in accordance with Buddhist principles. Also, for at least the last three hundred years, we had no proper army. Tibet gave up the waging of war as an instrument of national policy in the sixth and seventh centuries, after the reign of our three great religious kings.
8. Returning to the relationship between developing regional communities and the task of disarmament, I would like to suggest that the "heart" of each community could be one or more nations that have decided to become zones of peace, areas from which military forces are prohibited. This, again, is not just a dream. Four decades ago, in December 1948, Costa Rica disbanded its army. Recently, 37 per cent of the Swiss population voted to disband their military. The new government of Czechoslovakia has decided to stop the manufacture and export of all weapons. If its people so choose, a nation can take radical steps to change its very nature.
9. Zones of peace within regional communities would serve as oases of stability. While paying their fair share of the costs of any collective force created by the community as a whole, these zones of peace would be the forerunners and beacons of an entirely peaceful world and would be exempt from engaging in any conflict. If regional communities do develop in Asia, South America and Africa and disarmament progresses so that an international force from all regions is created, these zones of peace will be able to expand, spreading tranquility as they grow.
10. We do not need to think that we are planning for the far distant future when we consider this or any other proposal for a new, more

politically, economically and militarily cooperative world. For instance, the newly invigorated forty-eight member Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe has already laid the foundation for an alliance between not only the nations of Eastern and Western Europe-but also between the nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the United States. These remarkable events have virtually eliminated the danger of a major war between these two superpowers.

11. I have not included the United Nations in this discussion of the present era because both its critical role in helping create a better world and its great potential for doing so are so well known. By definition, the United Nations must be in the very middle of whatever major changes occur. However, it may need to amend its structure for the future. I have always had the greatest hopes for the United Nations, and with no criticism intended, I would like simply to point out that the post-World War II climate under which its charter was conceived has changed. With that change has come the opportunity to further democratize the UN, especially the somewhat exclusive Security Council with its five permanent members, which should be made more representative.

Q1: What ideas in the text do you agree or disagree with?

Q2: Many people use anger as a tool to get what they want. Is this the right thing to do? Would it be better if they use love and compassion as their motivation?

Q3: Is it possible to create zones of peace? Peace zones would be countries or groups of countries that do not have their own military forces?

Q4: Is the UN (United Nations) the key to a peaceful world in the future? What would happen if all the nations on Earth joined the UN, and there was only one army: the UN Peacekeeping force?

Q5: Do you have a sense of universal responsibility?

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