



MÉRIDA | YUCATÁN 2019

## DECLARATION OF THE XVIIITH SUMMIT OF NOBEL PEACE LAUREATES

### MAKE YOUR MARK FOR PEACE

Mérida | Yucatán | Mexico - 22 September 2019

We, the Nobel Peace Laureates and Peace Laureate Organisations, gathered at the XVIIth World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates from 19 - 22 September 2019, wish to thank the State of Yucatán, the city of Mérida and the nation of Mexico for hosting this World Summit. We are inspired by being able to meet in a city and state with such warmly hospitable people, with such a rich Mexican and Mayan cultural heritage and surrounded by such natural beauty.

We commend the progress that the State of Yucatán has made in implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and encourage the promotion of a just society for all.

We recognise and commemorate the Mexican Nobel Peace Laureate, Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles, for his role in the adoption of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and in the initiation of the concept of nuclear weapons-free zones.

We also wish to congratulate the Permanent Secretariat of the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates on its 20th anniversary. We thank it for organising this XVIIth Summit and acknowledge its contribution over the past two decades in providing a global platform for Nobel Peace Laureates to express their views on continuing threats to peace and in sharing their experiences in peace-making with the coming generation.

We have been immensely enriched by the presence of more than 1 000 young people at the Summit and by our interaction with them on the issues that will mould the world that they will inherit. Ultimately, their lives will be deeply affected by our common success or failure in addressing the climate crisis; in controlling nuclear weapons and in building a world based on a culture of peace, human rights and social justice.

At the conclusion of our meeting - and after in-depth consideration of the threats to peace, social progress and our environment - we have adopted the following Declaration:

## THE MÉRIDA DECLARATION

We need a renewed understanding of the concept of peace. After the devastation of two World Wars and a series of ideological, religious and civil wars, the relative absence of war has been mistaken as the achievement of peace. For as long as basic freedoms are violated and gross corruption, violence, extreme poverty, inequality, racism, modern-day slavery and trafficking of persons, discrimination, and discrimination phobias exist, there can be no true peace. We proclaim that true peace is inseparable from the achievement of true justice.

We are deeply concerned about current threats to peace, social justice and global sustainability for the world and for future generations. Every human being should understand how we are all interconnected - not only with one another, but with all life on our beautiful planet. Any threat to the wellbeing of any of us - or to our environment - affects us all.

We accordingly call on every single person to leave their mark for peace in the world that we all share.

We call on all citizens to participate in building a more just, a more peaceful and a more sustainable world by working for the Goals in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*, and the *UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

The Summit is deeply concerned about the threat posed to humanity by the climate and environmental crisis. We have heard the worldwide call of young people on 20 September for concerted action by governments to take real and overdue action to combat global warming and to reduce carbon emissions.

During the Summit we have addressed seven topics affecting the peace, wellbeing and sustainability of humankind. At the conclusion of our deliberations, we make this CALL TO ACTION:

### 1. LEAVING A MARK FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WE MAKE A CALL TO:

- All states and national and international actors to heed the call of the youth on 20 September 2019 to take effective action to combat global warming and carbon emissions;
- all states without exception to adhere to and implement to the full their obligations in terms of the 2016 *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*;
- all states to achieve as soon as possible the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) and in particular
  - goals focusing on the wellbeing of children - especially with regard to the prohibition of child slavery;
  - to promote youth development;
  - to promote the use of the Multidimensional Poverty Index as a means of being more effective in fighting poverty and in prioritising social development;
  - to encourage countries and people around the world to support the victims of sexual violence; and
  - to accept access to financial resources as human right and promote social business;
- all states and national and international actors to protect citizens, and particularly, women and children, from violence and to listen to the voices of the victims of violence.
- all states to adopt a new approach to the global drug problem. We call for:

- scientific studies to evaluate the the impact of the world war on drugs, drug trafficking and levels of drug use;
- review and encourage innovative strategies to combat the drug crisis, such as those that have been implemented in several national and state jurisdictions to regulate drug use;
- endorse a new approach to the global drug crisis, based on human rights and treating addiction as a health problem and not as a crime.
- all states to honour the role of civil society and ease restrictions on their ability to achieve their goals.

## **2. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND PEACE**

The world's 6 000 Indigenous peoples, who make an essential contribution to the diversity and richness of humanity's cultural heritage, face the threat of being overwhelmed by commercial, global and national cultures.

WE MAKE A CALL TO:

- ensure the education of all indigenous peoples in the language of their choice, while protecting and promoting their languages, their science, philosophy and cosmology, and their right to religious freedom;
- respect the autonomy and self-determination of all indigenous peoples without limiting or criminalising their participation in indigenous and national politics and society as citizens with full political rights;
- preserve their habitat, land and natural resources, with particular attention to their lakes, rivers, water sources and forests, which are also humanity's and the world's lungs; and
- to obtain free, prior and informed consent from indigenous peoples on any decisions relating to their territories.

## **3. GLOBAL DEMOGRAPHICS/ PEOPLE ON THE MOVE**

Everywhere people are on the move. They are leaving their normal places of residence because of war, climate change, social violence and poverty arising from the lack of economic and employment opportunities.

WE MAKE A CALL TO:

- raise awareness of the complex and diverse motivations for people on the move, within and between countries, particularly those arising from economic deprivation and political instability and situations of violence;
- search for fair, compassionate and orderly solutions to the challenges created by human migration;
- protect the human rights and dignity of internally displaced persons and migrants, without leaving anyone behind;
- end the detention of migrant children;
- end the militarisation of border communities;
- all states to protect migrants from acts of xenophobic violence; and

- build networks and effective channels to come to the aid of communities suffering from the impact of climate change and natural disasters - and to do everything possible to avoid massive displacements.

#### **4. THE ROLE OF GLOBAL MEDIA IN MAKING PEACE**

We live in an age of immediate mass communication in which there has been an exponential increase in our ability to disseminate news instantly throughout the world. The geometric expansion of social media has brought the power of global communication to the fingertips of everyone with access to the internet. This power creates new responsibilities - particularly within the context of the threat that social media poses to traditional global media; the manipulation of social media for illegitimate economic and political purposes and the growing dissemination of “fake news”.

WE MAKE A CALL TO:

- promote transparency and accountability in the management of social and traditional media;
- resolutely protect freedom of expression globally and within all countries, as well as the safety of journalists all over the world;
- expose and oppose manipulation of social media for illegitimate commercial and political purposes, including promoting extremism, digital sexual abuse and trafficking;
- prohibit the use of social and traditional media to stir up hatred against people on the basis of their identity and to make propaganda for war;
- guard against the abuse of technology for the promotion of violent internet games and racial discrimination; and
- encourage global media to build a culture of peace, through education and dissemination of the values of peace.

#### **5. PRIORITIES FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT AND DEMILITARISATION**

We are deeply concerned that 74 years after the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear weapons continue to pose an existential threat to humankind. As Nobel Peace Laureates we have repeatedly warned of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear war and are compelled to do so once again.

We express our deep concern over the withdrawal of the United States from the multinational agreement that prevents an Iranian nuclear weapons programme, as well as the withdrawal of the United States and Russia from the 1987 *Intermediate Forces Treaty*.

However, threats to international peace do not come only from nuclear weapons. We are extremely concerned about escalating expenditure on conventional arms and the development of new and deadly weapons systems.

We have taken note of the letter we have received from President Mikhail Gorbachev and fully support his call to “all leaders of nuclear-weapon powers to reaffirm without delay the proposition that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought” and to “return to the negotiating table to agree on reducing and eliminating the nuclear arsenals”.

WE MAKE A CALL TO:

- India and Pakistan to resolve their differences peacefully and to foreswear any use of nuclear weapons. We call on the entire international community to help to avoid a nuclear disaster in South Asia;
- the international community to call on states to become parties to the *Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*;
- all states to implement to the full their obligations in terms of the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty* and to support the formal entry into force of the *Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty*;
- all states to cut massively expenditure on armaments and to divest themselves of all weapons of mass destruction;
- ban pre-emptively the use of fully autonomous weapons or “Killer Robots”. Weapons beyond human control would be by their very nature, illegal;
- stop the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas;
- all states to join and fully implement the 1997 *Mine Ban Treaty* and 2008 *Convention on Cluster Munitions*, and on non-state actors to abide by the norms these conventions represent;
- promote a policy of a nuclear weapons-free world, inviting countries and individuals to make strong commitments to reverse proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons; and
- stress the need for transparent information and further education on the impact and status of nuclear weapons.

## **6. THE FORCE OF LAW VS THE LAW OF FORCE**

The rule of law is indispensable for the ordering of social, political and economic relations and it is the foundation of all human rights. The force of law at the global level provides the framework for international peace and stability. Within nations it is the foundation for human rights, social cohesion and freedom - while its absence is the source of most of the violations of human rights, social division and oppression.

In our search for peace we stress the importance of non-interference in the domestic affairs of countries and the importance of preventing conflicts and wars before they break out.

WE MAKE A CALL TO:

- all the states involved to respect international law and to avoid the escalation of conflict in the Gulf region, Africa, the Middle East, Palestine/ Israel and Yemen;
- reinvigorate multilateralism and global cooperation for a stable rule-based international order;
- all states to honour their commitments to conventions related to nuclear disarmament, the protection of the environment, and global economic and social cooperation, which are essential for peace and for the survival of humanity;
- reject unilateralism, isolationism, authoritarianism, populism, interference in internal affairs and protectionism as threats to the rule of law, both at the national and international levels; and
- stress the importance of preventing conflicts before they break out.

## **7. EDUCATION FOR PEACE: THE POWER OF LOVE VS THE LOVE OF POWER**

A core focus of the Summit is to provide a platform for communication between peacemakers and future generations. Education presents a unique opportunity to inculcate the youth with the values

and knowledge that are essential for the development of a global culture of peace and for the development of a peaceful world.

WE MAKE A CALL TO:

- emphasise the centrality of human dignity in nonviolence and peace education;
- ensure that all educational curricula include human rights and peace education programmes;
- facilitate communication and exchanges between different cultures and nations to promote international solidarity and understanding;
- endorse Peace Education and empower teachers to plant the seeds of peace in the minds of children and youth by providing them with the tools for peace-building, particularly the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*;
- prioritise activities and promote policies to implement the Declaration and Programme of the Culture of Peace adopted by the UN General Assembly 20 years ago;
- promote the declaration of peace zones at all levels of education, parks, museums, and other public spaces that are meant to protect children and youth, and to foster communication between co-generations; and
- everyone - and particularly the youth - to make a personal commitment to nonviolence and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

## **STATEMENT OF NOBEL PEACE LAUREATES AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE 17TH WORLD SUMMIT OF NOBEL PEACE LAUREATES**

### **MÉRIDA | YUCATAN | MEXICO**

The Summit was attended by 10 Nobel Peace laureates:

1. President Frederik Willem De Klerk
2. President Juan Manuel Santos
3. President Lech Walesa
4. Dr Shirin Ebadi
5. Mrs Tawakkol Karman
6. Lord David Trimble
7. Prof Jody Williams
8. Leymah Gbowee
9. Kailash Satyarthi
10. Rigoberta Menchú Tum

and 30 Nobel Peace Laureate organisations:

1. European Union
2. International Committee of the Red Cross
3. The American Friends Service Committee
4. Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet
5. Martin Luther King Centre
6. Albert Schweitzer Institute
7. Desmond Tutu Peace Centre
8. Grameen Creative Lab
9. Nelson Mandela Foundation

10. Institute of international Law
11. ICAN
12. Amnesty International
13. European Commission
14. International Campaign to Ban Landmines
15. International Labour Organisation
16. International Peace Bureau
17. International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War
18. Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs
19. United Nations
20. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

However, they do not all necessarily support all aspects of the general consensus that emerged from the Summit's deliberations.