

Editorial

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE

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Learning from the World Wars, the United Nations was formed in 1945 with the Charter “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, ... and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, ... and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.” Through international collaboration the UN aims “to maintain international peace and security,” and “to take effective collective measures for the prevention and the removal of the threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace” (Art. 1,1). Positively, the Articles 1(2) and 1(3) call for the development of “friendly relations among nations” and for “international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character.” To achieve positive peace, we need to overcome social inequality, discrimination, marginalisation, and poverty. Sustainable development is inextricably linked to sustaining peace. Though economic and political institutions are necessary to resolve conflicts, building a culture of peace is an ethical obligation and needs personal commitment and collective efforts.

Humanity lost the unique historic opportunity to build a new lasting cooperative global peace order based on a collective security system envisioned in the UN Charter of 1945. Since the mid-1990s, disarmament initiatives have been blocked, military expenditures are increasing, and new wars are taking place in different parts of the world. According to the statistical data released by the United Nations, in 2018, more than 70 million people were found fleeing war, persecution, and conflict. The conflicts, insecurity, weak institutions, and limited access to justice challenge the realisation of sustainable peace nationally and globally.

The Constitution of UNESCO begins famously with the words, "Since wars begin in the minds of men and women, it is in the minds of men and women that the defences of peace must be constructed." The Constitution reminds the political leaders and all of humanity,

That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of [hu]mankind (5).

It is a sad fact and an ethical issue that unjust inequalities exist within and among the nations between men and women, urban and rural, adults and children, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, netizens and non-netizens, etc., and the disadvantaged groups suffer disproportionately from the disastrous effects of market-driven and techno-aided industrial developments. It is, therefore, a moral imperative that we develop an action plan, bringing together all the fields of knowledge, economic, and political powers providing an antidote to the omnipresent technocratic paradigm and the 'use and throw away' culture driven by a market economy and short-term electoral goals of politics. We need ethically aligned economic and political policies, institutions, and action plans to promote peace. As moral agents, human beings are caretakers of the Earth and all who are living in this common home, in collaboration and solidarity with all.

A year back, on 2 December 2020, the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, in "The State of the Planet" address at Columbia University, bluntly said: "Humanity is waging war on nature. This is suicidal." He listed some of the "suicidal" "climate catastrophes:"

Biodiversity is collapsing. One million species are at risk of extinction. Ecosystems are disappearing before our eyes. Deserts are spreading. Wetlands are being lost. Every year, we lose 10 million hectares of forests. Oceans are overfished -- and choking with plastic waste. The carbon dioxide they absorb is acidifying the seas. Coral reefs are bleached and dying. Air and water pollution are killing 9 million people annually – more than six times the current toll of the pandemic.

According to him, "Making peace with nature is the defining task of the 21st century." The threats the market-driven consumeristic ways of life pose to people and the planet fundamentally differ from traditional security threats posed by other countries or in the new wars by asymmetric non-state actors.

Peace with nature is necessary for sustaining peace. We must stop environmental destruction and reduce the human footprints in nature. Various anthropogenic processes, like agriculture, industrialisation, urbanisation, and globalisation, have negatively affected the climate, air, water, land, flora, and fauna. Developing and implementing cooperative global environmental policies aiming to decarbonise the world economy is necessary for avoiding destruction and promoting sustainable peace. To this effect, we need fundamental changes in values, worldviews, relationships among people, and between people and nature.

Sustaining peace is based on the premise that it will not be possible to achieve lasting peace in the long term without sustainable development, equitable economic opportunity, and human rights protections for all. Equal access to justice is deprived and distorted around the globe for millions of people, including women, children, the elderly, refugees, prisoners, differently-abled, and many other categories of the global population. For the first time, humankind threatens the survival of its own species and many other living beings by nuclear and biological warfare, pandemic-causing agents, ecological collapse, and global warming. The fact that we know that we pose threats to our own survival and the survival of other species and that only we could redress the situation obliges us morally to build and promote sustainable peace. Guterres is emphatic: "We cannot go back to the old normal of inequality, injustice and heedless dominion over the Earth."

Sustainable Development Goal 16 is dedicated to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building accountable institutions at all levels. In the Preamble to the Global Agenda 2030, we read: "There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development" ("Transforming Our World"). Justice, peace, and ethics are embedded in

concurrence to the progress and sustainability of nations across the world under the leadership of the United Nations. Equal access to the justice system is not merely the delivery of justice through institutionalised means or providing legal counsel to the needy, but it is the foundation for protecting fundamental human rights, guaranteeing to meet everyone's basic biological, psychological, and social needs. Legal empowerment and partnerships are necessary to bring development to the marginalised and vulnerable and to build sustainable peace.

This issue of the *Journal of Dharma* examines the interaction between development and peace and brings out the ethical and ecological interface of all our policies and ways of life.

"Promotion of Social Peace and Development by Social Design" by Kuo-Kuang Fan and Chia-Lin Chang discusses the way to help students think, interact, create, and reflect through the process of social design and comes up with creative ideas to promote social peace and development. Teachers guide students to explore the problems connected with socialisation and its impacts based on three aspects, i.e. diversified groups, sustainable community, and ethics. It is expected to support students to rethink the current social situation and crisis and develop an attitude of peace promotion and cooperation in the learning process of social design, thereby realising a sustainable and stable interaction on a social scale.

The research article "Inclusive Law School Clinics: Institutionalising Effective and Accountable Justice for All" by Shibu Puthalath and Shashank D. Bharadwaj shows that providing affordable and timely access to justice institutions and legal aid services will help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals 16 targets of peace, justice, and strong institutions. Indian law school clinics have a unique opportunity to achieve the goal through institutionalised clinical legal education. The study infers that completely institutionalising the law school legal aid clinics as part of clinical legal education is a powerful platform to promote equal access to justice to all.

"Towards Harmony and Peace with Nonhumans: Pandemics and Ecological Democracy in Greg Bear's *Darwin's Children*" by Kee Wha Joo explores the fictional viral pandemics and the posthuman society through the lens of new materialism and puts forth *Homo monstercus*

as a new image of humanity fit for new lifeform in the era of the pandemic. As a descendent of *Homo sapiens*, *Homo monstercus* is the new protagonist of the future Earth, monster-like humanity, constantly transforming and evolving to survive the Anthropocene in harmony and peace with nonhumans. By applying theories such as Gilbert Simondon's individuation theory and Bruno Latour's actor-network theory and using concepts such as Karen Barad's intra-action, Stacy Alaimo's trans-corporeality, Donna Haraway's companion species, this paper analyses the anthropocentric relationship with nonhumans, divulges ecological and democratic ethic which enables their harmonious co-existence and symbiosis.

In the wake of renewed attention and discussions regarding sustainable development, paying due regard to the nature of a society that existed in ancient India, specifically during the Sangam [*Cankam*] period, could provide insightful observations. Anita Jose and Betsy Paul C. in their paper "Locating Sustainability within Indian Ethos: A Study of Posthumanistic Implications of *Tinai*," connect the concept of *Tinai*, with critical posthumanism and posthumanist subjectivity, providing insights regarding the partnerships and harmonious co-existence between the human, the ecological, and the material worlds.

The essay "Knowledge Sharing, Growth, and Sustainability: Focusing on the Bolivia KSP Case" by Youngrok Kim and Eunji Kim emphasises the importance of Korea's Knowledge Sharing Programme (KSP) role in promoting global sustainability through partnerships. At the request of the Bolivian government, KSP Bolivia was conducted, focusing on the development of the fiscal rules for the Bolivian budget management. Bolivia's various economic indicators are analysed to identify the issues in the Bolivian national economy and to suggest appropriate fiscal rules to address such issues. In particular, it was confirmed that the KSP is deeply related to the resolutions and agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Building peace and sustaining it has been a priority since violence prevents people and nations from achieving their goals. The roadmap to peace starts from the school. It is necessary to instil peace in students' hearts by including it in the school curricula. That is to prevent extremism and achieve human security. "Inclusion of Islamic Peace Concepts in School Curricula" by Wail Ismail, Mahfouda Mushaiqri, Li Haiyan looks at the importance of integrating peace from the Islamic perspective into the school curricula at all levels. The

research examines peace in the Qur'an and Sunnah. It reviews some educational models and theories that support peace and suggests ways to include it in school curricula. The model is designed by considering four dimensions: classroom, school environment, the wider community, and environment.

"Harmony in Nature: The Role of Right Understanding" by Anil Kumar Tewari clarifies the confusion between wealth and prosperity and suggests that they are not identical. Whereas the former is understood as a substantial accumulation of physical facilities/properties, the latter relates to the feeling of having more than the required physical facilities/properties. The different levels of existence and their interconnectedness are explained following the Madhyastha Darśana propounded by Agrahar Nagraj (1920-2016) and comparing his perspectives with Western thinkers. The concluding section reflects on the solution offered by Nagraj to emphasise the relevancy of his viewpoints on the ecological matters discussed in the contemporary scenario.

With gratitude to all the researchers who investigated the SDG 16 and the relationship between prosperity and peace and with the hope that all of us will take decisions for promoting sustainable peace, we are happy to submit this issue of the *Journal of Dharma* on "Towards Sustainable Societies: Peace, Ethics, and Development" for your reading and reflection.

References

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