

10 November 2006

The Buenos Aires Declaration: We the Peoples supporting the United Nations for a Fair and Peaceful World

The World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) and its member associations represented at the 38th Plenary Assembly, 6-10 November, 2006, in Argentina, adopt this Buenos Aires Declaration and commend it to the Membership of the United Nations and to the peoples of the world.

We express appreciation for Kofi Annan's leadership of the United Nations and thank him for his dedicated service to the peoples around the world. His leadership has been a great credit to the continent of Africa.

We welcome the appointment of Ban Ki-moon as the 8th Secretary-General and assure him of our support and our engagement alongside him in his efforts to further strengthen the United Nations in the service of humanity.

Mandate

We recall and reaffirm that the purpose of the World Federation is "to be a peoples' movement for the United Nations" and declare our commitment to bring the UN closer to people in the 21st century.

Main principles and instruments

As a peoples' movement for the United Nations we are for dialogue.

We support a continuing process of strengthening for an effective UN that is relevant to the lives of people everywhere and efficient in the sustenance of the planet as a whole.

We believe in a UN that supports democracy and that is itself democratic.

We support constructive dialogue leading to harmonious relations between states as a means of preventing and resolving conflicts.

We support the UN's emphasis on human security, which means realizing the basic human rights of every person and protecting people from critical and pervasive threats.

We hearten young people to support the United Nations and to use our organization to participate in shaping the future of the world.

Main Challenges

We welcome the incoming Secretary-General's commitment to peace, development, and human rights and his vision that the mandate of the UN in the coming period "is to strengthen the interstate system so that humanity can be better served amidst new challenges." We welcome his

commitment to the responsibility to protect and to preventive strategies, politically, economically, and socially.

Peace and Security

As a peoples movement, we fully support and will work for the shift in focus from state sovereignty to human security.

We call for vigorous efforts to encourage arms reduction and to teach and seek peaceful conflict resolution. The World Federation will work to bring this critical issue to the people, as it is their security.

Together with other civil society actors we will work on practical steps that can be taken to mobilize people in support of the Test Ban Treaty, the Treaty on Non-Proliferation, the Conventions on Biological and Chemical Weapons, as well as the one on land mines, and the UN Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

We support the efforts to create an Arms Trade Treaty. We will advocate the advancement of nuclear-free zones and the destruction of stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons as well as landmines.

We condemn all terrorism worldwide.

We shall energetically promote the Peacebuilding Fund. We shall lobby in support of United Nations peacekeeping and for fair burden-sharing among nations. We shall lobby for a corps of United Nations observers who can be deployed to situations of concern at short notice. We shall lobby in support of a UN rapid reaction peacekeeping capacity.

We shall support the further development of preventive diplomacy by the United Nations Secretary-General and the Security Council. We shall advocate in support of strategies for the prevention of gross violations of human rights.

We support the promotion of a “culture of peace” and peace education in order to further the goals of the United Nations.

Millennium Development Goals

We declare the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be the priority program of the Federation and its members, and support the further enhancement of the “Global Partnership for Development” as a tool for realizing the MDGs. We shall continue to give the Millennium Development Campaign our full support. We shall continue to mobilize civil society to engage in partnerships, to help in realizing the MDGs, placing particular emphasis on the importance of education in the realization of all eight MDGs.

We shall support the people-oriented focus of the Human Development Reports and their emphasis on empowering and advancing the basic human rights of each individual.

We encourage the introduction, nationally, regionally, and internationally, of the concept of preventable poverty. This concept means that every country should monitor itself to detect parts of the population not having access to the available means of development resources. This effort should be supported regionally and internationally. In this way, available resources can be marshaled for the relief of people in distress. Governments should increase their funding to NGOs as a means of realizing the MDGs.

We shall support and encourage dialogue about new financing mechanisms for development, and at the same time urge all countries to immediately raise their development assistance to 0.7 percent of GNP, if they have not already reached this target.

We shall continue to work for the protection of the global environment and for renewable sources of energy.

We shall continue to highlight the plight of people afflicted by pandemics such as HIV/AIDS and call for urgent relief and support programs.

Human Rights

We support the concept of the responsibility to protect in its entirety, including the three aspects of the responsibility to prevent, the responsibility to react and the responsibility to rebuild. We will work towards its development, strengthening and proper application.

We strongly urge that in all countries human rights be taught as a basic course in primary and secondary schools and in universities and other higher institutions of learning. We shall wage a world campaign in favor of human rights education.

We call on the human rights movement to help ensure that judges and legal personnel in all countries are supplied with the basic international human rights norms and jurisprudence in local language so that they can benefit from them in their daily work.

We support the shared international responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. We shall work with other NGOs to enhance the effectiveness of the new Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court.

We will campaign for the adoption of a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and for early ratification of the Convention of the Rights of Peoples with Disabilities.

We shall support the implementation of the human rights treaties and call for the allocation of more support from the United Nations budget for this effort.

We shall particularly emphasize the rights of women because they are the ones who bear a major part of the burden of poverty, war, and environmental degradation. We call for the establishment of a UN Department for the Advancement of Women, headed by a UN Under-Secretary-General, to energize this process.

We shall continue to oppose violence against women and children. We shall contribute to campaigns against human trafficking.

We urge all states to sign, ratify and implement the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocols, as well as the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.

We shall continue to promote the values expressed by the “Alliance of Civilizations”, and seek to integrate those values into our work.

International Cooperation

We call for renewed attention to ways and means of strengthening international cooperation. We shall contribute to this process by organizing expert panels on topical subjects and make their report available to the United Nations, As part of this process we shall organize in 2007 an Expert Panel on the implementation of international human rights treaties. We shall continue this process on other topics in succeeding years on topics such as the strengthening of the role of international law. We also reaffirm our strong support for comprehensive UN reform.

We shall continue to support the Democracy Fund. We shall promote inter-cultural dialogue and focus on common actions that may create positive energy and a sense of connection needed to overcome the difficult and sensitive problems.

We are proud of the achievement of this 38th Plenary Assembly in deciding not to pursue conflictual paths in considering issues of acute contemporary conflict. Instead we focused on searching for agreement. We affirm that conflict is not the path to harmony and peace.

We pledge ourselves to support dynamic international cooperation in support of the vision of the United Nations Charter, which remains as valid today as it was on the day of its adoption. We call upon the Peoples of the United Nations to rally in support of their United Nations.