

Peace Workshops

I GENERAL FRAMEWORK: THE CULTURE OF PEACE

The essential part of this document is devoted to the presentation of 12 peace workshops, but before presenting each of them separately, something needs to be said about the central theme that links them, which is the Culture of Peace and the eight keys or “treasures” of peace.

In his address to the European Scout and Guide Conference in Salzburg in April 1995, former UNESCO Director General Federico Mayor stressed that:

“The Culture of Peace is an idea on the move that requires a profound change in our attitudes and daily behaviour and an active acceptance of tolerance, which is neither complacency nor concession... and which is not “the virtue of the man without convictions”. Just as tolerance is not synonymous with indifference, so peace is not synonymous with either passivity or docility...

“There is, once again, just one single strategy: education, and education understood in its broadest sense:

- ...the transfer and sharing of knowledge,
- an active introduction to the values of peace,
- the learning of tolerant behaviour,
- and the awakening of each person’s potentials...” (ref. 1)

In the same address, he recalled the famous citation from the preamble to the UNESCO Constitution: “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”. This strategic and educational approach concurs with the thinking of one of the great educators of the XX century, Baden-Powell, who always viewed education as the art of developing “happy, active and useful” citizens: entrenching

the ideals of peace, tolerance and understanding in the minds and hearts of young people is not only the most noble of tasks but also the most useful that can be imagined to “replace the culture of war with the culture of peace”. (ref. 2)

The Year of the Culture of Peace in 2000 has now given way to the “International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World”. It is an invitation to step up the efforts!





Following nine months of debate, the UN General Assembly adopted on 13 September 1999 a “Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace” (A/53/243).

The first article of the declaration provides the most complete definition to date of the Culture of Peace:

“A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life based on:

- a) *Respect for life, ending of violence and promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and co-operation;*
- b) *Full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law;*
- c) *Full respect for and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;*
- d) *Commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts;*
- e) *Efforts to meet the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations;*
- f) *Respect for and promotion of the right to development;*
- g) *Respect for and promotion of equal rights of and opportunities for women and men;*
- h) *Respect for and promotion of the rights of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion and information;*
- i) *Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, co-operation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations; and fostered by an enabling national and international environment conducive to peace.”*



II SEQUENCE OF THE WORKSHOPS

We have decided to follow the order of the eight keys to peace to form the backbone for the presentation of the workshops.

The eight keys (or treasures) of peace were developed by UNESCO and WOSM together prior to the 19th World Scout Jamboree in Chile in 1998/99. They give concrete form to the commitment of Scouts to peace, which is far from being a passing expression made in a quickly forgotten declaration, but rather a daily commitment.

These eight keys were presented on a website designed to arouse the curiosity of and inspire reflection by young people during the World Scout Jamboree in Chile. They can fulfil the same purpose in this kit.

We realise that the order chosen for the presentation of the workshops was not the sole solution, but it does have a certain significance, both conceptual and educational, as follows:

Education for Peace:

Learning attitudes and skills that help us to live together. Three workshops illustrate this concept. The first is entitled "Legends of peace" (No. 1) and it calls on the imagination of young people to create a symbolic background for the culture of peace. The second workshop has a title which is self-explanatory: "Peace through intercultural understanding" (No. 2), while the third, "A traditional African folk-tale for Democracy and Peace Education" (No. 3) presents peace education from the perspective of African cultural traditions.

Democracy:

The same peace workshop based on African cultural traditions (No. 3) serves to illustrate the concept of democracy through citizen involvement.

Tolerance and solidarity:

Three workshops deal with the problem of the growing discrepancy between the rich and the poor, the mighty and the underprivileged, the North and the South: first from the angle of minorities: "I am not a racist but ..." (No. 4), then through North-South solidarity: "It's not fair!" (No. 5), and finally through the problem of refugees: "Refugees go home!" (No. 6).

Respect for Human Rights:

The question of refugees can and should no doubt be considered as a matter of human rights (see above, No. 6), but there is also a more specific aspect, which is "I've got rights too! Exploring Children's Rights" (No. 7).

Sustainable development:

This problem is tackled from two complementary approaches: the "It's not fair" workshop (see above, No. 5) tackles the subject from the development angle, while the "Save the Earth" workshop (No. 8) looks at it from the perspective of the environment.

Gender equality:

Two workshops deal with the question of ensuring an equal place for men and women in building society: No. 3 from the point of view of democracy and African cultural traditions, and No. 7, while embracing the global subject of the Rights of the Child, makes special reference to the girl child and her rights.

Refusing violence:

Three workshops touch on the question of peace from this angle: "Managing our Conflicts" (No. 9), "Violence on the screen" (No. 10) and "Mines!" (No. 11). In addition, the "Religion: men and women of peace" workshop (No. 12) tackles the question of non-violence from the angle of "peace heroes", men and women who, inspired by a profound religious message, have tried to epitomise it in their lives.

Free flow of information:

Three workshops touch on the growing need for information on peace: No. 1 from the point of view of peace education and its symbolic background, No. 10 from the point of view of violence in the media and No. 11 from the specific point of view of the campaign to ban landmines.

As expected of a Scout publication, the 12 workshops are rounded off with a challenge to the participants, which is to put the words into action. This is the focus of the section "My commitment to peace".





What we have just explained has two important consequences, which we hope the leaders using this kit will appreciate:

- By adopting the concept and keys of the Culture of Peace as the central thread, we have ensured the coherence of the kit.
- The workshops are not conceived as watertight compartments; they strengthen and enrich each other. Far from being an original idea, this approach is in keeping with the educational trends of recent decades, where education for peace, democracy, tolerance, human rights, development and the environment are considered more and more in a global context, since it is recognised that "...their concerns are finally mutual and overlapping" (ref. 3) and that "...at their broad focus...there is an extremely marked degree of convergence between (these) educations...to the point that it becomes difficult to conceive of them as discrete fields" (ref. 4)

These two elements together are further proof of the educational value of the kit.

REFERENCES

1. *Address of Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO, to the European Scout and Guide Conference, Salzburg, April 1995.*
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Sue Greig, Graham Pike and David Selby, "Earthrights", WWW and Kogan Page, UK, 1987, p. 23.*
4. *"Earthrights", op. cit., p. 30.*

