

Theme Paper on UNITED NATIONS PEACE DAY (21 SEP), NONVIOLENCE DAY (2 OCT), WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY (10 OCT), WORLD FOOD DAY (16 OCT), INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TOLERANCE (16 NOV), INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CONSCIENCE (5 APRIL), INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NEUTRALITY (12 DEC) & INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LIVING TOGETHER IN PEACE (16 MAY)

**The text matter is downloaded from the respective links of websites mentioned below.**

### I) UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE (21 SEP)

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-day-peace>

**Theme: Actions for Peace : Our ambition for the global goals of sustainable development**

Each year the International Day of Peace (IDP) is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire. Never has our world needed peace more.

This year's theme is **Actions for Peace: Our Ambition for the #GlobalGoals**. It is a call to action that recognizes our individual and collective responsibility to foster peace. Fostering peace contributes to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will create a culture of peace for all.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said, "Peace is needed today more than ever. War and conflict are unleashing devastation, poverty, and hunger, and driving tens of millions of people from their homes. Climate chaos is all around. And even peaceful countries are gripped by gaping inequalities and political polarization."

#### **Sustainable Development Goals**

2023 marks the mid-point in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2023 observance of the International Day of Peace coincides with the SDG summit (18 – 19 September) to mark the mid-point milestone.

The SDGs aim to bring us closer to having more peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, free from fear and violence. But without the buy-in and contribution of a wide range of actors including the 1.2 billion young people alive, the goals will not be achieved. We invite you to join the United Nations' call to take action for peace: fight inequality, drive action on climate change, and promote and protect human rights.

## The Universal Declaration of Human Rights & the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide

2023 is also the 75th anniversaries of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide. IDP 2023 encourages all youth to be ambitious in their engagement as positive and constructive social agents, to join the movement to reach the SDGs and contribute to building sustainable peace. Together we can help to lead our world towards a greener, more equitable, just, and secure future for all

## II) UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NONVIOLENCE (2 OCT)

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/non-violence-day>

### Theme : Say NO to Violence

#### Mahatma Gandhi Quotes

- Poverty is the worst form of violence.
  - Non-violence is a weapon of the strong.
  - Non-violence and truth are inseparable and presuppose one another.
  - We may never be strong enough to be entirely nonviolent in thought, word and deed. But we must keep nonviolence as our goal and make strong progress towards it.
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- The International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.
  - According to General Assembly resolution A/RES/61/271 of 15 June 2007, which established the commemoration, the International Day is an occasion to "disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness". The resolution reaffirms "the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence" and the desire "to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence".
  - The name of Mahatma Gandhi transcends the bounds of race, religion and nation-states, and has emerged as the prophetic voice of the twenty-first century. The world remembers Gandhi not just for his passionate adherence to the practice of non-violence and supreme humanism, but as the benchmark against which we test men and women in public life, political ideas and government policies, and the hopes and wishes of our shared planet.
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### **III) UNITED NATIONS WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY (10 OCT)**

[https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIIP3l6JSogQMVRNMWBR0Uzg4rEAAYASAAEgKfTvD\\_BwE](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIIP3l6JSogQMVRNMWBR0Uzg4rEAAYASAAEgKfTvD_BwE)

#### **Theme: Mental Health is a Universal Human Right**

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Mental health conditions include mental disorders and psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm. People with mental health conditions are more likely to experience lower levels of mental well-being, but this is not always or necessarily the case.

### **IV) UNITED NATIONS FAO WORLD FOOD DAY (16 OCT)**

<https://www.fao.org/world-food-day/en>

#### **Theme: Water is Life ,Water is Food : Leave no one behind**

Water is essential to life on Earth. It makes up over 50% of our bodies and covers about 71% of the Earth's surface. **Only 2.5% of water is fresh**, suitable for drinking, agriculture, and most industrial uses. Water is a driving force for people, economies and nature and the foundation of our food. Indeed, agriculture accounts for 72% of global freshwater withdrawals, but like all natural resources, fresh water is not infinite.

Rapid population growth, urbanization, economic development, and climate change are putting the planet's water resources under increasing stress. At the same time, **freshwater resources per person have declined 20%** in the past decades and water availability and quality are deteriorating fast due to decades of poor use and management, over extraction of groundwater, pollution and climate change. We risk stretching this precious resource to a point of no return.

Today, **2.4 billion people live in water-stressed countries**. Many are smallholder farmers who already struggle to meet their daily needs, particularly women, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, and refugees. Competition for this priceless resource is increasing as water scarcity becomes an ever-increasing cause of conflict.

Around 600 million people who depend, at least partially, on aquatic food systems for a living are suffering the effects of pollution, ecosystem degradation, unsustainable practices and climate change.

## **V)UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TOLERANCE** **(16 NOV)**

**<https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/international-day-tolerance-16-november>**

**Theme: Tolerance is respect , acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures , our forms of expression and ways of being Human”**

In 1996, the UN General Assembly (by resolution 51/95) invited UN Member States to observe the International Day for Tolerance on 16 November, with activities directed towards both educational establishments and the wider public. You can learn more from the International Day for Tolerance website, and also read a message for the 2015 observance of the day from the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon below:

### **Message from the Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon**

The call to practice tolerance was written into the identity of the United Nations 70 years ago. Today, in a world buffeted by turbulence and change, the Charter's summons remains a vital touchstone for our work.

People are more connected - but this does not mean there is more understanding.

Societies are ever more diverse – but intolerance is growing in many places. Sectarian tensions can be found at the heart of many conflicts, with the rise of violent extremism, massive human rights violations, and cultural

cleansing. And the biggest crisis of forced displacement since the Second World War has spawned hatred and xenophobia against refugees and others.

Tolerance is much more than passively accepting the other. It brings obligations to act, and must be taught, nurtured and defended. Tolerance requires investment by States in people, and in the fulfilment of their full potential through education, inclusion and opportunities. This means building societies founded on respect for human rights, where fear, distrust and marginalization are supplanted by pluralism, participation and respect for differences.

This is the message of the International Day of Tolerance – reflected in the UNESCO Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, adopted in 1995. This same idea animates the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), which is being led forward by UNESCO across the world.

On the International Day of Tolerance, let us recognize the mounting threat posed by those who strive to divide, and let us pledge to forge a path defined by dialogue, social cohesion and mutual understanding.

## **VI) UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CONSCIENCE** **(5 APRIL)**

**<https://www.unesco.org/en/days/conscience-day>**

### **Theme: Building a culture of Peace with love and conscience**

The preamble to the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) states that "disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of humankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people." Moreover, article 1 of the Declaration states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

The task of the United Nations to save future generations from the scourge of war requires transformation towards a culture of peace, which consists of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society.

**Conscious of the need for the creation of conditions of stability and well-being and peaceful and friendly relations based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, the General Assembly declared 5 April the International Day of Conscience.**

## **VII) UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NEUTRALITY (12 DEC)**

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/neutrality-day>

### **Theme : Preventive Diplomacy**

Neutrality — defined as the legal status arising from the abstention of a state from all participation in a war between other states, the maintenance of an attitude of impartiality toward the belligerents, and the recognition by the belligerents of this abstention and impartiality — is critically important for the United Nations to gain and maintain the confidence and cooperation of all in order to operate independently and effectively, especially in situations that are politically charged.

As Article 2 of the UN Charter obligates member states to settle their international disputes by peaceful means and to refrain from the threat, or the use of force in their relations, the General Assembly reaffirmed those obligations in its resolution 71/275.

The resolution also underlined that some states' national policies of neutrality can contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security and play an important role in developing mutually beneficial relations among countries of the world.

Recognizing that such national policies of neutrality are aimed at promoting the use of preventive diplomacy, which is a core function of the United Nations and occupies a central place among the functions of the Secretary-General, the General Assembly decided to declare 12 December the International Day of Neutrality, and called for marking the day by holding events aimed at enhancing public awareness of the value of neutrality in international relations.

The United Nations is committed to moving from a culture of "reaction" to one of "prevention". The term "Preventive diplomacy" refers to diplomatic action taken to prevent disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of conflicts when they occur. While it is conducted in different forms and fora, both public and private, the most common expression of preventive diplomacy is found in the work of envoys dispatched to crisis areas to encourage dialogue, compromise and the peaceful resolution of tensions.

## **VIII) UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF LIVING TOGETHER IN PEACE (16 MAY)**

## **Theme: United in differences and diversity**

### **United in differences and diversity**

Living together in peace is all about accepting differences and having the ability to listen to, recognize, respect and appreciate others, as well as living in a peaceful and united way.

The UN General-Assembly, in its resolution 72/130, declared 16 May the International Day of Living Together in Peace, as a means of regularly mobilizing the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity. The Day aims to uphold the desire to live and act together, united in differences and diversity, in order to build a sustainable world of peace, solidarity and harmony.

The Day invites countries to further promote reconciliation to help to ensure peace and sustainable development, including by working with communities, faith leaders and other relevant actors, through reconciliatory measures and acts of service and by encouraging forgiveness and compassion among individuals.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/living-in-peace-day>