

LONG WALK OF PEACE: MISSING DIMENSIONS

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Abstract: In this article, I argue that a spiritual approach to build a 'culture of peace' is missing in the recently published United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) document titled *Long Walk of Peace: Towards a Culture of Prevention* (2018). The focus of the UNESCO document is on achieving Sustainable Development Goals as key to its peace-building strategy. However, the mainstream peace-building conversations ignore other noteworthy developments in the field of peace discourses, especially those relating to acknowledging and understanding the inner worlds of the human being. The argument that peace begins within oneself can be found in the exemplary life of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, and in discourses which are relegated into the religious or spiritual domains. Without giving undue importance to the institutions of organised religion, this article attempts to bring focus to scholars and organisations working towards developing critical skills required to foster empathic and compassionate communities. By not providing clear direction to educators on how to develop such critical skills of humaneness, respect, and dignity amongst others, the 'peace and security architecture' of the United Nations which the UNESCO document rightly commends as momentous, stands on shaky ground.

Key words: Peace Education; Development Education; UNESCO; Youth; Gandhi; Soka Gakkai International (SGI); Educating the Heart; Sustainable Development Goals.

Introduction

In its most recent publication, *Long Walk of Peace: Towards a Culture of Prevention* (2018), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) states that the peace and security architecture of the United Nations rests upon three predicates: peace and security; human rights; and development as these have '...inspired new trajectories

to handle the growing complexity of new and old conflicts...’ (2018: 154-155). The UNESCO document stresses the important role of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (2018: 23) in diminishing conflict in societies and discusses the concept of peace from a historical perspective. It further highlights emerging issues which need to be addressed by peace-builders before a ‘culture of peace’ can be achieved.

In this article, I firstly focus on the tenuous relationship between development and peace raised by post-development scholars reflected in the concerns and difficulties of communities living in different contexts which go unnoticed by ‘development’ enthusiasts. Secondly, I also consider the historical analysis of peace which has ignored the significant role of the spiritual approach to achieving peace and reducing, or resolving, conflict as an important sustainable approach to peace-building. In many ways, the spiritual path with its emphasis on inner worlds of an individual is perhaps the oldest approach to peace-building. Gandhi becomes relevant here as part of his greatness lay in his acceptance of human imperfectness, a continuous effort to strive for peace and non-violence in his daily life, and his call to practice what one preached. In other words, the personal was political for Gandhi, and as a leader of peace his life was exemplary.

Thirdly, I wish to generate interest amongst educators on how to ‘spiritually’ equip the next generation with the skills to cultivate peace and harmony within oneself, with the community, and with the environment. The peace-building activities of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) is one example. I also reflect on the core message of a seminar event, held in October 2018, on the role of Protestant schools and their contribution to the future of Irish society as a second example stressing the need for such a ‘spiritual’ education. At the seminar, leading educators called for an education system which, instead of ignoring the role of religion, must question the relevance of religion. It argued for an ‘educated religion’ to enable emotional and empathic skills amongst young people. Finally, the article reminds us that other scholars have also made a plea for fostering

compassionate global citizens. The task of education is therefore to enable and empower the youth with the requisite skills to support active citizenship.

This article is based on secondary sources with special references to the UNESCO 2018 document, the SGI newsletters, and my readings of Gandhi. I have relied heavily on direct quotes from the documents to illustrate my main argument. My contention is that not only are we missing a spiritual dimension to peace and the tools needed to eke out (or manifest) that spiritual aspect in our daily lives, but that our peace-building processes lack leaders who are spiritually awakened. Furthermore, values of compassion, empathy, humanism, wisdom, inner transformation, and dialogue between people and their leaders, and among civil society are crucial for the UNESCO call for a ‘culture of prevention’ (2018: 23) of conflict. In other words, we need many more Gandhis in this long walk of peace.

Long Walk of Peace

The UNESCO document argues that building peace is a continuous process, and sometimes an elusive goal because well-intentioned policies over a long period of time have not always resulted in achieving peace within many communities.

“Decades after the nations of the world came together to form the United Nations system with a determination to build peace and security for all, conflicts continue to rage claiming countless lives, displacing millions of people, and threatening to destroy our common heritage” (2018: 3).

Through a variety of concrete examples, the UNESCO document shows how the United Nations (UN) has pursued peace and attempted to avoid conflict in precarious situations. Examples of strategies undertaken range from building capacities for food security through sustainable agriculture, environmental cooperation, learning from culture and heritage for peace-

keeping, women's participation as uniformed personnel, education, and youth leadership amongst others. The document then goes on to reflect upon the UN's understanding of peace quoting Hobbes, Spinoza, and Foucault fleetingly. Resting its arguments on Richmond (2005: 207) who famously said that providing for a clearer understanding of what must be done, and what must be avoided becomes easier if we know what peace is, the UN peace agenda has evolved and expanded its manifold horizons amid the global transformations and disruptions of recent decades. Ranging from a focus on Eurocentric security concerns embedded in Cold War legacies, the UN peace agenda has moved to innovative methodologies and holistic visions of peace including societal concerns of social justice, poverty alleviation, women's empowerment, and harnessing the potential of young people and children's welfare.

Using concerns of the environment, health and culture defined by heritage, music, theatre and sports, the UNESCO document stresses that the emerging concept of 'sustaining peace' organically directs itself towards achieving a culture of prevention. It declares that peace and security, development and human rights are the pillars of the UN strategy of achieving peace. Acknowledging the limitations of encompassing all conceptual and empirical studies, the document clearly emphasises that: 'It is, however, possible to discern some of the prominent trends in the evolution of the UN peace agenda by employing the academic. This is the *raison d'être* of this publication' (2018: 33-34).

The document, commendably, argues for the role of alternate discourses in attaining peace in the 'Imperatives of Reform' chapter where examples of communities moving towards non-violent and peaceful methods of conflict resolution have been recommended to policy makers.

"Clearly, peace activities need to emerge organically from within society... Peace cannot be imposed from outside...The transformative norms, values and narratives of such successful practices need to be evaluated by policy-makers and

practitioners in order to develop guidelines to help attain peaceful, just and inclusive societies” (2018: 159).

The UNESCO document further alludes to the importance of culture, and synergies present in different religious paths: ‘The importance of cultural dimensions and multi-religious synergy for transformative education also needs to be accorded greater attention at all levels’ (2018: 160). Again, in its concluding section, the authors have mentioned an inclusion of other types of peace mechanisms, ‘...holistic visions of peace resonate well with the ethos of culture of peace’ (2018: 164). The concluding remarks, however, raise the hopes of the peace-searcher by directing attention (without suggesting how) to the significance of using different strategies and alternate discourses:

“Peace can be radically transformative or it can be a passive acceptance of wrongdoing and injustice. Just as conflict is inevitable to the human experience, the concept of ‘peace’ will always be a site of arguments and a journey of discovery... Instead of trying to conflate peace with one or other schema, all those involved should constantly anticipate and nurture its plural ramifications” (2018: 164-165).

However, in its final framework in the section on ‘Structures and Processes’, the document considers the transformative education needed to ensure a culture of prevention of conflict but offers inadequate attention to multi-religious synergies and the corresponding spiritual dimensions of peace. While this well-written UNESCO document fills the peace-searcher with hope, it leaves one with despair on the question of where, in the document, does one look for the (promised) alternatives to the mainstream discourse on peace, conflict, or its resolution. What could possibly be the indicators of ‘transformative education’ which have not been tried before, and moreover, what are the ‘transformative norms, values and narratives’ which the document refers to?

The document clearly stresses the inter-linkages between the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and puts forth the argument that unequal power distribution, discrimination and inequality are some of the root causes of poverty.

“With growing competition over natural and other resources essential to an adequate standard of living, denial of economic and social rights is increasingly becoming a cause and predictor of violence, social unrest and conflict” (2018: 106-107).

The way out of such poverty is to stress the ‘holistic’ nature of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, by linking people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships. The report ends with suggestions for conflict prevention in the future using different peace and security tools (described in detail in the document), and ensuring that the pillars of development, human rights, and humanitarianism are upheld in the process.

“Grounded in the human rights framework, the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide new momentum to promote peace through human rights and development, with the aim of leaving no one behind. SDG 16, which aims to ‘Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels’, alongside the other SDGs, offers renewed potential to achieve the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, through a human rights framework, environmental protection and strengthened international cooperation...” (2018: 106-107).

In Section B of the document we hear grassroots voices from different groups of people globally which is inclusive, and highly commendable. While the document refers to a set of values and modes of behaviour, among other attributes, in a ‘culture of peace’, it leaves the keen peace-

searcher wanting to know what that could mean in daily life for an ordinary peace loving individual or community. The 'culture of peace' with its 'set of values, attitudes, and modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups, and nations' (UN Resolution A/Res/52/13 of 20th November 1997) is not something which can be taken as a given. On the contrary such a set of values and attitudes have to be cultivated and nurtured by observing one's peace within and without or inner and outer. The document also does not tease out the human experience of conflict or the journey of discovery it refers to (164-165). Nor does it discuss how peace develops organically in the same societies where violence has become the norm.

Interestingly, the document begins its journey with Gandhi's quotation that 'The world will live in peace, only when the individuals composing it make up their minds to do so' (2018: 20). However, the document's analysis did not delve deeper into the spiritual dimension of Gandhi's understanding of what he meant by making up one's mind to live in peace which is discussed below. Again, the document reminds us that since 2007, 2 October (Gandhi's birthday) has been declared 'International Day of Non-Violence' (UNESCO 2018: 31) to recognise the fact that without non-violence, achieving positive peace and social progress is not possible.

Gandhi: The personal is political

Describing the relevance of Gandhi, Heredia (2018) writes that the Gandhian discourse and praxis is foundational to understanding peace and harmony, especially because of his emphasis on the personal as political: 'I don't have a message; my life is my message' (Heredia 2018:16). For Gandhi, the personal was political, and the political was inclusive of other dimensions of personal and social life, religious or rather an ethical struggle, precisely because it was always a work in

progress for a new and liberated society. The Gandhian understanding of peace, according to Heredia, began with his notion of *Swaraj* or self-rule which meant primarily a rule over one's self as the foundation for living with others in a just, free, harmonious environment premised on forgiveness and reconciliation. Heredia further elaborates on his understanding of the Gandhian approach as follows:

“For Gandhi, justice must be founded on equality and dharma, prioritising duties rather than rights; freedom on self-control and self-reliance, more than freedom from others; harmony on self-respect and self-realisation, not on power and dominance over others” (Heredia 2018: 17).

Heredia shows, as below, how the Gandhian personal quest for becoming just, free, and at peace was relevant to the political or wider societal sphere.

“Gandhi's emphasis on ahimsa (nonviolence) and satyagraha (truth-force), his swadeshi (one's own neighbourhood, pays) and Swaraj are foundational in his continuing quest for peace premised on justice, freedom, harmony, his Ramrajya, the homologue of the Christian Kingdom of God. Such a peace in our world is perhaps the most relevant and deepest human quest for a new age, 'a new heaven and a new earth', a quest that not only bonds each to the other, but embraces the whole of the cosmos too, in one inclusive ecological community, beginning with the local village and neighbourhood, in ever widening oceanic circles to include the whole world” (Heredia 2018: 18).

Using Gandhi's words without a careful examination of his lived philosophy, therefore, may pose problems in the very understanding of how to progress in the walk towards peace. Perhaps we find it irrelevant to do so, or maybe we have less time to deliberate upon them but using his quotations for peace and justice and not delving deeper into what

Gandhi meant by 'my life is my message', means only focusing on half the truth.

Post-Development

Gandhi has been invoked by post-development scholars as well. Quoting Gandhi (n.d.) '...in fighting the imagined enemy without, he neglected the enemy within', eminent post-development scholar, Majid Rahnema highlighted the age old spiritual quest that the object of human quest was not outside the self but resided within (1997a: 337). Giving examples of grassroots movements which followed a Gandhian path, Rahnema (1997a: 400-401) argued that a dimension of the inner world, akin to the ambiguous term 'spirituality', had emerged out of people's art of resistance which needs a careful analysis. Furthermore, attention must be given to such a search for truth and peace (as Gandhi did) which starts from deeper layers of one's own inner world and manifests in practice, friendships and solidarities with others engaged in a similar search for truth or peace. "This way of being has firm roots in the traditions of resistance by the weak. In these traditions, "right action" involving others starts always as a personal work on oneself" (Rahnema 1997a: 401).

Rejecting the dominant paradigm of development, Rahnema then called for signposts in new languages and new paradigms arguing that the development ideology had substituted the familiar universe predominated by mutual help and hope in human relations with new forms of control, dominations, and exclusions. Discussing the limits of the dominant discourse and its language with clear references to other traditions in the east including Persian, Lao Tzu, Confucius, and Gandhi, and new forms of co-action and helping, Rahnema, gives examples of the Zapatista movement, and the Theology of Liberation in Latin America. Emphasising questions of 'who am I to intervene in another's life?', or the project of intervention needs 'to examine the whys and wherefore of their actions', Rahnema writes that:

“Before intervening in other people’s lives, one should first intervene in one’s own; ‘polishing’ oneself to ensure that all precautions have been taken to avoid harming the objects of interventions...Many questions should be explored first...Is it friendship, compassion, the ‘mask of love’, or an unconscious attempt to increase my powers of seduction...” (1997a: 397).

In their acclaimed book, *The Post-Development Reader*, Rahnema and Bawtree (1997) reflect upon what they term as ‘the agonies of development’ witnessed by scholars and experienced by those who lost in the development paradigm from across different communities. Concerns raised by both, activists and academics, in this edited volume were related to subjects absent in the UNESCO’s *Long Walk of Peace* document. For instance, Rahnema shows how community movements such as Chipko and Lokayan in India, the Zapatistas in Chiapas, Chodak in Senegal or the Longo Mai in France, were all driven by universally recognised virtues of compassion, friendship, human solidarity and hospitality (Rahnema 1997b: 127). Clarkson et al (1997) emphasise natural law and spirituality, and respect as the basis of relating with earth. Dahl and Megerssa (1997) discuss ideas of societal and cosmological order using local terms in the Boran lands in Ethiopia.

Thus, the idea of a universal panacea for problems of conflict and its resolution seems to be an aspirational dream which is unrealisable. Perhaps the solutions to conflicts lie elsewhere, i.e., in the domain of individual quests for peace within.

Understanding the inner worlds

In a different world, Gandhi’s spiritual seeking path which focused on the inner worlds of the human mind is put into practice by a global spiritual movement, i.e., the Soka Gakkai International (value creation) or SGI, which declares that world peace can be spread through self-awareness of the inner worlds, and individual attempts to transform oneself through revolutionising the self. The previous sections indicate that the spiritual

dimension may provide us with the missing link between praxis and theory. However, how can this gap between the theory of peace and its practice be reduced? While one can find answers in Gandhi's life as an example of such praxis, in this section, I have deliberated upon the tools such as understanding the inner worlds within us which motivate our actions with the hope that peace activists will be able to strive to enact this in their lives before helping others to engage with the peace process. Gandhi's 'my life is my message' echoes such a process.

The inner worlds have been best described in the Buddhist concept of 'ten worlds' or the ten states or conditions of life which are influenced by our thoughts, interactions, and our environment. The ten worlds are hell, hunger, animality, anger, tranquillity, rapture or heaven, learning, realisation, Bodhisattava, and Buddha. All 'ten worlds' have positive and negative aspects within themselves, and at any given point, we gravitate between all ten worlds. Conflict arises when the ten worlds are constantly vying with each other to manifest their reactions, responses or tendencies. We will be successful if we can keep the negative reactions of each aspect at any given moment lower than our higher selves. For instance, one may be in hell because one is in pain, but instead of investing the time in one's own pain, one may reflect upon pain experienced by others. I provide a brief description of the ten worlds below (Art of Living, 2018: 32-33).

The first is 'hell' which is characterised by misery and suffering. However, the experience of this suffering makes us empathetic to others' pain, and to improve our circumstances. The second is 'hunger' which refers to cravings and desires which dominate us, and yet, if seen positively, one can hunger to alleviate suffering and fight for peace. The third, 'animality', rules our instinctive behaviour making us fear the strong, and bully the weak. On the positive side, protective instincts for the self, and for others is also characterised in this condition of life-state. The fourth, 'anger', refers to a superiority complex, aggressiveness, and a

feeling of conflict with others. In its positive form, anger can motivate one to stand against injustice.

The fifth is 'tranquillity' and is described as laziness and inactivity in its negative connotations, and yet in a positive sense, it refers to calmness, being at peace, and being reasonable. It also provides a mental space to restore our energies. Sixth is the state of 'rapture', a short-term gratification of desires, and lead us to cravings which revert to hell or hunger for more. It could, however, lead to a deep sense of happiness or support others to reach their goal. The seventh condition of life is 'learning' which refers to knowing about oneself from others and from existing knowledge. However, an obsession with ourselves can lead to a negative tendency of self-centeredness.

Eighth is the state of 'realisation' or the wisdom to understand aspects of life through observation and experiences which is a positive factor. It could however, also, lead to self-centeredness where one can be too focused on trying to understand using the intellect which may lead to the subversion of one's state of wisdom to solve problems. The ninth is the 'bodhisattva' state which refers to someone who seeks enlightenment for self and others and is characterised by devotion such as that from parents for a child, and nurses for patients in ideal conditions. However, such devotion may lead to exhaustion as a result of the denial of one's own needs, and create discontent leading to strife in the community. The final state of life is 'Buddhahood' which refers to the awakening of an ordinary human to the true nature of life within its daily routine. This is characterised by compassion, joy, wisdom, courage, and life-force.

The first six worlds are referred to as 'lower worlds' because we experience it automatically, while for the last four we need to make constant efforts of being. Conflict arises in the lower worlds, and / or when we are unable to balance the higher worlds. None of the life-conditions are static or fixed. For example, within the life-state of anger lies the potential of realisation or learning. While 'Buddhahood' is a

difficult state to achieve, the argument is that if we train ourselves through specific (chanting) exercises, we will gain insights into the workings of our mind and will be able to direct our actions towards best practices fostering a 'culture of peace'. In other words, an individual has the responsibility to face the enemy within by being vigilant of the life-state we are in at any given moment.

The Peace Proposals

Without going into detailed discussion on the precepts and tenets of the SGI, I want to highlight another significant aspect of this global movement which is reflected in its peace proposals forwarded each year since 2000. The founding president of the Soka Gakkai International had proposed the idea of 'humanitarian competition' which meant 'by benefiting others we benefit ourselves', as a means to overcome conflict among nations, to spread the spirit of peaceful coexistence, and build a truly global society (Ikeda, 2009). Since 2000, the current President of SGI has been submitting annual peace proposals, as listed below, to the United Nations. A quick examination of the titles of the peace proposals, as below, gives us a glimpse of a departure from dominant discourses on peace and conflict resolution, and what alternative aspects of peace-building processes may look like.

Toward an Era of Human Rights: Building a People's Movement (2018), The Global Solidarity of Youth: Ushering In a New Era of Hope (2017), Universal Respect for Human Dignity: The Great Path to Peace (2016), A Shared Pledge for a More Humane Future: To Eliminate Misery from the Earth (2015), Value Creation for Global Change: Building Resilient and Sustainable Societies (2014), Compassion, Wisdom and Courage: Building a Global Society of Peace and Creative Coexistence (2013), Human Security and Sustainability: Sharing Reverence for the Dignity of Life (2012), Toward a World of Dignity for All: The Triumph of the Creative Life (2011), Toward a New Era of Value Creation (2010), Toward Humanitarian Competition: A New Current in History (2009),

Humanizing Religion, Creating Peace (2008), Restoring the Human Connection: The First Step to Global Peace (2007), A New Era of the People: Forging a Global Network of Robust Individuals (2006), Toward a New Era of Dialogue: Humanism Explored (2005), Inner Transformation: Creating a Global Groundswell for Peace (2004), A Global Ethic of Coexistence: Toward a “Life-Sized” Paradigm for Our Age (2003), The Humanism of the Middle Way: Dawn of a Global Civilization (2002), Creating and Sustaining a Century of Life: Challenges for a New Era (2001), and Peace through Dialogue: A Time to Talk (2000)

While the above are not without critique, my argument is that the peace proposals provide us with a framework to redefine conflict and conflict resolution using concepts of creating values, compassion, wisdom, human connection, inner transformation, humanism, and dialogues. The idea of negotiating between the ten (inner) worlds at any given moment reinforces and firms up the belief that we possess the capabilities and the tools to transform our own lives first. It further gives ordinary humans the hope and the courage to challenge or transform their circumstances and claim their rights through taking responsibility of their development.

Teachers and Theology

This section draws attention to the role of educators and teachers in building a just and peace-loving society through training the next generation in values of dignity of life, respect, grace, forgiveness and others as the need may arise. The importance of imparting such values is a core need of building a just political society which in the future may be better equipped to take immediate action to choose peace over non-peace. Professor Annette Scheunpflug (Chair of the Education Foundation and Centre for Global Learning in the University of Bamberg), a leading thinker of Global Learning Europe urges schools and religious institutions to orient towards the pedagogy and theology of hope with a focus on learner centred education which encourages students to ask what is important in my life, and what is good for others? An education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the world and awakens the

youth to bring about a world of greater justice, equality and human rights for all is the need of the hour, according to Scheunpflug. Linking her arguments on an educated religion to certain fundamental principles of the Protestant schooling system, Scheunpflug emphasises the need to celebrate difference and protest against injustice. Table 1 draws attention to the chief characteristics of our global society and the challenges it poses in learning activities for students in schools.

Table 1: Characteristics of a Global Society, and challenges it poses for learning

	Characteristics of Global Society	Challenges for Learning
Facts	Plurality of Globalisations	Dealing with knowledge and non-knowledge
Time	Rapid Social Changes	Deal with certainty and non-certainty
Space	Losing anchor in space	Deal with local relationships and spacelessness, A Global society
Socialising	Multiculturality and multi-religiosity	Deal with familiarity as well as strangeness

Source: Scheunpflug (2018)

Andy Wolfe (2018), Deputy (Chief Education Officer with the Church of England’s Foundation for Education Leadership), has argued for a system of education which focuses on wisdom, hope and aspiration, community and living well together, dignity and respect, and enhancing knowledge and skills which lead the youth towards living life in all its fullness. Leadership must bring together pedagogy and theology together

in schools in order to be able to lead society towards peace. Furthermore, thin narratives (see Table 2) based on competitiveness, individual gains, reductionism and utilitarianism must give way to hope and aspiration through forgiveness and grace, to community gains, respect and dignity, and wisdom, knowledge and skills that will help us live well.

Table 2: Thin Narratives and Thick Narratives

Thin Narratives	Thick Narratives
Utilitarianism; Instrumentalism	Wisdom, Knowledge, and Skills for living well
Competitiveness	Hope, Forgiveness and Grace
Individualism	Community
Reductionism	Respect and Dignity of all

Source: Wolfe (2018)

Elsewhere, Murphy et al (2014) argue for developing a curriculum focusing on emotional literacy to enable the growth of active citizens who have capacity to take compassionate action for global justice. The authors contend that there is a need to synthesise development education (DE) with the skills to think critically and react to injustice with Cognitively-Based Compassion Training (CBCT) skills which equip young people to have the ability and emotional capacity to intervene for change, without giving in to despair, anger, or burnout. The emotional and intellectual skills necessary for productive social activism and change can thus be critical tools for peace-education. An example of ongoing work on such transformative pedagogy, according to Murphy et al (2014), is the collaboration between Children in Crossfire (CIC), an international development organisation, and peace-scholars of Emory University and Life University’s Centre for Compassion and Secular Ethics to evolve a

teacher training curriculum titled 'Educating the Heart for Compassionate Global Citizenship'.

The UNESCO document alludes to the need to focus on enabling children with values of dignity and respect, but it seeks to do so in 'conflict-affected or fragile settings'.

"Teaching young children, the values of respect, tolerance and empathy, and equipping them with the necessary skills to resolve even daily conflict among peers in a non-violent manner, provides them with the tools they need, now and in the future, to foster peaceful relations at home, school and in their communities and beyond" (2018: 111).

Furthermore, the document states that 'as today's youth are tomorrow's world leaders, it is vital to ensure their engagement in nurturing peace' (2018: 156) but fails to emphasise the importance of developing skills of humane values or higher states of life as key features of a 'culture of peace' which, this article argues, is an opportunity missed by leading voices of peace-builders.

"Nurturing peace in today's interconnected world thus requires a broader canvas that along with the imperatives of human rights and development also entails a vibrant focus on education for peace, global citizenship, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue" (2018: 160).

Conclusion

This article, through an exploration of alternate discourses on peace and development, highlights the absence of an important dimension of peace, i.e., a spiritual approach, from UNESCO's *Long Walk of Peace* (2018) document. It discussed how such peace can be realised through acknowledging and understanding the ten conditions of life within each human being. UNESCO's document brings timely attention to narratives

on peace and the prevention of conflict across the globe showing that peace-building is possible through development related activities. However, the absence of the spiritual dimension to peace-building in the document ignores the simple fact that peace begins from within. In the absence of peace-leaders like Gandhi, in the political arena, peace processes today need each and every individual to understand their inner worlds, and act accordingly. The role of teachers and educators becomes more significant as the future of peace is in the hands of the youth. Bringing up children who are empathic, and value-laden, will show light to the long walk of peace, and encourage a culture of prevention.

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End note:

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