

## Culture of Peace Initiative (CPI) & International Day of Peace

The **Culture of Peace Initiative** (formerly "We The Peoples" Initiative) originated in 1983 as a programme of Pathways To Peace by Avon Mattison, Founder and President, and Robert Muller, then Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations. It is a co-operative movement to unite the strengths of existing organizations and projects toward making Peace a practical reality in the 21st century. The annual highlight of this Initiative is the **International Day of Peace (Peace Day)**, which is celebrated worldwide on September 21.

### **Background**

At its 36th session, in 1981, the United Nations General Assembly decided "to devote a specific time to concentrate the efforts of the United Nations and its Member States, as well as of the whole of mankind, to promoting the ideals of Peace and to giving positive evidence of their commitment to peace in all viable ways.

In 1983 with the approval of Robert Muller, then Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, Pathways To Peace (PTP) initiated the "We The Peoples" Initiative, with citizens representing diverse organizations, on the International Day of Peace. By 1984, citizens and their organizations in over 52 countries responded to PTP's invitation to participate in the annual highlight of this Peacebuilding Initiative on Peace Day.

Growth has continued throughout the world. In 1989, this Initiative was granted Peace Messenger Initiative status by UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar.

Since 1983, this local/global Peacebuilding Initiative has served as a vehicle for bringing forward the previously unseen and unheard voices working towards Peace. The Culture of Peace Initiative also serves to unite the strengths of existing organizations building Cultures of Peace for succeeding generations.

### **Purpose**

- To unite the strength of individuals, organizations, and projects into a cohesive movement to make Peace a greater reality for future generations.
- To contribute ideas to the United Nations about its evolving role in the 21st Century as an instrument for building and maintaining Peace. These ideas will be summarized periodically in formal reports to the UN.
- To establish the International Day of Peace (Peace Day) as a global day of access and Peace leadership for children and youth.
- To expand participation in the annual International Day of Peace (Peace Day), to celebrate humanity's progress toward Peace along its many paths, and create 24 hours of Peace worldwide.
- To develop inter-generational decision-making and to expand the participation of young people in United Nations Conferences, Seminars and Summits.

**The annual highlight day of the Culture of Peace Initiative is the International Day of Peace, September 21.**

This annual **Peace Day** marks our personal and planetary progress toward Peace. Peace Day also serves to remind us that our commitment, above all interests or differences of any kind, is to Peace.

International Day of Peace (Peace Day), September 21, provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of Peace on a shared date. All over the world, events are being organized to celebrate Peace Day. Some examples:

- People throughout the world join together in one minute of silence in common commitment to Peace.
- Organizations hold conferences and workshops about Peace and conflict resolution.
- Schools organize Peace Day events, where students get an opportunity to express their ideas about Peace and how to accomplish Peace.
- Places of worship organize Peace Day Prayer and/or meditation.
- Musicians and other performers dedicate their work on September 21 to Peace.
- September 21 is declared an official Day of Peace by Mayors, Governors or other decision makers.
- Individuals write letters to local newspapers about International Day of Peace and/or other issues related to Peace.

Each year, Pathways To Peace submits a Report to the United Nations, listing activities that took place on International Day of Peace. This Annual Report of the Culture of Peace Initiative is dedicated to the United Nations and to UNESCO's International Year for the Culture of Peace and Decade for the Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

For more information about Culture of Peace Initiative (formerly "We The Peoples" Initiative, WPI), and to read Annual Reports for the last four years, please visit the dedicated website: [www.cultureofpeace.org](http://www.cultureofpeace.org) (formerly [www.wethepeoples.org](http://www.wethepeoples.org).)

For more information about International Day of Peace, and for ideas on how you can participate, please visit [www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org).