

**Message from
Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury
Under-Secretary-General and High Representative
of the United Nations**

SGI-USA Culture of Peace Distinguished Speakers Series

As I complete an eventful decade of my service as Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations as well as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the world body, it is with deep humility that I reflect on having the privilege of being an inspired champion of the global movement for Culture of Peace and having the honour of working together with many women and men of peace to promote this noble initiative. I still cherish very proudly the extraordinary opportunity I had to chair the nine-month-long negotiations that led to the adoption by the UN General Assembly in September 1999 the landmark ***Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace***. My proposal along with scores of other countries the previous year led to the declaration by the UN of the ***International Decade for Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)***.

I strongly believe that the flourishing of culture of peace will generate the mindset that is an essential prerequisite for humanity's transition from force to reason, from conflict and violence to dialogue and peace. In order to prevent our violence-filled past century from repeating itself, the values of non-violence, tolerance, democracy and respect for diversity will have to be inculcated in every woman and man - children and adults alike. The culture of peace will provide the basic foundation to support a stable, progressing and prospering world. In short, it will give rise to a world that is finally at peace with itself.

As former Secretary-General of the United Nations and Nobel Peace laureate Kofi Annan had said, "Over the years we have come to realize that it is not enough to send peacekeeping forces to separate warring parties. It is not enough to engage in peace-building efforts after societies have been ravaged by conflict. It is not enough to conduct preventive diplomacy. All of this is essential work, but we want enduring results. We need, in short, a culture of peace."

It is with immense pleasure that I express my sincere appreciation to the Soka Gakkai International-USA (SGI-USA) for its significant contribution to the promotion of the culture of peace in many creative ways, thereby strengthening the global movement. Especially noteworthy is the SGI-USA's opening of several Culture of Peace Resource Centers across the United States and their recent launching of the ***Culture of Peace Distinguished Speakers Series***.

I am convinced that with the active support and promotion by individuals, organizations and institutions around the world, the lofty objectives of the culture of peace can be woven into the very lives of each and every individual comprising our global community.

In our conflict and violence ridden world, promoting the culture of peace is an urgent task that requires the committed engagement of all the people of the world wherever they are and whatever they do.

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