

A NEW PACIFIC PEACE RESOLUTION

Delegates to the 1st Pacific Islands New Millennium Peace Conferences signed the following peace resolution on Jan. 21.

Preamble

“Oceania is vast. Oceania is hospitable and generous, Oceania is humanity rising from the depths of brine and regions of fire deeper still; Oceania is us. We are the sea, we are the ocean.”

These are the words of a man of the Pacific; Tongan novelist Epeli Hau’ofa describes here the universalism of the Pacific Way, first popularized by the president of Fiji, Ratu Sir Kamisese T. Mara: More than a political way, the Pacific Way is a spiritual path—the spirit to embrace and harmonize diversity, to value cooperation and consensus building among peoples, and to recognize the profound interdependence between humanity and the environment from which we emerge. This is the spirit in which we, spanning the vast geographical reaches of the Pacific, gather today.

History

The 20th century has been the bloodiest period in human history. The century that saw the end of colonialism, the spread of democracy and human rights throughout the world, and unprecedented scientific and technological advancement has also seen human devastation, mass genocide, and horrors of war of a scale and kind unimaginable in any prior age.

The Pacific Islands is where European colonization of Asia was inaugurated. The Marianas were the site of the most intense and bloody battles of the Pacific War. The Pacific Islands have been the crossroads of the Pacific Rim, the place for centuries where East and West have paused on their voyages of trade or conquest.

On these islands, at the beginning of the last quarter of this century, representatives of 51 countries gathered to affirm their commitment to change the course of human history.

“Nothing is more precious than peace. Nothing brings more happiness. Peace is the basic starting point for the advancement of humankind.”

The words of Dr. Daisaku Ikeda, founder of Soka University of America, express the fundamental ideal for which those people gathered. Those individuals of little fame or recognition joined together in common resolve to sow the seeds of peace in the hearts of the people, to transform society not through seeking political or economic power, but through building bonds of trust among the people of the world.

Rationale

Whereas, despite means of communication and travel which have produced an unprecedented movement of people, ideas, and information across the globe, human society is threatened by a “new isolationism,” a spirit of intolerance evidenced by increasing insularity and a dangerous outbreak of conflict in the name of ethnic, religious or national identity;

Whereas, humanity is at a crossroads, and must choose between a path of material progress at the expense of spiritual renewal, or a path which leads toward an age of

spiritual and cultural renaissance, and a quality of life befitting the integrity of each and every human being; and

Whereas, education is the key to cultivating the hearts, minds and spirits of the youth, those who will in fact create the new century. Only through education can they learn and understand their history and heritage; only in this way can we foster in them the determination to pursue the difficult path of peace and humanism. Only through education do we have the means to free people from the prejudices in their minds, and the violence in their hearts.

Resolution

Dr. Ikeda suggests in the preface to *The New Human Revolution* that the “power of the spirit” is stronger than any weapon of war. “To transform this century of war into a century of peace, we must cultivate the limitless inherent power of human life. This is the human revolution....”

Gathered again in the Pacific Islands, as we contemplate the dawn of the 21st century, we, the representatives of a new Pacific, hereby stand resolved to dedicate ourselves to the task of creating a century of life and peace.

- In response to the barbarity of war, we must declare the true value of peace. In response to the savagery of exploitation and oppression, we must assert the principle of fundamental human equality, and the inherent dignity of all life.

- We must never forget that as great as the methods of human destruction become, the power of the human spirit is always greater. Harnessing this great spiritual power in the direction of peace, in the direction of harmony, and in the direction of always seeking ever greater spiritual depths is our endeavor.

- We must remember that the next generation of world leaders is entrusted to our care. We must develop our own capacity for compassion, and for spiritual renewal, and foster in them this same spirit. We must inspire in them a deep and lasting commitment to their highest ideals.

- Representing people and cultures throughout the Pacific, we must become the seeds of a new Pacific Islands Community of Peace. We must become leaders who seek to establish the Pacific Way, a new kind of international statecraft that seeks unity in diversity, and that practices consensus building through mutual understanding and respect.

This is our common mission. This is our mutual pledge.

On this 21st day of January, in the 2000th year of the Common Era