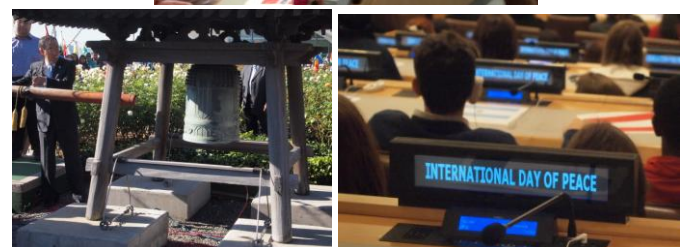
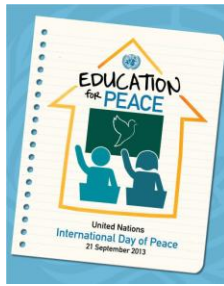


# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

at the United Nations September 18, 2013





## The International Day of Peace at the United Nations

### Education for Peace

September 18, 2013

Monica Willard, United Religions Initiative UN Representative

The morning began with 500 people arriving at the UN to be a part of the Peace Bell Ceremony and the Student Observance for the International Day of Peace, including our new URI Executive Director, Victor Kazanjian. Monica Willard from URI, Deborah Moldow from The World Peace Prayer Society, Michael Johnson from Pathways To Peace, and Shawn Sweeny from Jane Goodall's Roots and Shoots, serve as co-chairs for the UN International Day of Peace NGO Committee and work with the Department of Public Information to organize the UN events for the students. URI UN Representatives who attended were Rabbi Roger Ross, Swamini Sri Lalitambika Devi, and Patrick Nickisch from Geneva.



Students arriving



Processing to Rose Garden



Victor Kazanjian with URI UN Representatives

Students carried flags into the Rose Garden to represent all the UN member states at this annual Peace Bell Ceremony. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addressed the audience, called for a Minute of Silence and rang the Peace Bell. H. E. John W. Ashe, President of the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, also spoke and rang the Peace Bell. Other dignitaries included UN Messenger of Peace Dr. Jane Goodall and UN Foundation Girl Up! Champion Monique Coleman, Ambassadors and performers. The ceremony ended with the release of doves.



Minute of Silence at Peace Bell with Secretary-General



Ta'Kaiya Blaney with UN Flag



H.E. John Ashe, President, 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly

The Student Observance began immediately following the Peace Bell with the dignitaries coming to address the youth. Moderator Peter Launsky-Tieffenthal, Under-Secretary General for Communications and Public Information, began by introducing SG Ban Ki-moon to the students. The SG gave a personal statement that emphasized the importance of the 2013 theme, Education for Peace. Dr. Jane Goodall reminded the students of the importance of appreciating nature and animals as essential in building a peaceful world. As she was sharing her Roots and Shoots program, she made a request of the UN to demonstrate the importance of animals and suggested that an animal should be invited to attend this event next year. It was a touching moment when USG Launsky-Tieffenthal had one of the working security dogs invited to surprise Dr. Jane during this program. Ms. Monique Coleman stressed the importance of education for girls.



UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon



Monique Coleman



Ta'Kaiya Blaney



Dr. Jane Goodall receives surprise visitor

MINUSTAH, youth from the Peacekeeping Mission in Haiti, made a presentation and were a part of the morning via live webcast. Ahmad Alhendawi, UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, stressed the important place youth have in the UN agenda. This panel ended as the student Moderator, Ms. Roisin Hunt, was introduced. Roisin traveled from Ireland to be a special part of the morning activities. She is an active member of Instruments of Peace, the organizer of the Dublin International Day of Peace activities.

Roisin introduced the first performer, 12-year-old Ta'Kaiya Blaney, who performed her original song, *Earth Revolution*. Her message about peace, the environment and personal involvement were shared through her beautiful music. Ta'Kaiya is from the Sliammon Nation and is a member of the Protecting and Restoring the Sacred CC of Vancouver BC. Rebecca Tobias, URI NA Trustee, introduced Ta'Kaiya to URI. Ta'Kaiya represented URI at the 2012 Rio+20 Summit in Brazil and at the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples in May 2013. She will be performing at our URI Circles of Light dinner in March 2014.

Ms. Virginia Gamba, Office of Disarmament Affairs shared remarks and introduced the video, "Turning a culture of war into a culture of peace: Nepali schoolchildren speak out." This wonderful video was produced by the UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and Pacific. Following a question and answer time to include the students from Haiti, Dr. Nicholas Alipui, Director, UNICEF Programme Division, shared the Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy Programme: a partnership among UNICEF, the government of the Netherlands and national governments of participating countries.

After learning about these UN programs, the first group of students shared their peacebuilding projects.



Student presenters: Hana Craft, Mohammad Bakhrieiba, Raquel Ireifej, Alexandra Sheridan, Eliza Klein, Tatiana Kee, and Jocelyn Aptowitz



Audience, including The Peace Pledge Project students

1. Hana Craft from Carlsbad High School in California presented “The Peace Pledge Project” and was joined by members of her organization in the audience in reciting The Peace Pledge.
2. Mohammad Bakhriea, University of Phoenix student from Saudi Arabia, presented “Call of Culture.”
3. Jane Goodall’s Roots and Shoots had three different examples of their program. Raquel Ireifej shared “Peace Out of Heartbreak and Tragedy,” Alexandra Sheridan presented “Peace through Language” and Eliza Klein shared “Imagine a Sustainable Life”.
4. Tatiana Kee, from Acorn Community High School in Brooklyn, NY, presented her experience of using writing and theater to work together with youth in Palestine, Germany and New York with the organization, *breaking walls*.
5. Jocelyn Aptowitz from Hauppauge High School in NY shared the theater program her high school developed with the Council for Prejudice Reduction to address the problem of bullying.

Chernor Bah, Youth Representative on the Steering Committee of the UN Secretary-General’s Global Education First Initiative, shared this important program. His impressive presentation modeled youth participation and illustrated how youth can participate in UN initiatives.

Technicolor Lenses, based in Brooklyn, NY, shared their bi-lingual rap song that was especially written for the International Day of Peace. The lead singer, Tynam Whalen, had performed at the IDP student observance when he was in high school in 2008. He has been a UN Representative for Railroad Street Youth Organization in Massachusetts, and has continued to hold the International Day of Peace in his work as he finished college.



Technicolor Lenses



DP NGO Committee Co-chairs



Mrs. Ban rings peace bell

At 12 noon, the Co-chairs from the International Day of Peace NGO Committee invited the audience to participate with them in the Minute of Silence, and to repeat it on Sept 21, to send their message of peace to every country of the world. The World Peace Prayer Society had distributed paper flags for the students to hold during the Minute of Silence to encourage them to send their message to the country whose flag they were holding. All URI CCs were held in my heart as we sent our prayers from the United Nations to all the countries. I was privileged to introduce Mrs. Ban, wife of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. She has been with us each year to ring the peace bell in the room for this Minute of Silence. The ceremony ended with rounds of “May Peace Prevail on Earth!”

This was followed by another series of peace projects presented by youth.



The Big Book of Pages for Peace presents new page with 2013 IDP logo



Sayid Abdullaev and Alex Benedict

1. “Diversity Rocks” was presented by Gabriela Kasango and Anula Mharajan from Children of the Earth. This is an ongoing peace leadership training program that engages young refugees who have come to live in Vermont.
2. Noah Miller, who got his training from Children of the Earth, came from Israel to share the project he is directing for the Israel Lacrosse Association to build peace through sport.
3. The Big Book Project has been an ongoing afterschool project to create the biggest book for Peace. Students who began as 5<sup>th</sup> graders are now in college. They traveled from Groton, MA to share a page of their book and to describe “The Big Book of Pages for Peace Project”.
4. Valli Lakshimanan from India is studying at Stony Brook University. He shared the Miracle Corners of the World youth leadership training program that changed his life.
5. Luisa Chapla and Yevin Roh shared Railroad Street Youth Project, “International Day of Peace Event: Peer for Social Change.”
6. “From Conflict to Peace” was presented by Alex Benedict from Kutztown University’s international student program.
7. Sayid Abdullaev from Kyrgyzstan is a student at the University of Pennsylvania. He shared the project he originated in Kyrgyzstan, Youth for Peace, and the youth leadership opportunities he has received from UNESCO and UNEP programs .

The International Day of Peace Student Observance was a day for, about and with youth sharing knowledge, experiences and inspiration.

### **IDP Student Lunch Program at UN Church Center 12:30-3:30PM**

The morning program was followed by a lunch and interactive exchange of ideas with 150 youth from : Circle of Peace, Montreal, Canada; Diversity Rocks and Children of the Earth from Vermont; Roots and Shoots from the Tri-state area; Victor Kazanjian, Ta’Kayia Blaney and URI guests; Railroad Street Youth Project and the World Peace Prayer Society. We had a special guest drop by to speak to this smaller gathering. Dr. Jane Goodall joined the conversation after she finished her work at the UN.

The World Peace Prayer Society brought a special Peace Pole to be inscribed by attendees at this event with the message “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in many languages. This Peace Pole was then used in the evening for the Sunset Vigil, held at the Tillman Chapel at the UN Church Center for the International Day of Peace and then brought to the IDP event at Times Square on September 21.



Jane Goodall with Shawn Sweeney



Students creating the 2013 IDP Peace Pole

# The Sound of Peace

## United Nations Church Center, Tillman Chapel

### September 18, 2013

The Sound of Peace, a special interfaith International Day of Peace Vigil, was organized by a committee from the co-sponsoring organizations and led by UN Representatives Swamini Sri Lalitambika Devi from URI and Laurence Singer from Global Family for Love and Peace. The Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN, Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns-NY, URI, Global Family for Love and Peace URI CC, World Peace Prayer Society, URI at the UN CC, the Buddhist Council of New York, and Lalitamba Magazine co-sponsored the event. The Sound of Peace was part of two ongoing International Day of Peace projects: Global Interreligious Dialogue, a project of Global Family for Love and Peace, and the 11 Days of Global Unity, a program of We, the World.

The Vigil held music, poetry, stories and prayers to inspire peace. Deborah Moldow, World Peace Prayer Society and URI, moderated the program. Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, Honorary Chair of the IDP NGO Committee at the UN, gave the opening remarks. Musical performances were given by Shir Yakoov Feit, Cantor of Romemy Synagogue; Ta'Kaiya Blaney (URI) sang Amazing Grace in English and in the Sliammon language; Swami Laraaji Nadabrahmananda shared cosmic music for meditation. Poet Elvis Alves read his poems from Lalitamba Magazine.

Prayers and reflections followed. Rev. Farida Ali from Religions for Peace offered a Muslim prayer; Chief Dominique (T8minik) Rankin from the Algonquin Nation offered an Indigenous message; Christian prayers were given by Sister Deirdre Mullan, RSM, Partnership for Global Justice, and Father Guency Isaac; Ven. Chung Ohun Lee, Won Buddhist International, offered a Buddhist prayer; Rev. Victor Kazanjian from the URI offered an inspirational message for peace; and Swamini Sri Lalitambika Devi offered closing remarks. Monica Willard encouraged everyone to be part of the prayers for peace for the International Day of Peace on September 21 and led a Minute of Silence. The Vigil ended with the audience joining in the prayer, May Peace Prevail on Earth!



Amb. Anwarul Chowdhury



Rev. Victor Kazanjian



URI UN Reps with Peace Pole



After the Vigil in the UN Church Center Tillman Chapel

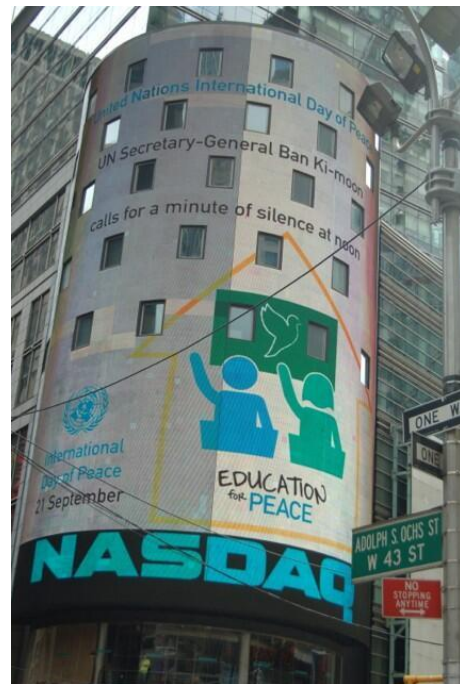
**The International Day of Peace at the UN, September 18, 2013** concluded with a URI dinner. Laurence Singer, Deborah Moldow, Monica Willard, Audrey Kitagawa, Martha Gallahue, Betsy Stang, Swamini Sri Lalitambika Devi, Zunaira Mubasher, Rabbi Roger Ross, Patrick Nickisch welcomed our new URI Executive Director Victor Kazanjian and Isabelle Ortega, URI Director of Communications.

# International Day of Peace, Saturday, September 21

## Times Square, New York City

### Observing the Minute of Silence and Prayers for Peace at 12 noon

The Peace Pole made during the IDP Student lunch program was used again on September 21. It was at the center of a giant peace sign that was created in Times Square at 12 noon . Deborah Moldow is in the center of the peace sign holding the UN flag. Rick Ulfik, founder of We, The World and the 11 Days of Global Unity campaign from Sept 11-21 annually, is next to Deborah with the Earth Flag. On another part of Times Square, the UN Department of Public Information arranged for the UN IDP Education for Peace logo to be shown on the NASDAQ sign at 12 noon!



**May Peace Prevail on Earth!**

## The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual International Day of Peace Vigil in Central Park, Saturday, September 21

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual **International Day of Peace Vigil in Central Park** ran from 11 am until 5 pm at the Bandshell in New York City's Central Park. The day included music, inspirational presentations, family activities, displays, prayers for peace and a World Peace Flag Ceremony organized by Deborah Moldow. Monica Willard represented URI and offered a peace prayer. The International Day of Peace Vigil in Central Park is organized by Rev. Susana Bastarica and her dedicated planning committee.



Rev. Susana Bastarica



Rev. Deborah Moldow



Labyrinth for peace, a Vigil Activity



IDP Vigil Stage at Bandshell in Central Park



Central Park near Vigil



Monica Willard presenting at IDP Vigil in Central Park

“If there is to be peace in the world, there must be peace in the nations.  
If there is to be peace in the nations, there must be peace in the cities.  
If there is to be peace in the cities, there must be peace between neighbors.  
If there is to be peace between neighbors, there must be peace in the home.  
If there is to be peace in the home, there must be peace in the heart.” Lao Tzu

May Peace Prevail on Earth!