

**International Peace Bureau**

**World Congress**

**Technical University**

**Berlin, September 30 – October 1, 2016**

**“Plenary Session of the 1<sup>st</sup> of October”**

**“Disarmament for sustainable human development: from a Culture of War to a Culture of Peace and Non Violence”**

Dear Ingeborg, dear Lisa, dear friends of the International Peace Bureau, Reiner, Colin,... thanks very much for organizing this very important Congress.

Thanks to all of you, because you are promoting worldwide mobilization in favor of the human rights and a dignified life for the human beings.

Thanks to all those that have had excellent interventions addressing this plenary session.

Dear colleagues, friends, ladies and gentlemen:

It is morally unacceptable that every day over 20,000 people die of hunger while close to 5 billion dollars are invested in military expenditures and armament. A judicious reduction of these enormous and disproportionate figures would be enough to quickly and substantially increase

endogenous, sustainable and human development worldwide; to take care of the environmental intergenerational legacy, ensuring that the irreversible deterioration of the habitability of Earth does not take place; to promote international cooperation in order to implement the major priorities of the United Nations (food, water, health, ecology, education, peace), and therefore make the “new beginning” advocated by the Earth Charter possible.

It is time for action, because points of no return can be reached. We have multiple diagnoses, and now it is time to implement, without delay, appropriate and timely treatments. The “democratic principles”-that with such accuracy and vision are defined by the Constitution of UNESCO “to guide humanity”- must be embodied, as a personal and collective essential reference for every day behavior and political frameworks.

The new era of peace will mainly emerge from the undeferable transition from force to words, from a culture of imposition, domination and violence to a culture of encounter, dialogue, conciliation and peace. Instead of “*si vis pacem para bellum*”, “*si vis pacem para verbum*”. Tomorrow can be too late. Practical polices and strategies -so well established in the United Nations Declaration and Plan of Action for a Culture of Peace, 1999– must be applied without delay.

It’s for this reason that I congratulate the IPB because, altogether with “Disarm!” they have added “creating an Action Agenda”. Yes we have at present to many diagnoses and now we must proceed urgently with timely treatments before is too late.

Colin, Reiner, Ingeborg, Lisa...: this is the way. In the United Nations, in New York, just one month ago, Ingeborg Breines addressed the V<sup>st</sup> UN High Level Forum for a Culture of Peace with a vibrant speech on disarmament for development, ending as follows: “In Berlin let us write a new, gender-sensitive, non-militaristic social plan of action”. This is exactly what we need right now: an Action Agenda that can, in the present context, mobilize millions of supports in all corners of the world: “Disarmament for Development”!

It is necessary to reiterate that if there is no evolution there will be revolution, and that the difference between these two words is the “r” of responsibility. Let us stop following the irresponsible and, urgently, facilitate the transition from an economy based on speculation, production delocalization and war to an economy of sustainable and human development, led by a *democratic and efficient multilateralism*.

Neoliberalism marginalized the UN System in the eighties of the past century and substituted it by plutocratic groups (G7, G8, G20). How and why the western countries have accepted to put the governance of the world in so few hands? We are 193 countries!

The best solution –though the immense inertia of those who have always exercised absolute power is not easy to overcome- is *disarmament* (including, of course, nuclear), applying a fair part of the huge means devoted to security to the *development* of all countries, so equal dignity and quality of life become a reality in all of them.

The President of the Pugwash Conferences, in his excellent intervention, has emphasized the necessity of a very urgent elimination of the nuclear weapons. At this respect, I considerer that is important to remind that the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1961, when passing the presidency of the United States, President Eisenhower said to the new elected President John F. Kennedy that “only the industrial military complex of the United States is more powerful than the president of North America”. In October 1986, I was very close to President Mikhail Gorbachev when, in the meetings hold in Reykjavik between him and President Reagan in order to deal with the nuclear threat, they agreed in the first day of conversations to reduce a 70% percent of nuclear weapons in all the world. Mikhail Gorbachev said: “Now we could only destroy the planet 300 times!”, and he requested President Reagan to reconsider a complete elimination of nuclear power. Next day, when President Reagan kept his position very firmly, Mikhail Gorbachev declared: “Nothing has change at this respect: as President Eisenhower has already anticipated at the beginning of the sixties, the Republican Party insist in keeping the industrial military consortium more powerful than the President of the United States”...

With only 10% reduction per year and country of the funds at present invested in defence and armament sector, the security worldwide will remain unaffected, while the main UN priorities could be implemented right now before reaching points of no return, as we are dealing with processes that could become irreversible. It must be emphasized that such development strategy would also likely result in a general improvement of

economy on a global scale, contributing to deal with the severe migration and social problems that we currently face.

It is urgent a new concept of security! The current major powers continue believing that military force is the only expression and reference of 'security'. Serious error, very expensive error that focuses exclusively on military aspects and leaves completely unassisted other multiple aspects of the 'human' security, that is, in any case, what really matters.

When we observe the arsenals full of rockets, bombs, planes and warships, submarines... and at the same time the thousands of persons who die of hunger every day, and those who live in extreme poverty without access to suitable health services... and look dismayed at the deteriorating conditions of habitability of the Earth, we become aware that we must react without delay because we are reaching points of no return on core issues of the intergenerational legacy.

Because of the extraordinary and unprecedented mediatic power we became passive spectators instead of active actors. Now, the peoples can, because they can express themselves freely with the digital technology, raise their voice. Not only territorial security but food, access to safe water, health services, rapid, coordinated and effective action in emergency situations... this and not other is the kind of security that the human beings dream and deserve.

As the Secretary General Ban-Ki-Moon has declared, "the world is over-armed and peace is under-funded...We believe the transformation of

society can only be achieved when handling conflict differently and reallocating military expenditure”. Funds to put into practice the Programme of Action for a Culture of Peace, approved by the GA of the United Nations in September 1999, as well –they are very similar- the goals for sustainable development and the measures to regulate timely the climate change. Disarmament for Development: that simple. The solutions exist. Immediate action is required to comply with our intergenerational responsibilities. The re-foundation of the United Nations is urgently needed.

Now we know. Now the human beings can express themselves and raise their voices. Now, particularly, the women are rapidly increasing their full participation in the decision making processes. I like to repeat what President Nelson Mandela told me in Pretoria in 1996: “the women are the corner stone of the new era. They will be the protagonists of the culture of peace because women only exceptionally utilize force while men only exceptionally doesn’t”.

We must follow the International Peace Bureau on the “Disarmament for development” initiative and raise countless voices for justice and peace both in person and digitally. A colossal mobilization could enlighten the present somber horizons. Peace is a right... The right to peace is close to its adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Henning Zierock, a champion of culture of peace from 1988, is today here and remind all of us that peace through justice is the best way to overcome the present threats.

Thanks to him, thanks to the International Peace Bureau, thanks to all of you... This historic transition from the reason of force to the force of reason can now take place. These dreams can become reality if those who have suffered worse and those who know better how to trigger the changes urgently need are immediately at the forefront of a massive mobilization, both presential and in the cyberspace. Citizens of the world led by the scientific, academic, artistic, intellectual community... Yes!: to have this meeting in an important university is meaningful. To have this meeting in Berlin, and pass our messages from Berlin, is meaningful as well. Walking "*unter der Linden*" I have always receive the whispering of "no more war, no more war"...

From force to word...

Let us invent the future. Every human being able to create: this is our hope. As President John F. Kennedy said in June 1963, "There is no any challenge beyond the distinctive creative capacity of the human beings".

Yes, "We, the peoples..." will, at last, take the reins of the common destiny in our hands"!