



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

E/CN.4/2003/NGO/216  
17 March 2003

ENGLISH ONLY

---

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
Fifty-ninth session  
Item 10 of the provisional agenda

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Written statement\* submitted by Movimiento Cubano por la Paz y la Soberanía de los  
Pueblos, a non-governmental organizations in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[8 February 2003]

---

\*This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

## About the Link Between Education for Peace and Education on Human Rights as an Expression of Education on Values

Philosophical, sociological and psychological criteria serve as a baseline to outline the pedagogical understanding of the concept of values: they must be understood as human values which can be identified with any material or mental object that, when satisfying any human need, they are assimilated by each individual, based on cognitive and spiritual elements, through his/her own vital experience and under the influence of a given historical and social context: it gives a personal sense of the meanings of the outside world within himself/herself.

That is to say, that each man and woman assimilates what satisfies his/her personal needs and, on this basis they have interests, they form principles, they define their future aspirations and they are able to analyze the possibilities they have in order to achieve them: it is how values are manifested. That's why they guide and orient human activity in a conscious way and at the same time, as an individual process, they allow to differentiate some men from others as exclusive and unique beings. Two persons can do the same action and be driven by different values. Thus, it is stated that they are subjective meanings that have a strong individual component.

Therefore, to understand peace as a human value means to change it into a reason that guides our activity in the different fields of social life: moral, intellectual, occupational, creative, political, and so forth; to work as educators in order to influence in its assimilation by all those persons that surround us; to contribute to create proper environments for the well-balanced development of interpersonal relations; to learn and teach to solve conflicts, so that they become a source of development and not a cause for aggressiveness. In fact, to do the utmost in order to achieve that peace, in its widest concept, occupies a meaningful place in the hierarchy of values; both in its individual and in its group dimensions, as well as in the national and international contexts.

The concepts about the Cubans' peace that have outstood in the history of the social thinking are still in force and they interlace, in a particular way, with the ideas about education. In our specific conditions, a historical analysis on the subject, makes evident the singular character that concepts such as peace and education acquire in a society submitted to the colonial rule during several centuries, and later pressed by the longest conflict with a powerful neighbor; which for a long time, has intended to do away with our national sovereignty and make our identity disappear. At the same, the interrelation peace-human right is another constant issue in the political thought and daily occupation. That's why, it is not surprising that on his article: *The Poor of Earth*, published in 1894, on the eve of what he himself called "the necessary war", José Martí pointed out that the only peace state is "that where not even one right has been diminished".

The literature specialized on these subjects generally approaches theoretical details about the link between concepts such as peace, rights and human values. This trilogy focuses, of course, according to the concept one has on values: those who enclose them to a strictly individual ethics do not see them reflected in the human rights due to the socio-political feature of the latter. EDUPAZ understands that human rights are

inherent to the persons because of their human nature. They are indispensable for the enjoyment of a worthy life; which means to respect everybody and to ensure their education, health, work, justice, security, freedom, and so forth, with legal support to protect and defend those rights and to punish their violation. As much as human rights satisfy the material and spiritual needs of the human beings, they are likely to be assimilated by the persons and changed into reasons that guide their activity in the different fields of life, personal and social ones. That is, human rights are an expression of values, which, from our viewpoint, are not limited to the individual moral, as much as the latter is expressed in the interpretation and in the actions of men and women face to a world where they have to live in.

Human rights express values linked to social life. The needs inherent to them emerge from a given historical context and develop within the framework of the socialization process. Therefore, the meaning of education is understood, in its widest concept, as the awareness of human beings of their rights, as a starting point to guide their activity towards their own safeguard and the rest of the people's. It is a process of value assimilation where awareness of the right is clarified based on historical-cultural and contextual influences related to the social environment, based on the vital experience of the individuals, on their own practice and amid different contradictions.

The educators have before themselves the challenge of influencing the formation of the generations that must be urgently mobilized to assimilate and spread the values that would make possible to save the world from the crisis of inequity that threatens to destroy it. Human rights as values that ensure the satisfaction of the most elemental needs of the persons, peace, among them, are in the core of this issue. The guarantee of massive access to education is, especially, a key element in this process, since it is the only way to make possible the integral formation of individuals able to assimilate the essential content of education for peace and education on human rights.

#### Culture of Peace and Education for Peace as Contemporary Lines of Thought

Human beings' desire of peace is as old as their own existence, colored with the different conflicts with the natural and social environment that surrounds them. In the history of humanity, there have been significant moments that represent important milestones in the search for peace. The concepts of culture of peace and education for peace take new forms as lines of the social thought, more or less independent after II World War, at the outburst of the development of the international democratic movement, following the defeat of fascism and linked likewise to the expansion of socialism in Europe and Asia and to the advances of the national liberation movements in Asia and Africa.

The present vision of Culture of Peace, according to F. Lacayo, conceives a new way of socio-cultural coexistence characterized by the experience of human rights, sustainable development and human development, justice, respect to differences, democracy, new relations with nature, overcoming of poverty and solidarity in human relations that closely link universal and national components. Culture of Peace is created through education, science and culture on the bases of human solidarity. The theory and practice of Education for Peace has been evolving. To forge peace bastions in the men's mind has been and still is the central idea of this tendency. It is

evident that today, face to a new century and to a new millennium, when we are before the greatest wave of violence that humanity has ever known, it has been concluded that the judicial study of international relations and the establishment of regulations in that sense in order to preserve peace are not enough. It is necessary to study the elements that unleash aggressiveness in the individuals and teach them abilities that would allow them, as far as possible, to reduce the use of violence in its different expressions, looking for peaceful solutions to the conflicts among the people. Besides, when extending violence to the different fields of social life: family, schools, cities, and so forth; and when the pleasure for it becomes a merchandise that is sold in books, magazines, films and videos; it is obvious to see the link between violence as part of the daily life of the persons and violence as a resource of the States to solve their conflicts. That's why these matters become part of the object of study of social sciences such as Pedagogy and Psychology.

- According to what has been previously stated nowadays, to educate men and women of every age on peace and on the respect and safeguard of human rights becomes an unavoidable duty in the urgent task of building a future where the new international relations, we are seeking to develop, ensure a sustainable development and, at the same time, persons that show more solidarity, who are able to guarantee opportunities for everyone, in the society where they live. No nation in the world can be aliened to this duty: Cuba adopts it within the frame of its social project.

-----