

## The long road to peace

### *Rotary's contribution*

#### History

*Since 1921 and the Edinburgh Convention, Rotarians have contributed to "peacemaking. Between the two world wars, they took their part as such or in their own right in the public advocacy against war.*

From 1942 to 1945 in London, the Ministers of Education of the free world, meeting at the initiative of Rotary, decided to create UNESCO to "construct in the minds of men the defenses of peace.

The aim was to "contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms".

In 1945 in San Francisco, delegates from 50 countries drafted the United Nations Charter to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

The United Nations organization succeeded the League of Nations and was based on 3 inseparable pillars: peace and security - human rights - development.

*Among all the participants, 50 were Rotarians and 5 future presidents of the General Assembly will also be Rotarians. In addition, the U.S. Secretary of State will invite the President of Rotary International to nominate 10 Rotarians to be part of the U.S. delegation.*

*The network of Rotary representatives to international institutions UN and its agencies UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO ..., the European Union, OECD, the United States, the African Union, the Arab League, the World Bank perpetuates and strengthens the presence of Rotary in their midst.*

#### The Culture of Peace

World security is the exclusive responsibility of the Security Council. Unfortunately, its action is hindered by the excessive use of the right of veto.

In 1956, the peacekeeping force was created: "the blue helmets".

The UN peacekeeping forces received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988.

Human security is part of a preventive diplomacy for the consolidation of peace in which we find multilateralism and the rapprochement of cultures. It is the subject of resolutions and recommendations at the General Assembly. Since the 1980s, human security has been dominated by the concept of "culture of peace".

The "culture of peace" adopted by the UN Assembly in 1997 is defined as "*values, attitudes and behaviours that promote and reflect conviviality and sharing nourished by the thought of freedom, justice, tolerance and based on the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity*".

Many conflicts are due to the inability of cultures and religions of different nations to "*live together*" and to work together to solve problems.

The violation of dignity through discrimination, repression and persecution are triggers for wars, whereas governance based on democracy, human rights, free trade, and the involvement of international organizations are prerequisites for peace.

The philosophy of the culture of peace is intimately linked to the quest for a global citizenship based on education.

It is in this same spirit that in 1950, governors Roger Coutant of the Lille Club and Robert Hausman of the Stuttgart Club created the first inter-country committee between France and Germany to restore understanding and trust between the two countries.

### **Intercountry committees, the first Rotary program dedicated to peace.**

40 years later, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, intercountry committees contributed to the rebirth of Rotary in Central and Eastern Europe, especially in Poland and Russia, at the initiative of the governors of Northern France.

At the same time, Rotary and The Rotary Foundation are implementing specific programs to strengthen mutual understanding and understanding through the Rotaract, Interact, Ambassadorial Scholarships, and Youth Exchange programs.

### **Programs in which Rotary International is a leader.**

#### **Perpetuation of peace and positive peace**

The idea of the culture of peace has been very much alive, but since the beginning of the century, this concept has given way to two other concepts that reveal the evolution of our societies: **the perpetuation of peace and positive peace.**

Violence: sexual violence, violence against people or the most extreme violence such as terrorist acts, gratuitous violence or hatred spread on social networks, or the polarization within society around the theme of identity, whether religious, cultural or ethnic, are permanent challenges to the perpetuation of peace.

The same is true for the displacement of populations and human migration. We expected by 2035 to the migration of 135 million people from sub-Saharan Africa to North Africa and Europe.

Social and economic inequalities between countries, youth unemployment and the institutionalized practice of corruption are factors of tension and malaise.

It is estimated that corruption amounts to 1,500 billion dollars per year.

Health throughout the world is another factor of injustice. Within 10 years, there will be a shortage of 18 million caregivers in developing countries to care for the elderly.

Trust in international institutions and governments has declined sharply. governments has dropped sharply.

**This is why the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Antonio Guterres, has made the fight against the fight against violent extremism and the perpetuation of peace, the priorities of his of his mandate.**

The Secretary General relies more specifically on 2 programs of the United Nations and UNESCO: one on the involvement of women who bring greater efficiency to the peace process and the other on the effectiveness in the peace process and the other on the involvement of youth in sports, culture and in sports, culture and exchanges.

### Positive peace

*From "The perpetuation of peace" to "positive peace".*

It is a recent notion that can be defined as a set of behaviors attitudes and initiatives that underpin and support social cohesion.

**Positive peace** is that of human bonds and shared values. It implies a social dynamism which allows to pass from violence to serenity.

Of course, the expression of a positive peace requires conditions that are not found everywhere today not found everywhere today: a stable political environment, a favorable environment for the environment for the economy and the private sector, an equitable distribution of resources, good relations between countries and the rule of law.

Free information, lots of education and trust in the law.

The pursuit of **positive peace** is a necessary precondition for the development of peaceful societies.

*Rotary is a valuable player in the implementation of positive peace. In 2002, Rotary's flagship program for the promotion of peace and understanding was launched at seven universities around the world. s flagship program for peace promotion and conflict resolution, the Rotary Peace Centers, opened in seven universities around the world.*

*For the past two years, this program has been supplemented by online training for every Rotarian through the Rotary Peace Institute. Rotary's partner, the Institute of Economics and Peace.*

### The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations aims to transform society to make peace sustainable before implementing positive peace. is the goal of the United Nations.

The means it has proposed is that of a major development plan to which the Member States subscribed 35 years ago: the Millennium Development Goals.

They have produced more or less convincing results depending on the field:

- Fighting poverty and malnutrition: 300 million people have been able to escape extreme poverty.
- Fight against illiteracy: only 4 countries out of the 50 concerned have been able to overcome it
- Access to drinking water: 300 million people have had access to drinking water but 700 million people are still deprived of it and 2 billion people do not have access to sanitation.

These very real results are, however, very unevenly distributed geographically. If the countries of Asia have improved a lot, this is not the case for sub-Saharan Africa.

On the other hand, significant progress has been made in stopping the AIDS epidemic, but also in the fight against malaria and tuberculosis.

Similarly, we have seen a very significant drop in maternal and infant mortality.

*In 2005, the RI Strategic Plan was adopted, followed by the Rotary Foundation's Future Vision Plan. 6 axes, then 7 with the environment will become the great causes of Rotary that we find all in the Millennium Development Goals.*

*Let us add to this the fight of Rotary for the eradication of polio. This fight, soon to be won, will allow us to fulfill our promise to the children: a polio-free world.*

**The Millennium Development Goals have been replaced by the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals development: 17 primary and 169 secondary goals.**

A transformative and integral model that is much broader in scope because it touches all areas of society and includes economic, quality of life and moral goals. quality of life, and moral and human objectives.

Transforming the world, ensuring dignity for all, protecting the planet and promoting the advent of peaceful societies.

This ambition requires building a partnership with civil society and in particular with Rotary International, as we have done with the Polio Plus initiative.

Rotary's leadership, humanistic, and ethical values, coupled with its global and local and local presence, and the commitment of its volunteers in the field are a guarantee of progress in achieving its goals.

However, as a nonpolitical and nondenominational organization, Rotary must strengthen its influence in society through its influence in society, through strong actions in line with its causes and the dissemination of its ideas.

In any case, an opportunity to highlight the convergence of thought and action of the United Nations and Rotary and to recall the contribution of each to the service of peace and development.

[Serge Gouteyron](#)

[Past Rotary International Vice President](#)

***The Long Road to Peace is a UNESCO publication:***

***The work of a group of experts from the UN, UNESCO, and researchers***