United Nations: Humanity’s Hope for World Peace
"Peace and the United Nations are inseparable. Peace means the presence of harmony, love, satisfaction and oneness. We have to feel the whole world as our very own. If each individual in each nation can consciously feel that he or she does not belong to a little family called 'I and mine' , but to a larger family called 'we and ours’, then the message of love, brotherhood peace and sharing can easily be embraced by the entire world. It is precisely this message, this hope for world peace and oneness, that the United Nations offers humanity. “ - Sri Chinmoy

SRI CHINMOY: THE PEACE MEDITATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

From its earliest days, the United Nations has recognized the value of meditation as a force for world peace. Each session of the General Assembly is opened and closed with a minute of silence. Trygve Lie, the first Secretary-General, had a meditation room built in the Secretariat building and his successor, Dag Hammarskjold, designed the room as we know it today. Since the inception of the United Nations, representatives of member countries have been enjoying moments of contemplation in the Meditation Room.

The practice of meditation was further expanded when in 1970, Sri Chinmoy, an internationally respected philosopher, lecturer, author and spiritual teacher with an interdenominational approach to meditation, was invited to serve as leader of a meditation group at U.N. headquarters.

Under his guidance, the meditation group, officially referred to as Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations, has dedicated itself to the ideals of universal harmony and world peace.

For 25 years, Sri Chinmoy has been holding twice-weekly meditations, which provide an opportunity for quiet, spiritual renewal in an atmosphere reflective of the highest purposes of the world organisation. In addition, through an ongoing series of programs and symposia, the Peace Meditation group provides a forum for ambassadors, Secretariat officials and staff, religious leaders and other global-minded individuals to share and reinforce their spiritual vision for the United Nations.

U THANT PEACE AWARD

In 1982, Sri Chinmoy established the U Thant Peace Award in honour of the late Secretary-General. The award honours individuals and organisations for their exceptional service to the world and their contributions to international peace.

Recipients of this award include:

• Mother Teresa, Founder, Missionaries of Charity and 1979 Nobel Peace Laureate

• Mikhail Gorbachev, former President of the Soviet Union and 1990 Nobel Peace Laureate

• James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF (1980-1995)

• United Nations Development Programme

SEVEN MINUTES FOR WORLD PEACE

Inaugurated in 1984 by Sri Chinmoy, Seven Minutes for World Peace is a simultaneous global observance of peaceful silence honour of United Nations Day on October 24th. Its goal is to increase humanity's awareness of the inner dimensions of peace and the relationship between inner and outer peace. Individuals and groups from more than 40 countries participate in this annual event.

PEACE WALK

Peace Walks at the United Nations are organised under the co-sponsorship of the Peace Meditation group and a number of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations. They are held annually at the United Nations on UN. Charter Day (June 26) and UN. Day (October 24) as well as in over 50 cities around the world to mark the International Day of Peace on the opening day of the UN. General Assembly. During these events, participants walk in prayerful silence for universal peace and in respect for the founding principles of the United Nations.

At the United Nations Church Center in New York, Sri Chinmoy leads a silent opening prayer at a program held in honour of America's National Day of Prayer. Leaders representing Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Baha'i groups collectively offer their prayers for world peace. (24 July 1975)