



A MOMENT'S PEACE

SRI CHINMOY MEDITATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

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COMPLEX DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AT UNDP

The following is an address by Mr. Erskine Childers, Director, Division of Information, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), at a special programme for UNDP sponsored by the Meditation Group on 29 November 1982.

You probably know that UNDP is the largest operational expression of global co-operation, of North-South co-operation, in existence today in the world. There are more human beings at work through UNDP, expressing that co-operation among our sisters and brothers in the Third World, than through any other organization. We are at the same time, however paradoxically, one of the least-visible organizations, and I can make a connection between the purposes and philosophy of the Meditation Group and that problem. I would like to do so by recalling something said by a very famous Dutch historian, Peter Haig. He said that history must take the whole of life for its province. We have found at UNDP that *development* must take the whole of life for its province. There has to be a oneness, a unity, about our insights into the needs of human beings in relation to their environment if they are to make *economic and social progress*.

We have found that this is a very complicated process, and not one easy to explain to the international community at large. It is not just a matter of saying, "Here is a child, protect it," or, "Here is a forest, protect it." Rather, it is saying, "Here is a planet and here are human beings in their natural environment. Find out how to ensure harmony in the use of the planet by the human beings who have the precious chance to inhabit it, and who have the responsibility to look after all of it, not only for their time, but for all time."

The lessons to be learned in this process are very, very intricate. Let me give you one example. If you were to work, as I have, in areas of the world where human beings have been reduced to using the manure from cattle for their fuel and heating energy—picking it up, shaping it into cakes, sticking it on the walls of their homes to dry and then using it as fuel, with all the attendant disease—you might say that the problem is simply that they must be



Sri Chinmoy meditates with Javier Perez de Cuellar

A MEETING OF IDEAS

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar met with Sri Chinmoy and members of the Meditation Group on 13 January 1983. Excerpts from the remarks of the Secretary-General follow.

I am indeed touched by your sincere expression of support for my efforts in the cause of peace and international understanding.

In your meditation, you see beyond the superficial distinctions of race, sex, language or religion, as the Charter encourages us to do. You concentrate on the truths and ideals which unite all mankind: the longing for peace, the need for compassion, the search for tolerance and understanding among men and women of all nations.

We must never forget that all our activities here are aimed at fulfilling the lofty principles of the Charter. We must not lose sight of these objectives despite the frequent difficulties we encounter along the way. In recalling the fundamental goals which inspire our work, you are helping to reaffirm our commitment to the Organization and its purposes.

brought to understand that this is unhealthy. But even if this understanding is brought about, where are they going to get the fuel to cook with if, as a result of climatic change and population increase, all the trees that used to provide fuel have been chopped down? You might say that the answer is to provide health services to protect the community from the disease brought on by their present practice. But if you looked further, you might say that the way into that circle, the way to resolve that poverty and misery and to create out of it a circle of growth and life, is to find the right kind of tree for fuel that will grow better and faster, and then conduct a tree-planting campaign along with all the other measures.

It is that wholeness in develop-

ment that is UNDP's particular responsibility. Working with all of the other agencies of the system, it is trying to ensure that what the child needs, what the forest needs, what is needed in industry, what is needed in roads—all come together in harmony. It has never before in world history been tried on this scale. We are trying to help two-thirds of humanity to achieve balanced, appropriate and sensitive development. It is not an easy thing to explain, and that is one of the reasons why it is so invisible. Yet I hope it is in all of our hearts, because we all know that the human being and the ecosystem are, in fact, one. If they separate, if human beings try to dominate the ecosystem, all our future will be destroyed.

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Excerpt from the Concluding Statement of Prof. Yash Pal, Secretary-General of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

I see our work as a partial road map into the future with many roads and avenues, and many destinations. It is for each country, individually and in co-operation, to decide its goals and to chart its own course to achieve these goals.

And yet there are some common imperatives of the space age. We have to move and prosper with each other and with our earth. We can no longer live off each other nor can we merely exploit our earth. Our plants, and we ourselves, have, in a sense, become one organism because we influence each other and touch each other, ever so intimately, independent of distance. The time constant for interaction between segments of human society has become shorter than the response time of the human nervous system. We must move from being new neighbours to become neighbourly.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Ongoing events

Please call 754-5876 to confirm all scheduling.

- Introductory meditation classes
- Silent meditations led by Sri Chinmoy, twice weekly

March programmes

- 8 March—Observance of International Women's Day
- 21 March—"Liberty and Equality," a programme marking the International Day for the Elimination of Racism

O Bird of Light

One thought, one tune, one resonance—
Who calls me ever and anon?
I know not where I am.
I know not whither I shall go.
In dark amnesia, myself
I buy, myself I sell.
All I break, again all I build.
All I hope to be mine, mine alone.
Alas, my heart is eclipsed by dark
And wild destruction-night.

O Bird of Light, O Bird of Light,
With your glowing and flowing flames
Do enter into my heart once again.
You are calling me to climb up
And fly into the blue.
But how can I?
My heart is in prison
In the strangled breath of a tiny room.
O Bird of Light, O Bird of Light,
O Bird of Light Supreme.
In me, I pray, keep not an iota of gloom.



MEDITATION AT THE U.N.

Question: Is there any way that we can meditate specifically to help the United Nations?

Sri Chinmoy: Inside your heart there is the soul, the direct representative of God. You feel that when the soul comes to the fore, you will have abiding satisfaction from life; that is why you pray and meditate every day. So when you meditate here at the United Nations, please feel that inside the body of the United Nations, this building, there is a soul—most powerful, most illuminating and most fulfilling—which has to come forward. If you can feel the presence of the soul of the United Nations, then your meditation will be most helpful.

There are many, many who are not present here today to meditate with us. But when they work for the United Nations most devotedly and selflessly, they are doing their meditation in their own way. The soul of the United Nations blesses these people and offers them its gratitude.

All those who are working at the United Nations are unconsciously being illumined by the soul of the United Nations. And all those who are aspiring in their own way are deriving special blessings from the soul of the United Nations.

The soul of the United Nations embodies the dream of the United Nations: peace, brotherhood and oneness founded upon self-giving and the recognition of universality in the heart of each individual. If you can cultivate these sublime ideas or ideals during your meditation, you will most effectively and most fruitfully help the soul of the United Nations. In this way, the soul of the United Nations, and eventually the body which houses the soul, will find their true significance.

The United Nations is a world-wide organisation. During your meditation, if you can concentrate on the seed, which is the soul, then in the course of time this seed will grow into a plant and eventually into a huge tree which will serve and shelter the entire world. The soul embodies, in essence, the infinite capacity of the Supreme. If we can bring to the fore the capacities of the soul, on the strength of our sincere, dedicated, devoted and soulful meditation, we will serve the United Nations most fruitfully in the way the Supreme wants us to serve and fulfil it.

WOMEN MEET

A group of women from the diplomatic community have begun meditating together at weekly meetings held in the homes of various members of the group.

At each meeting a short introduction to basic meditation techniques is given, followed by a period of silent meditation. New members are cordially invited to attend the meetings of the group which are generally held every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.

For further information, please contact Ms. Rijuta Tooker at 754-5687.

Sri Chinmoy Meditation at the United Nations is an association of U.N. delegates, staff, NGO representatives and accredited press correspondents who believe that inner reflection and meditation can bring us in touch with the founding spirit of the United Nations and inspire renewed dedication to its ideals.

In operation since 1970, the Meditation Group has had since its inception the kind guidance of Sri Chinmoy internationally renowned philosopher, meditation teacher, artist, musician and author of over 500 books on meditation and related subjects.

This information is presented as a service and does not necessarily represent the official views of the United Nations or its Agencies.

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