

A Celebration of the Life of Vladimir Petrovsky

(29 April 1933 – 21 February 2014)



Special programme held on 5 March 2014
by the Sri Chinmoy Centre and
Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation
at the United Nations
Aspiration-Ground, New York



Vladimir Petrovsky and Sri Chinmoy in
soulful conversation.

In Memoriam: Vladimir Petrovsky

Vladimir Petrovsky, former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs (1992) and Director-General of the UN Office in Geneva (1993-2002), as well as Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union (1986-1991), passed away in Moscow on 21 February 2014 after an extended illness. The funeral took place on 25 February and was attended by a close circle of family and friends.

Hailed by many as the “perfect diplomat”, Mr. Petrovsky had a long and illustrious career, joining the diplomatic service in 1957 after studying at the Institute of International Relations in Moscow. He lived through the difficult and intense times of the Cold War, and was later instrumental in the foreign policy process during the perestroika period as first Deputy Foreign Minister under President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Security policy was Mr. Petrovsky’s forte, and he worked closely with the third UN Secretary-General U Thant in the 1960s and ’70s. Mr. Petrovsky played a leading role in bringing to fruition the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 – thirty-five countries, including the United States, Canada and most European nations, signed the declaration in an attempt to improve relations between the Communist bloc and the West – and the comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1996. Both were very important stepping stones on the way to a more secure and peaceful world.

While in his earlier years his work was clearly guided by classic diplomatic guidelines, later, in his role as United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Petrovsky promoted more and more a comprehensive way of solving the world’s problems, including not only political actors, but also civil society, academics, religious and spiritual groups and even artists and businesses. Today this has become a much more common approach.

In Geneva he opened the United Nations Office to the public through “open days”. He was also active in connecting the various

UN agencies, and in improving relations between the United Nations and the host nation, Switzerland, through regular meetings with the government in Bern. Mr. Petrovsky led numerous fact-finding missions to Libya, and also served as Secretary-General of the ongoing Conference on Disarmament. He had a strong and clear vision and dreamt of Geneva as a place where peace would flourish, change would be welcome and diversity embraced. He worked to establish an atmosphere in which luminaries from all fields could come together and develop a new security paradigm. Following his retirement from the United Nations, Mr. Petrovsky continued to work for peace in numerous ways, founding the non-governmental organization Comprehensive Dialogue among Civilizations and teaching political science at Columbia University in New York.

It was his personal aspiration for peace, combined with his goodwill and patience, perseverance, wisdom and integrity, that gave weight to his words and made him a friend to many, outside the professional realm of the negotiating table.

Sri Chinmoy considered Mr. Petrovsky a true Brother-Friend, and the two met on numerous occasions and corresponded often. Sri Chinmoy offered Vladimir Petrovsky the “Lifting Up the World with a Oneness-Heart” Award on 4 February 1992, and the U Thant Peace Award on 17 March 1992. On the occasion of Mr. Petrovsky’s 65th birthday, Sri Chinmoy dedicated to him a book of 65 poems entitled *Vladimir Petrovsky: Builder of a New Heart-Firmament*.

In Vladimir Petrovsky’s passing, humanity has lost a rare personality, one who loved the world and served it all his life with an untiring enthusiasm and hope.

We salute this noble world-server. His advice on bringing about a peaceful end to conflict was highly valued and sought after worldwide. We shall miss his wise counsel. We offer all our loving gratitude and heartfelt condolences to his beloved wife, Mira, and their daughter, Helen.

A Celebration of the Life of Vladimir Petrovsky

- 8pm Audience assembles and is seated
- 8:20 Candlelight meditation during a recording of Sri Chinmoy chanting "*Shanti*"
- 8:27 Meditation for the peace of the soul continues in silence
- 8:40 Audio of Sri Chinmoy introducing his arrangement of his song dedicated to Mr. Petrovsky. Chanting by the Vedic Fire ensemble follows.
- 8:40 Flower offering begins (each person offers a miniature white orchid at the photo of Mr. Petrovsky on the shrine)
- 9pm Shashanka as MC introduces each segment
- In memoriam - Shashanka
 - A few significant excerpts from personal meetings and correspondence between Sri Chinmoy and Mr. Petrovsky - Ranjana
 - Some meaningful experiences of Mr. Petrovsky - Nishtha
 - Press releases from Itar-Tass News Agency and other official announcements - Pragati/Nilima
 - Statements and comments from diplomats and politicians (UN disciple-colleagues)
 - Poem recitations from Sri Chinmoy's book *Vladimir Petrovsky: Builder of a New Heart-Firmament*, written in honour of Mr. Petrovsky's 65th birthday (UN disciple-colleagues announce their departments and years of service); disciples from Oneness-Dream-Boat-Shore (former Soviet republics) will also read
- 9:30 Songs composed by Sri Chinmoy dedicated to Vladimir Petrovsky - Singers
- 9:45 Video clips of meetings between Mr. Petrovsky and Sri Chinmoy
- 10 pm Prasad (blessed food) offered, while "Moscow Nights" is sung by Russian disciples. All may join in.
- 10:10 After Prasad: more spontaneous reminiscences from disciples
- 10:20 Meditation video of Sri Chinmoy (12 min.) and short slide show (2 min.) -Mridanga

Sri Chinmoy's soulful messages appreciating Mr. Petrovsky

Excerpts from personal meetings and correspondence between
Sri Chinmoy and Mr. Petrovsky, from Sri Chinmoy's book entitled
Vladimir Petrovsky: Builder of a New Heart-Firmament,
New York: Agni Press, 1998

“We are in the same oneness-boat steering towards the same
destination. Our goal is oneness-heart sand fulness-life.”

23 October 1991

“The power of your oneness-heart enables you to mix with so
many kinds of people. God has endowed you with tremendous
capacity.”

4 February 1992

“Your patience and your compassion will overcome all the odds of
the world. They will all be illumined by your infinite patience and
infinite compassion. This is my most sincere feeling.”

17 March 1992

“No matter where you go or under whichever conditions you find
yourself, you carry with you two most significant things: the mes-
sage of peace and the wisdom of light. When people are in your
presence, the magnetic pull of your wisdom-light brings to the fore
their own good qualities.”

7 August 1992

“The United Nations is not a building. It is not the meeting place of
certain eminent people. It is the life-breath of oneness in humanity.
Wherever you go, you are carrying the pristine beauty-light of the
United Nations. Here and there you go, carrying the life-breath of
the United Nations and offering it to the suffering humanity.”

7 August 1992

“To establish peace, my brother Vladimir goes from one place to another like a bird. He produces an inner music. This inner music is the music of love, peace and oneness.”

16 February 1993

“Throughout Eternity, the soul of the world and the heart of the world will remain grateful to you because of what you are doing in a global way. The beauty and fragrance of your heart is inundating the length and breadth of the world.”

19 April 1998

“Politicians come and go, but in your case, you are the politician of the heart, not the politician of the mouth. History will bear witness to the fact that not only do you speak from the heart, but you give your heart as well. While you are talking, the words are coming from the very depths of your heart. Then you give your heart itself for the betterment of this planet.”

19 April 1998

“You may be here at one particular place, but your concern for each and every citizen of the world is being felt by the heart and soul of humanity.”

19 April 1998

“Brother, you are proving that politicians can use their heart, not just the mind. In your life, talking has been replaced by practising — practising the feeling of oneness. At every moment you are showing your oneness. Your heart is the bridge between the poor and the rich, between the weak and the strong, and between the smallest countries and the largest countries. You were born in the Soviet Union, but now the whole world claims you with utmost love, joy, pride and gratitude.”

19 April 1998

