



**SRI CHINMOY:**

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**THE PEACE**

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**MEDITATION**

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**AT THE**

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**UNITED NATIONS**



## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In the spring of 1970, at the invitation of then UN Secretary-General U Thant, Sri Chinmoy began leading twice-weekly Peace Meditations at the United Nations for delegates and staff.



**SRI CHINMOY AND THE THIRD SECRETARY-GENERAL, U THANT**

29 FEBRUARY 1972

Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations, as the Meditation Group is now known, is comprised of United Nations staff members, delegates and representatives of

non-governmental organisations. The Group sponsors an ongoing series of programmes, lectures and concerts to promote world peace, often in cooperation with UN Member States as well as with organisations supporting the ideals and goals of the United Nations.

The importance of meditation as a force for world peace has been recognised by the United Nations from its earliest days, when it was decided to open and close each session of the General Assembly with a minute of silence. The first Secretary-General, Trygve Lie, had a meditation room built in the Secretariat

*The outer message of the United Nations is peace. The inner message of the United*

## PROGRAMMES FOR PEACE

The Peace Meditation regularly sponsors concerts, commemorative programmes and interfaith prayer breakfasts during which Ambassadors, UN officials and religious leaders express their own vision for peace.



*Diplomats and staff join religious leaders at an interfaith prayer breakfast for the opening day of the UN General Assembly. The event is hosted each year by an Ambassador of a United Nations Member State, in cooperation with the Peace Meditation.*



*Sri Chinmoy performs on 50 instruments from various nations around the world during a concert held in the General Assembly Hall Lobby on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations and the 25th anniversary of the Peace Meditation Group.*



*The Sri Chinmoy Bhajan Singers accompany themselves on harmonium, sarod, santur, synthesizer and flute while performing in the UN's Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium.*



building and his successor, Dag Hammarskjöld, designed the room as we know it today. Secretary-General Kofi Annan recently re-opened the meditation room for use throughout the day.

In this tradition, the Peace Meditation, led by Sri Chinmoy, continues to meet twice weekly during lunch hours for silent meditations, sometimes interspersed with meditative music or reflective readings. In a non-denominational environment conducive to deep reflection, individuals can pause in their daily work to strengthen their own inner peace as well as their outer commitment to world peace.

**ABOUT SRI CHINMOY.** For some thirty-five years, Sri Chinmoy has dedicated his life to the service of world peace and to the fulfilment of the unlimited potential of the human spirit. A prolific poet, essayist, artist and musician, as well as an avid athlete, he has inspired citizens worldwide through his creative endeavours, through innovative peace initiatives and through the example of his own life. He brings his multifaceted inspiration to the UN family in the spirit of selfless offering, encouraging individuals of all faiths, races and nationalities to seek peace in their lives and bring this peace to their UN work.

*Nations is love. The inmost message of the United Nations is oneness.* —SRI CHINMOY

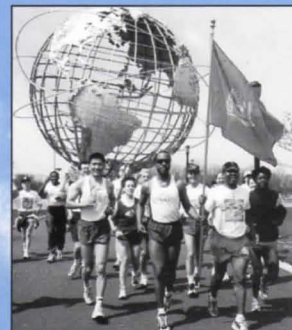
**PEACE WALKS.** In cooperation with a number of Permanent Representatives of UN Member States, the Peace Meditation sponsors special “peace walks” commemorating United Nations Charter Day (26 June) and United Nations Day (24 October). Participants walk silently through the United Nations garden carrying a copy of the Preamble to the UN Charter, passing it in relay style from one national group to another. In addition, each September, peace walks are held in over 100 cities worldwide on the International Day of Peace.

**SEVEN MINUTES FOR WORLD PEACE.** Beginning in 1984, “Seven Minutes of World Peace”, a global observance of peaceful silence in honour of UN Day, has enjoyed wide support from Heads of State and Mayors of key cities around the world.

**PEACE RUN FOR THE UNITED NATIONS.** Each year the Peace Meditation hosts an 18-mile group run in cooperation with Missions and non-governmental organisations, beginning at the site of the former UN headquarters at Lake Success, New York, and concluding with a brief ceremony at the current headquarters in Manhattan. Runners carry flags of the Member States and the United Nations.



*The Preamble of the UN Charter is carried in a nation by nation relay during a Peace Walk in the UN garden.*

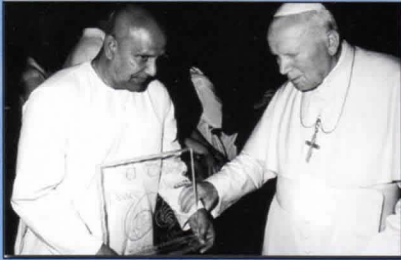


*Peace Run for the United Nations*



## U THANT PEACE AWARD

Sri Chinmoy, on behalf of the Peace Meditation, has presented the “U Thant Peace Award” to organisations and individuals who, in exemplifying the lofty spiritual ideals of the late Secretary-General, have offered distinguished service toward the attainment of world peace. Some of the presentations have taken place on U Thant Island in the East River, directly facing the UN, which the Peace Meditation arranged to have renamed in honour of the late Secretary-General. Recent recipients of the award include:



**POPE JOHN PAUL II**  
1998



**PRESIDENT MIKHAIL GORBACHEV**  
1994



**MOTHER TERESA**  
1994



**PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA**  
1996



**INDIAN PRIME MINISTER I.K. GUJRAL**  
1997



**JAMES GRANT, UNICEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
1994

Members of the United Nations community are warmly invited to participate in the twice-weekly non-denominational meditations and other programmes for peace hosted by the Peace Meditation. Everyone is welcome to join for all or part of a session, in a quiet, reflective atmosphere which allows each individual to pursue his or her own personal way of meditation. For those interested, members of the Group also offer classes in Hatha Yoga and meditation techniques.

*For more information please call (718) 739-4332 or write to*

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