



## **World Peace: Challenges And Remedies In The Context Of Guru Granth Sahib**

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Contemporary world is encountering innumerable challenges such as droughts, famines, disease and foremost war. In about one hundred or more 'small wars' more people have died than were killed during the World War II.<sup>1</sup> Famine, hunger and disease haunt major parts of Africa and Asia with disastrous consequences on rest of the globe. The probability of world peace becoming a first casualty is difficult to rule out. The task of the United Nations Organisation appears to be becoming more relevant than it was earlier. The present paper attempts to delineate contemporary challenges to the United Nations Organisations in the context of world peace.

Genesis of the formation of the United Nations Organisation is rooted in the failure of its predecessor the League of Nations.<sup>2</sup> The world War I (1914-1918) and the World War II (1939-1945) caused human catastrophe of great dimension surpassing all forms of medieval barbarities.<sup>3</sup> Henceforth, the fear of any repeat in the future had frightened the world statement. The term 'United Nations' was coined by the U.S. President F.D. Roosevelt and first used in the Declaration of the United Nations on January 1, 1942 when the representatives of 26 nations pledged the governments to continue fighting together against the Axis powers.<sup>4</sup> In the Moscow Declaration of October 1943 it was decided 'to create a new improved international peacekeeping organisations after the war'.<sup>5</sup> However, the San Francisco Conference (15 April-26 June 1945) attended by fifty representatives determined the aims and structure of the UNO; it drafted the UN charter which was signed on 26 June 1945 and ratified at the first session of the UN General

Assembly on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1945.<sup>6</sup> The UN Charter in 111 articles sets out the aims of the United Nations as thus:

to save humanity from the scourge of war;  
to protect human rights and the equal rights of men  
and women and of nations large and small;  
to promote justice and respect for international law;  
and to promote social progress, better standards  
of life and freedom.<sup>7</sup>

Sir Clement Attlee, the British Premier defined its ultimate aim in 1946 'as the creation of a world of security and freedom, a world governed by justice and moral law.'<sup>8</sup> Broadly speaking; its aim is to promote international peace, security and cooperation. Its membership has reached up to 191 by the end of 2002.

Man is born free. All humans are born equal in dignity and have equal rights. It is right of entire human race to enjoy liberty, equality and fraternity without distinction of caste, colour, creed, race, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Almost all human beings throughout the world seem to have been guaranteed right to freedom of thought, opinion, expression, conscience and religion. United Nations also believe that no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs. No one will be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Children are guaranteed special treatment. International communities give assurance that progenies will be protected from violence and wars. New generations will live in peace and they will have a right to violence free environment and future oriented education. This is a good gesture for entire human race.

In spite of all the rights and freedoms which international communities boast to guarantee, humans are seen in shackles of slavery, violence and under severe threat of oppression. Powerful and wealthiest nations are plagued by materialism. Environmentalists complain that this planet has been raped by the rich nations. Under the influence of materialistic and excessive craving for luxuries, the rich nations are dealing with Third world countries with stiff necks. Our children were vulnerable. Although they are our future but they are suffering the most at the hands of oppressive nations.

Under the present conditions, many of the children will not get opportunity to bloom in their life because they become easy prey to violence, discrimination and life threatening onslaught of underworld dons, mafia groups and warlords.

The present world is suffering from maladies of violent conflict, war and bloodshed. People are victim of physical, mental, social, moral, political, financial and state violence. World badly needs peace and harmony.

Global efforts have been made during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to promote peace within and among nations and to secure human rights for all people over this planet. Many peace agreement were signed by different nations during the last five decades but despite these significant accomplishments, the international community has yet to secure a truly sustainable peace across the globe where billions of people do not have an equal claim to basic human rights. Big nations that talk of universal peace and prosperity are the biggest sellers of arms in the world and thus creating threat to the global power balance. Everybody, especially our children need protection from the fear of power imbalance so that it does not result in violence and world war.

World Peace is attainable to a greater extent but the world has to learn to adhere to the religious and spiritual values as taught by the Sikh Gurus who were apostles of universal peace.

Philosophy and concepts of Sikhism enrich human life and world civilization. Sikh Scripture teach compassion and forgiveness. Sri Guru Granth Sahib enshrines the revealed work of God. The revealed word is not exclusively for the Sikhs but it is for entire human race. The message respects entire human race, its dignity and honour, It stands for universal brotherhood, harmonious living, universal peace, prosperity and Sarbat Da Bhala. It stands for well-being of the human family and peace on earth. Guru Granth Sahib enshrines universal message of One God and brotherhood of human race. It does not teach violence, suppression and oppression (Neither to frighten others nor to be frightened by anybody). It has a fair and objective attitude towards opinions and practices that differ from it. It condemns evil action whether it is Babur or anyone else. In today's world, philosophy of Guru Granth Sahib is the only resolution to build a better world, free of nuclear danger, the arms race, poverty, ignorance, discrimination, persecution and suffering, ensuring development, dignity and justice for all. Sri Guru Granth Sahib is panacea for all the worldly maladies.

By living in consonance with the Sikh philosophy, together we can change the culture of war and violence into a culture of peace and non-violence for our progeny. Let us pray and practice the concept of world peace. Let us commit to practice the essence of Guru Granth Sahib and guarantee human values especially to our younger and future generation. This act will inspire them to aspire for a world of dignity and harmony, a world of peace, justice, solidarity, liberty, equality and prosperity.

By following the teaching of Guru Granth Sahib, we can restore the right of the 'Culture of Peace' to our progeny. Similar philosophy has also been defined by United Nations with the set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations.

**References**

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3. In the World War I, 13 million soldiers lost their lives: 20 million civilians died of miseries and diseases; about 5500 persons died per day. During the World War II about 45 million persons died; 34 millions wounded and 30 million displaced: *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 29, 987, 1022-24.
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6. *Yearbook of the United Nations* (1951), 1-3.
7. For the text of the United Nations Charter (1945) see, *The Encyclopedia of the United Nations*, 836-841.
8. Michael Pollard, *United Nations*, Orient Longman, Hyderabad, 1996,7.