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STEPS OF PEACE

An informed public is the lasting foundation

FROM A QUOTE TO A WAY OF LIFE

One of our favourite quotations comes from Mahatma Gandhi:

"There is no path to peace. Peace is the path."

We heed this wisdom: People of faith and conviction carry peace in our hearts and minds. We need to be worthy of that conviction. So every step we take is a conscious choice, a method to build, and an invitation for others to join.

This resource is a collection of such steps. Each international day, each organisation, each suggested action is a light in front of our feet. In encountering the millions of PeaceBuilders amongst us, you might find direction, strength and camaraderie. They urge us to formulate our own response.

That is the invitation: to discover what peace looks like in our hands.

Courage. We are in good company.

The subtitle of this book is drawn from the words of Professor Jeffrey Sachs: "An informed public is the lasting foundation."

MARK THE DAYS

20 Feburary
World Day of Social Justice 4

5 March
International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness 13

24 April
International Day of Multilateralism & Diplomacy for Peace 23

16 May
International Day of Living Together in Peace 33

29 May
International Day of UN Peacekeepers 40

20 June / 16-22 June
World Refugee Day / Refugee Week 48

6+9 August
Anniversary of nuclear destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 57

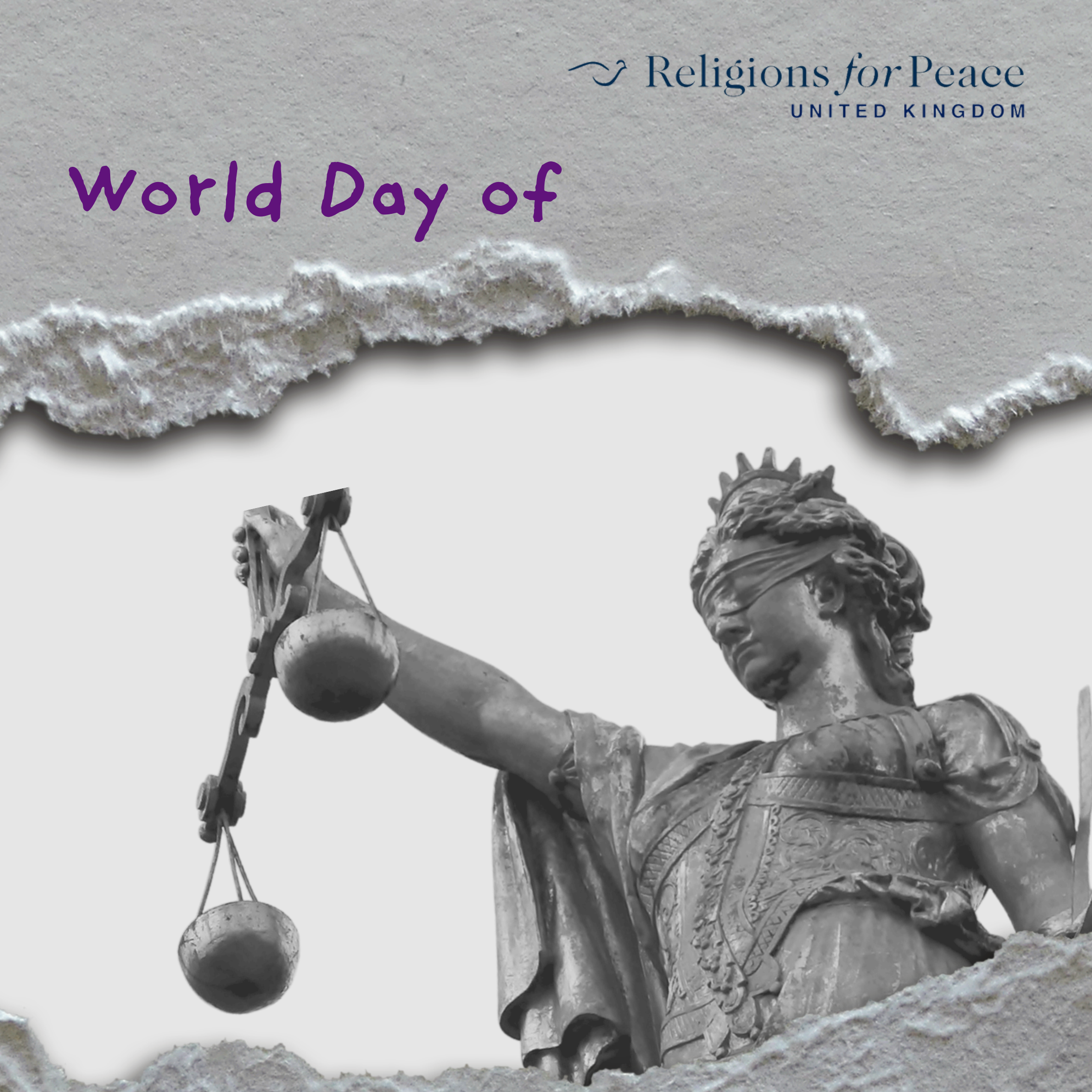
21 September
International Day of Peace 65

26 September
International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons 73

2 October
International Day of Non-Violence 89

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World Day of



SOCIAL JUSTICE

20 FEBRUARY

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Established by the **UN General Assembly in 2007,** the World Day of Social Justice **highlights the need for fair societies.**

Led by the International Labour Organization (ILO), a UN agency since 1919, **dedicated to promoting decent work and fair labour standards worldwide.**



CHALLENGES:

- 1.4 **billion** people work in **vulnerable jobs.**
- **Half the world** lacks access to **social protection.**
- Economic disparities, discrimination, and lack of access to essential services **fuel instability and violence.**

Fair wages, social protections, and workers' rights are key to Peace and Sustainable Development.

World Employment Social Outlook https://bit.ly/4jPRsch
United Nations https://bit.ly/42Tf3CA

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WHAT THE ILO & UN DO:

- Decent Work Agenda: **Fair wages, safe workplaces, and rights at work.**
- Global Coalition for Social Justice: **300+ partners tackling inequality.**
- Labour Standards & Policies: **Protecting workers worldwide.**



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WE CAN ALSO HELP BY:

- **Choose ethical brands** (look for Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, B Corp).
- If you're an employer, **ensure fair wages, safe conditions, and work-life balance.**
- **Advocate for fair labour laws** (sign petitions, support policy change).
- Raise **awareness in your community, workplace, and social media.**
- Volunteer or donate to **initiatives supporting fair work and equal opportunities** like the ILO or Anti-Slavery International.
- Support policies and organisations **tackling climate change and pollution, as a stable environment is essential for social justice and livelihoods.**

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Social Justice is the foundation for lasting

PEACE

LET'S WORK TOGETHER
FOR A FAIRER WORLD!

THE SHAPE OF FAIRNESS

What is social justice?
It is how fairly opportunities, resources and rights are distributed – shaping access to work, education, healthcare, and dignity (United Nations, 2024).

Why does it matter for peace?
Because unfair systems breed resentment, instability, and conflict. Fair labour systems support both economic growth and poverty reduction (International Labour Organization, 2024). The UN's Sustainable Development Agenda recognises this: you cannot stabilise a society that feels rigged.

What has been done?
The International Labour Organization (ILO) sets global labour standards. Its Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008) insisted that economic progress must align with dignity and equality. The Global Coalition for Social Justice (2023) now coordinates over 300 partners to tackle inequality and labour exploitation (ILO, 2024).

What works?
Programmes like Better Work strengthen factory conditions through monitoring and training (Better Work, 2024). Social protection systems – healthcare, unemployment benefits, pensions – have expanded globally, reducing poverty and building resilience. Every 1spentgeneratesover1spentgeneratesover1.50 in returns (ILO, 2024).

What is in the way?
The 2008 financial crisis exposed weak labour protections. Climate change and automation are reshaping work faster than laws can adapt. Many workers – especially in informal or vulnerable employment – still lack basic protection. Access to opportunity remains wildly uneven (ILO, 2024).

So where are we?
Social justice is not a label to wield. It is a continuous investment in labour rights, inclusive policies, and cooperation between governments, employers, and civil society (Better Work, 2024). The question is not whether we can afford it. The question is whether we can afford to keep failing at it.

FURTHER

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ORGANISATIONS

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

It is a United Nations agency that brings together governments, employers and workers to set international labour standards and promote decent work worldwide (International Labour Organization, 2024). Its work includes the Decent Work Agenda and initiatives such as the Global Coalition for Social Justice, as well as programmes supporting employment creation, social protection systems and fair labour laws across member states.

United Nations (UN)

It plays a broader coordinating role by embedding social justice within global priorities such as human rights, peace and sustainable development. Through frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 8 (decent work) and Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), it supports countries in aligning economic growth with social inclusion.

Better Work

A joint initiative of the ILO and the International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group) that works directly with factories, governments and global brands to improve working conditions in supply chains. Its projects include factory assessments, worker training and policy engagement, particularly in the garment and footwear sectors across countries such as Bangladesh, Vietnam and Ethiopia.

Anti-Slavery International

A non-governmental organisation focused on ending modern slavery in all its forms, including forced labour, human trafficking and child labour. It conducts research, campaigns for stronger legislation and works with local partners on projects that protect vulnerable workers and support survivors.

Trades Union Congress (TUC)

It represents trade unions and campaigns for workers' rights, fair pay and safe working conditions in the UK. Its work includes advocacy on employment law, protection for insecure workers and initiatives addressing issues such as zero-hours contracts and workplace equality.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF)

In the UK, It focuses on reducing poverty and inequality through research and policy advocacy. Its projects include analysing living standards, promoting fair wages and influencing government policy on social security, housing and economic inclusion.

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The International day for

DISARMAMENT & NON-PROLIFERATION AWARENESS



5 MARCH

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WHAT DOES THIS DAY MEAN?

Disarmament and arms limitation are key to maintaining international peace and security.

The International Day of Disarmament & Non - Proliferation Awareness was established by UN Resolution A/RES/77/51 (2022). **It encourages member states and civil society to engage in activities that highlight the importance of reducing armament levels for a safer world.**



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THE DEVASTATING IMPACT OF

WARS & WEAPONS

£83 billion UK military export licences globally (2008-April 2025)

https://caat.org.uk

Over 122 million people forcibly displaced due armed conflicts (UNHCR, April 2025)

https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends

The cost of **one battle tank** could provide **malaria treatment for 26,000 people**

US$2.887 trillion was spent on **global military** activity in 2025

https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/who-we-are/figures-glance?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Resolutions have not stop the world racing to rearm.
So many suffer. So much is done in our name.

WAR IS EDGING TO OUR FRONT DOOR



The Past

The energy released by the Hiroshima bomb was equivalent to **15,000** tons of TNT

The present

The combined destructive force of today's arsenal = **100,000** to **130,000** Hiroshima-sized bombs

what's for the future?

https://www.osti.gov/opennet/manhattan-project-history/Events/1945/hiroshima.htm

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THE UN's role

SETTING THE AGENDA

- researches and identifies needs
- strategises and sets the agenda
- builds treaties and sets legal frameworks
- creates channels for cooperation

https://disarmament.unoda.org/

The UN framework enables channels and conduits for coordinated action, and NGOs shoulder the delivery.

Disarmament is not a wish. It is what the UN, NGOs, and public conscience achieve together.



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WHO IS LEADING THE CHANGE

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

Their efforts led to the adoption of the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons** in 2017, which aims to completely eliminate nuclear weapons for a safer world. https://www.icanw.org

RfPUK is a proud member of ICAN

The Stockholm International Peace \Research Institute (SIPRI)

Conducts research on disarmament, arms control, and international security. They provide crucial data and policy analysis to **help governments and organisations make informed decisions regarding global arms reduction.** https://www.sipri.org/about

Campaign against Arms Trade (CAAT)

Challenges arms trade and its links to human rights abuses. www.caat.org.uk

PAX

Is committed to banning the use of landmines, cluster bombs, and nuclear weapons while supporting those affected by conflict around the world. www.paxforpeace.nl

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WHAT CAN WE DO

Stay informed by learning about the **UN's Disarmament Agenda** and **advocating for its implementation.**

Support organisations working towards a world without nuclear weapons.

Engage with politicians, urging them to **prioritise disarmament and global security**.

Join campaigns to get involved in promoting a peaceful future.

Share the message of disarmament awareness to raise global consciousness.



DOES ANYONE BELIEVE IN DISARMAMENT ANYMORE?

Treaties exist. The NPT, the Biological Weapons Convention, the TPNW – all aim to limit or eliminate the most destructive weapons (UNODA, 2024). Bilateral agreements have reduced nuclear arsenals from Cold War peaks (UNODA, 2024).

Yet even as these treaties were signed, nuclear-armed states have modernised their arsenals, raised warhead limits, and developed new delivery systems. The language of disarmament has not been matched by the reality of rearmament.

The UN's 2018 Disarmament Agenda and the 2024 Pact for the Future signal renewed political commitment (United Nations, 2018; 2024). But advances in missile technology, cyber capabilities and AI are outpacing existing frameworks (UNODA, 2024). The UK has raised its warhead cap. The US and Russia have withdrawn from arms control agreements. Global military spending continues to break records.

Here is the harder truth: rearmament is popular. Fear sells. Strength, measured in megatons, wins votes. Diplomacy is dismissed as naivety. De-escalation is called surrender. The default assumption – from kitchen tables to cabinet rooms – is that crisis leads to war, that negotiations are for the weak.

If we name that honestly, our action suggestions no longer sound lame. They sound like what they are: the beginning of an uphill struggle. People of faith and conscience do not get to opt out because the odds are long. This is not a strategic calculation. It is the only choice.

Disarmament is not a single policy goal but an ongoing collective process (United Nations, 2024). To name the gap between promise and reality is not to condemn the UN – it is to hold it, and ourselves, to the standards it was built to defend.

The UN draws the blueprint. The NGOs lead the way. Let's keep building in the wind.

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https://disarmament.unoda.org/

ORGANISATIONS

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

It is the main UN body coordinating global disarmament efforts. It supports negotiations on arms control treaties, promotes transparency through tools such as the UN Register of Conventional Arms, and works on issues ranging from nuclear weapons to emerging technologies like autonomous weapons. It also leads education initiatives, including Youth4Disarmament, to engage younger generations in policy and advocacy.

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

It is a global civil society coalition that played a central role in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017. Its work focuses on advocacy, public awareness and encouraging governments to commit to legally binding nuclear disarmament.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

Provides independent research on military expenditure, arms transfers and global security trends. Its data is widely used by governments and international organisations to inform evidence-based policy decisions on arms control and conflict prevention.

PAX

The organisation PAX works on both advocacy and field-based peacebuilding. It campaigns to ban weapons such as landmines, cluster munitions and nuclear weapons, while also supporting communities affected by conflict through protection and recovery programmes.

Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT)

Focuses on the economic and political drivers of the arms trade. It conducts research, legal challenges and public campaigns to highlight the links between arms exports, human rights abuses and conflict, particularly in relation to UK arms sales.

Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre (CPACC)

In the UK, it coordinates government efforts to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction. It brings together expertise from multiple departments to strengthen export controls, international partnerships and national security policy.

Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy (AIDD)

Another UK based organisation, it supports international negotiations on nuclear weapons and arms control. It provides policy analysis, facilitates dialogue between states and civil society, and has contributed to key disarmament processes, including nuclear non-proliferation discussions.

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the international day of

MULTILATERALISM & DIPLOMACY FOR PEACE

24 APRIL

https://libraryresources.unog.ch/multilateralism/history

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WHAT IS MULTILATERALISM?

THE DAY: 24 APRIL

On 12 December 2018, the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution of "International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace" (A/RES/73/127)

WHAT IS MULTI-LATERALISM:

Multilateralism is a tool of statecraft and a mindset, a way for nations to confront complex global challenges through a universal approach.

WHAT IS DIPLOMACY:

Diplomacy is an alternative to WAR. Peaceful negotiation and management of international relations bcan avoid violence or conflict.

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WHAT IS

PEACE:

shared justice

mutual respect

shared security

prosperity for ALL

dialogue over violence

collaboration over conflict

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CHALLENGES

climate crises

global inequalities

misinformation

armed conflict

rising nationalism

ETC. ETC. ETC.....

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CHALLENGES

Rising Nationalism

Many nations are shifting focus to domestic priorities, sidelining global cooperation.

Climate Crisis

In 2024, global temperatures rose 1.6°C above pre-industrial levels, exceeding the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C threshold for stability.

Global Inequality

As of 2025, the wealthiest 10% of individuals globally own over 50% of total personal wealth, while the bottom 50% hold less than 2%.

Conflicts

Ongoing conflicts around the world have led to significant loss of life and displacement.

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stay informed about
GLOBAL ISSUES

practice
CRITICAL THINKING

learn & appreciate
MULTIPLE CULTURES & BELIEFS

understand
DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

INDIVIDUALS CAN BUILD TRUST AND COOPERATE ACROSS DISAGREEMENT

INDIVIDUALS CAN BE PEACEBUILDERS

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TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER



MULTI-WHAT?

WHY DOES IT CONCERN ME?

Most of us will never sit at that negotiating table. But from that table comes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Paris Climate Agreement. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. All for the common good.

Multilateralism is the recognition that no nation solves its deepest problems alone. Climate change. Arms trade. Pandemics. Mass displacement. Slavery. These all need working across borders and divides.

The people around that table are not heroes. Their work is invisible. Their efforts are hard, long, and costly. But the results they bring save no fewer lives than frontline peace corps.

The spirit of staying in the room until a solution is found is multilateralism. The instruments to make solutions fit into legal frameworks is diplomacy.
So what does this day ask of you?

The individual actions we listed – staying informed, critical thinking, learning multiple cultures, understanding diverse perspectives, building trust across disagreement – this is the soil multilateralism grows in.

A diplomat cannot negotiate in good faith if their domestic audience rewards aggression. A UN resolution cannot pass if voters do not care about the problem. A treaty cannot hold if citizens do not believe in cooperation.

So on this day we may not be applauding the diplomats. But the day is asking you to become the kind of person who makes their work possible.

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ORGANISATIONS

United Nations (UN)

The United Nations (UN) is the central platform for multilateral cooperation, where 193 Member States negotiate, adopt resolutions and coordinate action on global issues such as peacekeeping, human rights and sustainable development.

World Health Organisation (WHO)

The World Health Organization (WHO) demonstrates multilateralism in practice by coordinating international responses to health crises, setting global health standards and supporting countries in strengthening healthcare systems.

World Trade Organisation (WTO)

Provides a rules-based system for international trade, helping countries resolve disputes and ensure that trade flows as smoothly and predictably as possible.

European Union (EU)

A regional example of multilateral cooperation, where member states work together on shared policies ranging from trade and climate action to human rights and regional stability.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Supports global financial stability by providing economic surveillance, policy advice and financial assistance to countries facing economic crises.

World Bank Group

Works to reduce poverty and support development through funding, technical expertise and partnerships, often coordinating large-scale international efforts on infrastructure, education and climate resilience.

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)

In the UK, the FCDO leads international diplomacy and development cooperation, working with multilateral institutions to address global challenges such as conflict, poverty and climate change.

Chatham House (Royal Institute of International Affairs)

An independent policy institute in the UK that provides research and convenes dialogue on international issues, supporting informed multilateral decision-making.

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The International Day of

LIVING TOGETHER IN PEACE

16 MAY

Proclaimed by UN Resolution 72/130 in 2017

THIS DAY WAS PROPOSED BY ALGERIA AFTER THEIR CIVIL WAR. THE UN VOTED UNANIMOUSLY AS TENSIONS AND CONFLICT RISE WORLDWIDE.

UN calls to ELIMINATE ALL forms of discrimination

IN THE UK FRUSTRATION AND CONFLICT FROM ECONOMIC INSTABILITY IS BEING STOKED.

LIVING TOGETHER IN PEACE MEANS WE INSIST ON SOLUTIONS, NOT SIDES.

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GLOBAL CHALLENGES:

discrimination

racial & ethnic

religious

disability

family status

age

social-economic

sexual orientation

inequality

access to education

access to natural resources

gender equity

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possible

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS:

- Educate yourself and others
- Build diverse relationships
- Challenge stereotypes & misinformation
- Speak up and use respectful language
- Reflect on your own biases
- Listen carefully to different experiences
- Advocate openness and support the cause
- Join movements and campaigns

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PEACE IS THE PATH

RESPECT IS THE CONDITION

INCLUSIVENESS IS THE STRATEGY



our actions matter. choose PEACE

The alternative is unthinkable

THE CONDITIONS OF PEACE

Peace is not a passive state. It is an active process rooted in inclusion, dialogue and respect for diversity (United Nations, 2024). The UN's 1999 Declaration on a Culture of Peace made this clear: lasting peace requires participation, cooperation and human rights (United Nations, 1999).

But discrimination persists. Racial and ethnic inequality still shapes income and opportunity. Women have fewer legal rights than men (World Bank, 2024). And 251 million children are out of school, reinforcing cycles of disadvantage (UNESCO, 2024).

UNESCO leads efforts to change this – through intercultural dialogue, anti-racism programmes, and projects like 'Revive the Spirit of Mosul' that use culture and education to rebuild after conflict (UNESCO, 2024). At the policy level, the UN promotes inclusive societies through human rights frameworks and development goals.

Exclusion undermines stability. Whether based on race, gender, religion or economic status, it increases the risk of conflict.

Governments and organisations have work to do. But so do we. Everyday actions – engaging with different perspectives, challenging prejudice, supporting inclusive initiatives – build the conditions for peace.

Peaceful coexistence is not a destination. It is continuous effort. It is the daily choice to value difference, address inequality, and create spaces where dialogue replaces division.

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https://www.unesco.org/

World Bank (2024). 'Women, Business and the Law Report.'
https://www.worldbank.org/

ORGANISATIONS

United Nations (UN)

Leads global efforts to promote peaceful coexistence through its human rights frameworks, peacebuilding initiatives and international cooperation platforms. It supports dialogue between countries, coordinates humanitarian action and promotes inclusive policies through agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Its programmes focus on intercultural dialogue, anti-racism initiatives and inclusive education, helping communities build mutual understanding and prevent conflict. Projects such as the Global Forum against Racism and Discrimination and Revive the Spirit of Mosul demonstrate how cultural heritage and education can support reconciliation and social cohesion.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)

Works specifically to improve understanding and cooperation across cultures and religions. It develops youth programmes, intercultural exchanges and global forums aimed at reducing polarisation and strengthening dialogue between diverse communities.

Search for Common Ground

An international NGO that focuses on conflict transformation at community level. It works in fragile and conflict-affected regions to promote dialogue, mediate disputes and support local peacebuilding initiatives through media, training and grassroots engagement.

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

In the UK, it promotes and enforces laws that protect against discrimination. It works to ensure equal treatment across areas such as employment, education and public services, contributing to more inclusive and fair societies.

Runnymede Trust

UK-based research organisation focused on racial equality, it produces evidence-based research and policy recommendations to address systemic discrimination and promote social justice and inclusion.

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The International Day of UN PEACEKEEPERS

UN General Assembly Resolution 57/129

On this day we honour the courage, commitment, and sacrifice of over **2,000,000** women and men who have served under the UN flag since 1948

This Day was established by the resolution in recognition of peacekeepers' vital role in helping countries transition from conflict to peace



29 MAY

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WHAT IS UN PEACEKEEPING?

It is a unique tool of INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

3 core principles

consent of parties

impartiality

non-use of force*

* except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.

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~~OCCUPATION~~

PARTNERSHIP ✓

United Nations Peacekeeping helps countries torn by conflict & create conditions for lasting peace

- protecting civilians
- upholding human rights
- disarming ex-combatants
- clearing landmines



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LET US HONOUR THE

70,000+

MEN & WOMEN. UNIFORMED AND CIVILIAN PEACEKEEPERS:
EXPERTS ON MISSION, POLICE, TROOPS,
STAFF OFFICERS, CIVILIAN PERSONNEL
AND UN VOLUNTEERS

GLOBAL PEACE is a shared responsibility

one that calls for courage, cooperation, and compassion in action



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POSSIBLE INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS:



- OBSERVE TODAY, WEAR A BLUE RIBBON
- ACTIVELY TALK ABOUT PEACE TODAY
- LEARN, EDUCATE, & ADVOCATE
- WRITE A POEM, CREATE ART OR MEDIA
- VOLUNTEER TO BUILD COMMUNITY
- SUPPORT VETERANS AND FAMILIES

THEY STAND BETWEEN

Since 1948, over 2 million UN peacekeepers have served in more than 70 operations. Today, 70,000 personnel are deployed across 11 active missions – often in complex, high-risk environments (United Nations, 2024; 2025).

Their job has changed. Early missions monitored ceasefires. Modern peacekeepers protect civilians, support elections, promote human rights, disarm combatants, and clear landmines (United Nations, 2024).

They operate under three core principles: consent of the parties, impartiality, and force only in self-defence or to protect the mandate (United Nations, 2024). This is not traditional war. This is standing between.

The gap is stark. Peacekeeping accounts for less than 0.5% of global military spending. Yet missions face non-state actors, misinformation, and advanced weaponry. Since 1948, over 4,400 peacekeepers have lost their lives (United Nations, 2025).

Initiatives like Action for Peacekeeping (A4P+) aim to improve performance and accountability. Women's participation has grown from 1% to over 8% – gender-diverse teams build stronger trust with local communities (UN Peacekeeping, 2024).

UN peacekeeping is not a permanent solution. No peacekeeping mission ever is. But it is a crucial mechanism for stabilising fragile regions and creating the conditions where long-term peace becomes possible.

They stand between.
We salute them.
We take heart that their conviction keeps many safe.

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United Nations Peacekeeping (2024).' Women in Peacekeeping.'
https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/women-in-peacekeeping

ORGANISATIONS:

United Nations Department of Peace Operations (DPO)

Oversees UN peacekeeping missions worldwide, coordinating military, police and civilian personnel working to maintain stability, protect civilians and support post-conflict recovery.

United Nations Department of Operational Support (DOS)

Provides logistical, technical and administrative support to peacekeeping missions, ensuring personnel have the resources needed to operate effectively in complex environments.

UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda

Works across peacekeeping operations to increase women's participation in peace processes and improve protection for women and girls affected by conflict.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Outside the UN system, organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) often w ork alongside peace operations by providing humanitarian assistance, protecting civilians and s upporting communities affected by armed conflict.

Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)

In the UK, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) contributes personnel, funding and diplomatic support to UN peacekeeping and international conflict-resolution efforts.

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16-22 JUNE

REFUGEE WEEK

Refugee Week is a festival celebrating the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees and people seeking sanctuary

20 JUNE

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

It's also a time to

BETTER UNDERSTAND WHY

people are displaced and the challenges they face





DEFINITION

A **refugee** is someone who has been

FORCED

to flee their country because of **war, persecution or violence**

Source; UNHCR https://www.unhcr.org/uk/what-is-a-refugee.html

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GLOBALLY:



122.6 million people

were **forcibly** displaced by mid-2024

UNHCR https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/mid-year-trends-report-2024.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

69% live in neighbouring low-income regions

UNHCR https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/mid-year-trends-report-2024.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com

nearly **40%** are children

Refugee data finder https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics



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IN THE UK:



Asylum seekers are

BANNED

from work

£7 / day

for essentials

over **30%**

in hostels with limited stability and community support

Refugee council https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/stay-informed/explainers/top-facts-from-the-latest-statistics-on-refugees-and-people-seeking-asylum/

possible

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS:

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Read. Reflect. Respond.

Witness their Struggle. Understand the Risks.

Take part in the 9 Simple Acts for Refugees

Refugee Week

- share a film
- cook a refugee recipe
- say hello to your neighbour
- read a book
- join a community walk

visit: https://refugeeweek.org.uk/simple-acts

Step Up. Speak Out. Stability for ALL.



Some of our UK frontline organisations



asylum matters

https://asylummatters.org

Refugee Education UK

https://www.reuk.org



City of Sanctuary UK

https://cityofsanctuary.org



TOGETHER WITH REFUGEES

https://togetherwithrefugees.org.uk/

COUNTERPOINTS.

https://counterpoints.org.uk



https://refugeesathome.org

REFUGEE COUNCIL

https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

SEE THE DATA. FEEL THE STORIES. STOP THE CRISIS.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF WAR

Refugees do not cause displacement. They are the result of wars.

Refugee Week began in the UK in 1998 and has since expanded internationally. It is a cultural festival and a platform for awareness – not only about the challenges refugees face, but also their contributions to work, culture, education and civic life (Refugee Week, 2024).

Displacement is not simple. War is a major driver, but so are political instability, environmental degradation, food insecurity and climate change (UNHCR, 2024). Many people remain displaced for years or decades, facing long-term struggles around education, employment, identity and social integration.

Children pay the highest price. Disruption to schooling, risk of exploitation, and psychological trauma follow them (UNICEF, 2024). Stable education and community support are not optional – they are essential for recovery.

Words matter. A refugee has legal recognition and international protection. An asylum seeker is still waiting for a decision (UNHCR, 2024). The process can take months or years, during which people face insecurity, restricted work, and social isolation.

Public perception is often shaped by misinformation, not experience (Counterpoints Arts, 2024). Refugee Week responds with cultural exchange and community participation – not to convince, but to connect.

The 1951 Refugee Convention guarantees the rights and safety of people fleeing persecution (United Nations, 1951). To people of faith and conviction, laws provide the thumbnails for our fuller engagement.

Our souls soar when we surpass obligations. Our efforts to welcome are the pleasant flowers in the garden of the divine.

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ORGANISATIONS

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The main international agency responsible for protecting refugees, asylum seekers and displaced people worldwide, it provides emergency shelter, legal protection, education support and resettlement assistance, while also coordinating international responses to humanitarian crises.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Works on migration and displacement issues globally, supporting humanitarian aid, safe migration pathways and long-term integration programmes for displaced communities.

Refugee Action

A UK-based charity, it supports refugees and asylum seekers through advice services, housing support, education programmes and employment guidance. It also campaigns for fairer asylum policies and improved living conditions in the UK.

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Advocates for a more humane asylum system in the UK by working with policymakers, local communities and campaign networks. Its projects focus on refugee rights, access to support services and public awareness initiatives.

Refugees at Home

Connects people seeking sanctuary with volunteer hosts who can provide temporary accommodation. The project helps address housing insecurity while also encouraging community connection and inclusion.

City of Sanctuary UK

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Together With Refugees

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Counterpoints Arts

Uses art, storytelling and cultural projects to challenge stereotypes around migration and displacement, and to promote more informed and empathetic public conversations about refugees and belonging.

2025

COMMEMORATION IS
A HEARKENING TO ATROCITY

WE ARE DOING IT AGAIN

THE COMBINED DESTRUCTIVE FORCE
OF TODAY'S ARSENAL IS EQUIVALENT
TO 100,000 TO 130,000
HIROSHIMA-SIZED BOMBS.

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UNITED KINGDOM

80 HISTORY

YEARS AGO ON 6 & 9 AUGUST 1945

2 NUCLEAR BOMBS FELL ON HIROHIMA & NAGASAKI

BY THE END OF 1945

150,000 TO 245,000 HAD DIED

TAKING THE MEDIUM ESTIMATE FROM HTTPS://THEBULLETIN.ORG/2020/08/COUNTING-THE-DEAD-AT-HIROSHIMA-AND-NAGASAKI/

THE BOMBS VAPOURISED VICTIMS, AND CAST A LONG SHADOW ON GENERATIONS OF DEFORMITIES AND DECEASES

what thoughts do we give ourselves when looking back on this horror which happened so long ago and so far away?

DOES ANY OF THAT MATTER TO US TODAY?

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UNITED KINGDOM

HISTORY

LITTLE BOY (HIROSHIMA):
15 KILOTONS

FAT MAN (NAGASAKI):
20 KILOTONS

FROM 1946 TO 1958
THE US CONDUCTED
67 NUCLEAR TESTS
IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN

https://www.brookings.edu/articles/castle-bravo-the-largest-u-s-nuclear-explosion/

THE 1962
BUNKER BUSTER B53
9 MEGATONS

SHOCKWAVE COULD FLATTEN
REINFORCED CONCRETE STRUCTURES
15 MILES AWAY

Sources: U.S. NNSA, "The B53" by Sandia National Labs, FAS Nuclear Notebook

IN 1961
THE SOVIET UNION TESTED
TSAR BOMBA

THE TEST YIELDED APPROX
50 MEGATONS
1 megaton = 1000 kiloton

1,570 TIMES
HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI
COMBINED

https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/tsar-bomba-largest-atomic-test-world-history

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UNITED KINGDOM

9 COUNTRIES POSSESS NUCLEAR WEAPONS

6 COUNTRIES HOST US WEAPONS

A FURTHER **28** COUNTRIES ENDORSE THE USE

TODAY

https://www.icanw.org/nuclear_arsenals

THERE ARE AROUND **12,241** WARHEADS IN THE WORLD TODAY

https://www.icanw.org/nuclear_arsenals

OVER **9,614** ARE IN ACTIVE MILITARY STOCKPILES

In 2006 the UK reduced its stockpile of warheads to 160
In 2010 we were expecting 65% reduction by mid 2020s
In 2021 the policy became **40% expansion of warheads**

THE UK CAP IS NOW 260

https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9077/CBP-9077.pdf

IT ONLY TAKES AS FEW AS 100 WARHEADS TO PLUNGE PLANET EARTH INTO NUCLEAR WINTER

https://www.ippnw.org/programs/nuclear-weapons-abolition/nuclear-famine-climate-effects-of-regional-nuclear-war

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THERE ARE NO WINNERS IN NUCLEAR WARFARE

THE UK DOES NOT HAVE A POLICY OF 'NO-FIRST USE'

https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9077/CBP-9077.pdf

WEAPONS WE MAY FIRE FIRST IS NEVER ABOUT DETERRENCE

NO MATTER WHO WE USE IT ON,
NO MATTER WHO IS RIGHT OR WRONG

THEY WILL RETALIATE

ALL FALL VICTIM TO

immediate death, slow starvation, genetic mutation, environmental catastrophe, nuclear winter, radiation fallout

ARE WE SURE OMNICIDE IS OUR SURVIVAL TACTICS?

CARRY THOSE STATS.
KEEP ASKING QUESTIONS.
YOU ARE A WITNESS.

WITNESSING IS NOT ABOUT
EFFECTIVENESS.
IT IS ABOUT FAITHFULNESS.
THE SPIRIT OF CREATION
WILL ALWAYS REFUSE CERTAIN DEFEAT.
ALL PEOPLES OF FAITH AND CONVICTION
STILL CARRY DIGNITY AND IMPACT.

EVERY CHOICE TO BUILD IS A PROTEST
AGAINST ANNIHILATION,
EVERY STEP OF PEACE AN ACT OF
RESISTANCE AGAINST MORAL DEMISE.

WE PREFER LIFE.
WE HAVE WAYS.
WE SAY: WATCH US.

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UNITED KINGDOM

International Day of PEACE

Observed each year on 21 September, this global day was established by a unanimous United Nations resolution in 1981.

It is a day for all of humanity to set aside differences and commit to peace.

Since 2001, it has also been recognised as a day of ceasefire and non-violence.

21 September

https://internationaldayofpeace.org

In the UK

the increasing anger and frustration in our streets have indeed ruptured the semblance of a peaceful state.

Even in a society renowned for its enlightenment and fairness, profound concerns are emerging over the decline in living standards, the deterioration of public services, and the increasing threat to personal safety.



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UNITED KINGDOM

SOME QUESTIONS FOR OURSELVES

Amidst clashing values and fierce disagreement, does a consensus remain that everyone wishes for safety, for fairness, and for the right to self-determination?

Given we all acknowledge the issue persists, do our current actions creating momentum for resolution, or are they entrenching us in a cycle of unproductive conflict?

Demonstrators demand to be heard. But behind the frustration and indignation, do we understand that most still fundamentally cherish stability and seek a compromise that protects the common good?

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IF BEYOND CONLICTING VIEWS WE ARE ALSO BEYOND INERTIA

let's establish

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

attitude

1 LISTEN and keep the new info.

Even if our views are wildly different.
All ideas merit serious attention. Yours too.

principle

2 ACKNOWLEDGE...

differences can still mean coexistence.

action

3 TABLE GRIDLOCK

Revisit disagreements later.
Give it more time and consideration.

Religions *for* Peace
UNITED KINGDOM

CALLING

All PeaceBuilders, ChangeMakers, all people of faith and none

Religions for Peace UK is a charitable foundation that will support you to:

CATALYSE

Inaction only deepens the crisis.
Spark candid conversations on equitable resources and community safety.

CONVENE

We can help you facilitate listening with humility, discussing with respect, addressing concerns with patience, and exploring shared interests.

COLLABORATE

It is time for us to find each other and say we want to work together.
Britain had paved paths of peace in much more challenging conditions. We are up for it agan.

THE CHANGING SHAPE OF PEACE

The UN established this day in 1981. Since 2001, it has also been a day of global ceasefire (United Nations, 2024). It was mostly about stopping wars between nations.

Now, it is about the anger in our streets. The decline in living standards. The fraying trust between neighbours. The idea of "peace" has shifted significantly since 1981. It is no longer just a diplomatic word. It is personal. It is upfront. It is costly. It cuts directly into our lives.

Due to the diverse circumstances of countries, people and belief, the word "peace" carries different meanings. On the political level, it can be the absence of war. On a personal level, it is a full belly, a secure home, a child who can walk to school without fear. On an ideological level, peace can be justice, or a simple chance to speak freely, express faith, and disagree without violence.

Peace carries real risks too. We can be ridiculed. Called naive. Leftover flower children. Our motives questioned. Our websites hacked. Our social media flooded with mockery.

Whichever way it is perceived, peace is an active state. Not a sigh. Not a notion. Not a passive hope. Peace is every step – lived out loud, in public, often costly, but with immense worth.

Let peace be our discipline. Our courage. Our resolve. To stay steadfast. To brave the rising tide. To meet hostility with curiosity, and division with compassion.

We keep going.

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ORGANISATIONS

United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)

Supports countries recovering from conflict by coordinating international assistance, strengthening institutions and promoting long-term stability. Its work focuses on reconciliation, development and preventing societies from returning to violence.

Religions for Peace International

One of the world's largest multi-faith organisations dedicated to peacebuilding and interreligious cooperation. It brings together religious leaders and communities to address conflict, promote dialogue and support humanitarian action on issues such as violence prevention, displacement and climate justice.

Religions for Peace UK (RfPUK)

Works to strengthen cooperation between faith communities across the United Kingdom. Its projects focus on peace education, dialogue, social justice and community engagement, encouraging collaborative responses to discrimination, conflict and social division.

Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW)

part of Quakers in Britain, campaigns on non-violence, peace education and conflict resolution. Its work includes mediation initiatives, advocacy against militarisation and support for restorative justice approaches.

United States Institute of Peace (USIP)

An independent organisation that conducts research and develops practical strategies for conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding. It works internationally with governments, educators and local communities to reduce violence and support peaceful resolution processes.

Religions *for* Peace
UNITED KINGDOM

International Day of

THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Established by the UN in 2013 to reaffirm our global commitment to nuclear disarmament, raise awareness, and demand action.
This is the UN's highest disarmament priority, first declared in 1946.

26 September

https://www.un.org/en/observances/nuclear-weapons-elimination-day

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UNITED KINGDOM

THE TALE OF TWO TREATIES

#1 TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

191 states have joined the Treaty
including the five nuclear-weapon States

the UK is in this one

Opened for signature in 1968
entered into force in 1970
extended indefinitely in 1995

https://disarmament.unoda.org/en/our-work/weapons-mass-destruction/nuclear-weapons/treaty-non-proliferation-nuclear-weapons

3 PILLARS

Non-Proliferation:
non-nuclear-weapon states to refrain from acquiring nuclear weapons

Disarmament:
all parties end the nuclear arms race toward nuclear disarmament

Peaceful Uses:
all states to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes

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THE TALE OF TWO TREATIES

#2

the UK is NOT in this one, AT ALL.

TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

currently 95 signatory states
74 party-states (ratified / acceded)

opened for signature in 2017
entered into force in 2021

https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVI-9&chapter=26

This is the **FIRST** legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal being the ultimate goal being their **TOTAL ELIMINATION**

HOW TREATIES WORK

SIGNING A TREATY

- A preliminary step: Signing is a formal but non-binding act, showing a country's intent to move forward with the treaty-making process.
- A sign of good faith: A country that has signed a treaty is obligated to refrain from actions that would undermine the treaty's purpose or objective, according to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

  https://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/1_1_1969.pdf
- Paving the way for ratification: Signing prepares the way for the more formal process of ratification.

RATIFYING A TREATY

- Formal approval: Ratification is the official, international act where a state formally expresses its consent to be bound by the treaty.
- Binding legal obligation: Once ratified, the treaty becomes legally binding on the state that ratified it, making it obligatory to adhere to its provisions.
- Domestic process: Ratification typically involves a domestic legislative process to make the treaty binding within the state.
- Entry into force: A treaty enters into force and becomes legally binding for all signatory states once the required number of ratifications has been received.

https://unfoundation.org/blog/post/un-history-what-is-ratification/

Religions *for* Peace
UNITED KINGDOM

BE AWARE OF
THE UK POSITION

The UK operates a submarine-launched nuclear deterrent which it is currently renewing, with a new fleet of Dreadnought-class submarines and a replacement warhead for its Trident missiles.

In JUNE 2025, the government published the Strategic Defence Review. All 62 recommendations were accepted.

Key outcomes:

- **£15 billion committed to the replacement warhead programme**
- **UK will join NATO's nuclear deterrence mission – purchasing 12 F-35A aircraft**
- **Work has begun on defining the post-Dreadnought successor**
- **Up to 12 new AUKUS nuclear-powered attack submarines to be built**

The government describes this as the "biggest strengthening of the UK's nuclear posture in a generation.

source:
https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10275/

DOWNLOAD: the full House of Commons Library Briefing
Strategic Defence Review 2025: The UK's nuclear deterrent

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QUESTION:
HOW MUCH IS IT COSTING US?

Since the acquisition of the UK's first strategic nuclear deterrent in the 1950s, the cost of procuring and maintaining it, and which Government department should finance it, has always been debated.

IIn line with convention, the Dreadnought programme will be funded from the Ministry of Defence's departmental budget. Precise costs are difficult to ascertain, as the government now reports all nuclear spending as a single "Defence Nuclear Enterprise" line in its budget. There has been a longstanding debate over budgetary responsibility for the nuclear deterrent.

source: https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8166/

Published August 2025

DOWNLOAD: The cost of the UK's strategic nuclear deterrent

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WE CANNOT AFFORD SILENCE

Let's offer some food for thought:

- The greatest risk is indifference. We are people of faith and conviction, we act as a reminder to care, to question, and to engage.
- A lasting peace is built on informed choices, not on unasked questions. We believe, with every fibre of our being, that a lasting peace is built on an informed and engaged public.
- Our mission is peace. Our method is awareness. The future is yours to decide.
- We wish to ensure the public is aware of this critical debate and its profound moral and practical implications.

Hashtags: #PeaceCharity #InformedDebate #NuclearDeterrent #UK

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UNITED KINGDOM

THE UN'S ROLE IN PEACEBUILDING

Peacebuilding Commission:
tackles inequality, poverty, injustice

Peacekeeping operations:
deployed in complex conflict zones

Sustainable Development Goals:
promote justice, equity, and environmental sustainability

ActNow campaign:
mobilises global citizens to take climate and peace actions

Pact for the Future:
addresses new threats like misinformation, tech misuse, and global crises

www.un.org/en/global-issues/peace-and-security

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'ACT NOW FOR A PEACEFUL WORLD'

In a world full of uncertainty, division, and unrest, peace cannot wait.

This is a call to action, not just for leaders, but for every one of us.

We all have a role to play in our own home, street, school, and network.

We use the UN Sustainable Development Goals as our strategic blueprint

Let peace begin with us.



https://internationaldayofpeace.org/

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What Can We Do:

BE A FORCE FOR JUSTICE



Support gender equality: equal pay, fair representation



Raise inclusive children: choose media and toys without bias



Fund education: scholarships, school supplies, awareness



Help end hunger: reduce food waste, support food banks



Take care of yourself: well-being supports your capacity to help others

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What Can We Do:

SPEAK UP FOR PEACE



Join campaigns: #PeaceBegins, #SayNoToHate



Support peacebuilders and interfaith dialogue



Learn about peacekeeping, disarmament, conflict prevention (Target 4.7)



Protest injustice, report harassment



Think critically before sharing content online

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What Can We Do:

ACT FOR SUSTAINABILITY



Switch to renewables, reduce meat consumption, waste less



Walk, cycle, take public transport, and fly less



Repair and reuse; avoid fast fashion and plastic



Plant native species and protect biodiversity



Advocate for green policies in your community

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What Can We Do:

BUILD A FAIRER ECONOMY



Support fair-trade and ethical businesses



Mentor and empower young people



Advocate for decent pay and conditions



Choose ecotourism and local experiences



Embrace a circular economy: reuse, upcycle, share

WEAPONS OR SDGS?

The UN identified nuclear disarmament as a priority in its very first resolution in 1946. Sixty-seven years later, by 2013, little had changed. Treaties existed. Arsenals had been reduced. But nuclear states were modernising, not dismantling.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) has had no new signatories since 2023. Nuclear-armed states remain outside. The stagnation is real. We once thought most people prefer safety. Reality checks us: we were wrong.

Until the goal of this UN day is reached, this day stays relevant. Working together is ever more crucial.

The diplomats build the frameworks that keep the world safe. They sit in rooms we will never enter. They negotiate treaties that take decades. Their work is slow, invisible, and essential.

The soil they cultivate needs us. Our concern. Our choices. Our refusal to give up on a world free of weapons of mass destruction. The peace we make in our homes, gardens, villages and cities – that is the world they work to protect.

SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – is the goal that holds all the elements together. We are all stakeholders.

Economist Jeffrey Sachs, special advisor to the UN on the Sustainable Development Goals, puts it simply: *"We have a profound misdirection of resources to war – when the total cost of the SDGs is only five percent of annual output. It's crazy if we don't get this done."*

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ORGANISATIONS

Many organisations working towards nuclear disarmament were also highlighted in the observances for Hiroshima & Nagasaki and Disarmament & Non-Proliferation Awareness. Two additional institutions are particularly important in the context of nuclear treaties:

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Monitors compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), supports nuclear safety and verification, and promotes the peaceful use of nuclear technology under international safeguards.

Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

The CTBTO supports the implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by developing a global monitoring and verification system designed to detect nuclear explosions anywhere in the world. It works with states and scientific institutions to strengthen nuclear test-ban verification and promote international cooperation on disarmament and non-proliferation.

Religions *for* Peace
UNITED KINGDOM

International Day of NON-VIOLENCE

Observed every 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.

Established by the United Nations in 2007 (UNGA Resolution A/RES/61/271), the day promotes non-violence through education and public awareness and reaffirms its relevance in addressing injustice and building peaceful societies.

Non-violence is not the absence of action, it's the active rejection of violence as a means of change.

2 October

Source: https://www.un.org/en/observances/non-violence-day

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UNITED KINGDOM

DEFINITION OF NON-VIOLENCE

The principle of NON-VIOLENCE — also known as non-violent resistance — rejects the use of physical violence in order to achieve social or political change.

Often described as "the politics of ordinary people", this form of social struggle has been adopted by mass populations all over the world in campaigns for social justice.

Source: https://www.un.org/en/observances/non-violence-day

Ghandi pioneered the principles of

Ahimsa (non-harming) **and**

Satyagraha (truth-force)

which influenced civil rights movements worldwide.

For Gandhi, non-violence was not passive, it was a powerful means of resisting injustice without resorting to harm.

Source: https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/ahmisa-non-violence-gandhi-and-global-citizenship-education-gced

Religions *for* Peace
UNITED KINGDOM

In a landscape of starkly divided opinion, let us recognise, on this International Day of Non-Violence, that:

THE LEGACY OF PEACE IS A HARD-WON DISCIPLINE

Uphold the social contract: Let reason be our common ground

The right to speak comes with a duty to listen

Respect is a bridge built from both sides

Impact change with calm voices

Channel frustrations into solutions

DO NOT LET VIOLENCE ECLIPSE ANY CAUSE

INSIST ON PEACE

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"THERE IS NO PATH TO PEACE,
PEACE IS THE PATH."
Mahatma Ghandi

Ghandi is an international peace icon. The recent vandalism at London's Tavistock Square is a profound contradiction that obscures the very grievance it claims to highlight.

Our shared future requires the courage to move beyond outrage and address the roots of anger. We firmly believe non-violence is the essential foundation for lasting progress.

PEACE IS THE PATH

We are fellow PeaceBuilders
laying the way with
our conviction to non-violence

RESOLVE & COURAGE

The International Day of Non-Violence highlights the continuing relevance of non-violent action in addressing injustice, political conflict and social division. Established by the United Nations in 2007 on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, the observance recognises non-violence not as passivity, but as an active method of resistance grounded in discipline, dialogue and collective action (United Nations, 2024).

Gandhi's philosophy was shaped by the principles of ahimsa (non-harming) and satyagraha (truth-force), which emphasised resisting oppression without inflicting harm on others. His methods influenced major civil rights and liberation movements worldwide, including campaigns led by Martin Luther King Jr. in the United States and Nelson Mandela in South Africa (United Nations, 2024).

Research on civil resistance has shown that non-violent movements are often more effective in achieving long-term political change than violent uprisings. A widely cited study by political scientists Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan found that non-violent campaigns were historically more likely to achieve democratic and sustainable outcomes because they attract broader public participation and reduce cycles of retaliation (Chenoweth and Stephan, 2011).

Non-violence is also increasingly linked to social cohesion and democratic resilience. In polarised societies, practices such as dialogue, mediation and restorative justice are seen as essential for reducing hostility and rebuilding trust between communities (UNESCO, 2024).

However, modern forms of violence are not always physical. Online harassment, misinformation and dehumanising rhetoric can contribute to hostility and social fragmentation, particularly during periods of political tension (UNESCO, 2024). For this reason, many peacebuilding initiatives now emphasise responsible communication, media literacy and respectful public engagement as part of non-violent practice.

The International Day of Non-Violence therefore serves as both a historical commemoration and a contemporary challenge. It asks how societies can respond to anger, injustice and disagreement without deepening harm, while recognising that peaceful change often requires persistence, courage and collective responsibility.

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United Nations (2024). 'International Day of Non-Violence.' *https://www.un.org/en/observances/non-violence-day*

UNESCO (2024). 'Culture of Peace and Non-Violence.' https://www.unesco.org/

THE SHAPE OF PEACE IN OUR HANDS:
UN TO GRASSROOTS

International days keep diplomacy on track, so we feel far away from the UN. We are not diplomats. And because the UN is not an enforcement agency, we are not without misgiving about its effectiveness. But we need to realise: global policy needs local execution. These days are prompts for grassroots action.

We stand at a crossroads. Democratic consent, non-violent protest, mutual respect – all challenged by muscle and intimidation. When the Gandhi statue was defaced, our society witnessed a complacent silence. Non-violence is no longer a publicly defended consensus. Gender-based violence is on the rise. Opposition to nuclear weapons is eroding. We are no longer confident about hard-won values.

Peace work has moved beyond lofty ideals or voicing a concern. The UN Sustainable Development Goals are our blueprint – to take up what we can deliver with resolve and courage.

The grassroots may not have official channels to the UN, but our endeavour is its own validation. And our spiritual integrity will reach those decision-making tables at the UN.

The ball is in our court.

SHAPES OF PEACE WE CAN OWN

Peace comes in many shapes. Religions for Peace UK supports peace programmes with UN Sustainable Development Goals as our blueprint. Each workstream contributes

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👉 **PeaceBuilders Network**

For collaboration. If our projects resonate, we would be glad to hear from you. There are ways to work together.

👉 **Projects overview**

👉 **Let's collaborate**

Courage. We are in good company.

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PeaceBuilders Network

www.rfpuk.org/peacebuilders

- improve visibility
- strengthen connection
- foster collaboration

Join Us

INFORMATION RESOURCES

20 February: World Day of Social Justice

World Employment Social Outlook https://bit.ly/4jPRsch
United Nations https://bit.ly/42Tf3CA

5 March: The international day for Disarmament & Non-Proliferation Awareness

https://caat.org.uk
https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/who-weare/figures-glance?utm_source=chatgpt.com
https://disarmament.unoda.org/
www.paxforpeace.nl
https://www.osti.gov/opennet/manhattan-project-history/Events/1945/hiroshima.htm

24 April: The international day for Multilateralism & Diplomacy for Peace

https://libraryresources.unog.ch/multilateralism/history

20 June: World Refugee Day

https://www.unhcr.org/uk/what-is-a-refugee
UNHCR
https://www.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/mid-year-trends report-2024.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com
Refugee data finder https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics
Refugee council https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/stay informed/explainers/top-facts-from-the-latest-statistics-on-refugees and-people-seeking-asylum
https://refugeeweek.org.uk/simple-acts

INFORMATION RESOURCES

20 June: World Refugee Day

https://asylummatters.org
https://www.reuk.org
https://cityofsanctuary.org
https://togetherwithrefugees.org.uk/
https://counterpoints.org.uk
https://refugeesathome.org.
https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

6+9 August: 80th anniversary of Hiroshima & Nagasaki Nuclear Bomb

https://www.brookings.edu/articles/castle-bravo-the-largest-u-s-nuclear-explosion/
https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/tsar-bomba-largest-atomic-test-world-history.
https://fas.org/initiative/status-world-nuclear-forces/
https://www.icanw.org/nuclear_arsenals
https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9077/CBP-9077.pdf
https://www.ippnw.org/programs/
https://www.ippnw.org/programs/nuclear-weapons-abolition/nuclear-famine-climate-effects-of-regional-nuclear-war

21 September: International Day of Peace

https://internationaldayofpeace.org

2 October: International Day of Non-violence

https://www.un.org/en/observances/non-violence-day
https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/ahmisa-non-violence-gandhi-and-global-citizenship-education-gced

Religions *for* Peace
UNITED KINGDOM

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At RfPUK, we warmly welcome ideas for projects, and collaborations that further these goals. If you have a vision for a positive environmental or community action, or simply want to explore ways to get involved, please access our Invitation to Collaboration. Every effort, large or small, contributes to building a more sustainable, just, and peaceful world. Together, we can turn awareness into meaningful action.

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