



United Nations  
Association in Canada

*Explore your world with UNA-Canada*

## What is Peace, to You?

What brings you peace? What does it feel like? How do you put a price on or value peace? How do you support and promote peace, in your life, in your community and in the world? Can you think of a more worthwhile discussion to have with yourself, your family and friends? Explore what brings you peace, and then commit to actions that expand your concept of peace into the world.

### For “We the Peoples” at UNA-Canada...



UN Photo: John Isaac (Serbia)

Peace is a paramount mission of the United Nations and of your United Nations Association in Canada (UNA-Canada). It is the basis of our existence; the essence of our identity; the cause that animates everything we do.

But what *is* peace? Too many people define peace, and therefore the success or failure of achieving peace, as simply the absence of war.

We at UNA-Canada believe that **peace is much more than simply the lack of conflict and hostility. It is a unique and powerful state of mind that starts with the individual.** It is the disposition and spirit of compassion, gratitude, respect, confidence, inclusivity, participation and justice.

Feeling at peace is beautiful to experience and, once tasted, we all look for ways to get back there. We start changing what we do and think. We share the experience with our family and friends, and we foster a ripple effect to our community and the world.

The path to the experience of peace is unique to each person. For billions of people, this feeling and hope comes to them as a result of the presence of UN agencies and one-on-one interactions with UN personnel and their unmistakable blue helmets.

- For those with the terrible fear while living in a region of conflict, peace is often a longing for a safe place. It is seeing blue berets arrive in their neighbourhood. It is believing that their lives will not forever be lived in the dead space between two explosions.

### United Nations & Peace

The UN proves itself year after year to be an effective institution in building peace. Not only has it succeeded in its initial mission of preventing World War III, but its peacekeeping, peace-building, democracy promotion and diplomacy have led to a world that is overall far more peaceful than it has been in previous decades. With annual UN peacekeeping costs amounting to less than 0.5% of total world military expenditures, UN peacekeeping is one of the greatest bargains of all time.

- For those in an area that is recovering from war, it is watching UN personnel risking life and limb clearing land mines, or having your first opportunity to vote in fair democratic elections that are organized and monitored by UN staff.
- For a community ravaged by a natural disaster, it is a sense of community in a world that cares – when UN workers arrive to provide food, water, shelter and help to rebuild.
- For millions of impoverished women struggling to support and feed their family, it's a small guaranteed loan from a UN agency to start a small sustainable business, build personal independence and self-confidence and change their children's futures by paying their school fees.
- Whether on manicured grass in Canada or on a barren patch of earth in Africa, for children playing a team sport, peace may be realized through participation. After a game of play, teams shake hands in center field having developed self-confidence and positive life-long skills such as cooperation, communication, respect, support, team-work, leadership and an understanding of how rules of law make living together better.
- In countries without the health services we take for granted, imagine the relief and hope upon receiving treatment for life-threatening diseases like polio, tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS. Or more basic medicine like antibiotics to treat an infected wound, anti-parasitic or anti-diarrhea remedies, or even simply vitamin supplements to prevent malnutrition.



UN Headquarters, NY

Peace can be care provided in UN refugee camps. Seeds provided by the UN's Food & Agriculture Organization. Access to health services and information. The opportunity to go to school. UN training of local doctors, police and teachers. It may simply be a message of love received by mail – an international system set up by the Universal Postal Union. Or a visit from someone beloved arriving by plane – for which the international air traffic system is made possible by the International Civil Aviation Organization. It can be peace within your family. Peace with your neighbours. Peace with the environment. Peace with yourself.

**Peace is a way of being, doing and living in society that can be taught, developed, and best of all, improved upon.** It is experienced when individuals feel safe, empowered, respected, included and hopeful. When they have hope, they can learn. When they learn, they can teach others the value of respect, inclusivity and peace in their community. When this progress is supported, one by one, one on one, it will be repeated. And when it is repeated again and again... the world will change. This is the value of peace to us at UNA-Canada. What is peace, to you?

One way to support peace on a global scale is to join our movement of "*We the Peoples...*" and help us to transform lives and build hopeful futures. A better world starts with YOU.

**Become a member of United Nations Association in Canada at: [www.unac.org/supportus](http://www.unac.org/supportus) or subscribe to our e-newsletter at: [www.unac.org/subscribe](http://www.unac.org/subscribe)**

Together, we will look beyond what is, to what could be, and take positive action toward a peaceful, prosperous and just future for all.