

THE WORLD MARCH FOR PEACE & NONVIOLENCE: A HUMANIST PROPOSAL

The World March for Peace and Nonviolence was launched during the Symposium of the World Center for Humanist Studies held at the Park of Study and Reflection in Punta de Vacas, Argentina, on November 15, 2008.

The World March aims to generate consciousness of the dangerous global situation in which we are living, a situation marked by the heightened probability of nuclear conflict, a renewed arms race, and the violent military occupation of foreign territories.

The World March is a proposal for an unprecedented social mobilization, advanced by the *Humanist Movement* through one of its organizations, *World Without Wars*.

Since its initial proposal things have developed very quickly. In just a few months the World March has received the endorsement of thousands of people, pacifist and nonviolence groups, a variety of institutions, and renowned figures from the worlds of science, culture, and politics, who are sensitive to the urgency of the moment. It has also inspired an enormous diversity of initiatives in more than 100 countries, becoming a rapidly growing human phenomenon. (www.theworldmarch.org)

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Today we are experiencing a critical situation throughout the world, characterized by poverty across vast regions and confrontations between cultures. Violence and discrimination contaminate the daily life of broad sectors of the population. Armed conflicts plague many areas, and we now have a profound crisis in the international financial system.

Looming over all of these is the most pressing problem of all: the growing nuclear threat. We are in a moment of extreme complexity. Not only must we take into account the irresponsible interests of the nuclear powers and the madness of violent groups with their potential access to nuclear material, we must also consider the added risk of a nuclear accident that could unleash a devastating conflict.

This is not just the sum of a few isolated crises; rather, we are facing the global failure of a system whose methodology of action is violence and whose central value is money.

THE PROPOSALS OF THE WORLD MARCH

To avoid a future nuclear catastrophe we must surpass violence today, demanding:

- *nuclear disarmament at a global level;*
- *the immediate withdrawal of invading troops from occupied territories;*
- *the progressive and proportional reduction of conventional weapons;*
- *the signing of non-aggression treaties between countries;*
- *the renunciation by governments of the use of war as a means to resolve conflicts.*

It's urgent to create consciousness for peace and disarmament. But it is also necessary to awaken a consciousness of nonviolence that rejects not only physical violence, but all forms of violence: economic, racial, psychological, religious, sexual, etc. This new sensibility could take root and inspire the social structures, opening the way towards the future Universal Human Nation.

We demand our right to live in peace and liberty. We do not live in liberty when we live under the threat of violence.

The World March is a call to all people to unite efforts and take responsibility for changing the world, to overcome their personal violence, and to work in their immediate environments, and as far as their influence may reach.

THE MARCH IN ACTION

The World March for Peace and Nonviolence is already inspiring various initiatives and activities, and these will multiply in the coming months. One will be the symbolic march of an international and intercultural team whose journey will pass through six continents. It will start on October 2, 2009 -- the International Day of Nonviolence -- in Wellington, New Zealand, and will culminate on January 2, 2010 at the foot of Mount Aconcagua in Punta de Vacas, Argentina.

During this time, in hundreds of cities around the world, there will be marches, festivals, forums, conferences, and other events to create consciousness of the urgent need for Peace and Nonviolence. And throughout the world, the campaigns to gather endorsements for the March will multiply this signal beyond what is now imaginable.

For the first time in history an event of this magnitude is being set in motion through the initiative of the people.

The true strength of the World March is born from the simple, conscious act of those who endorse this dignified cause and share it with others.

FOR THE HUMANIST MOVEMENT

Spokesperson for the World March: Rafael de la Rubia

Spokesperson for Africa: *Michel Ussene*

Spokesperson for the Asia-Pacific Region: *Sudhir Gandotra*

Spokesperson for Europe: *Giorgio Schultze*

Spokesperson for Latin America: *Tomas Hirsch*

Spokesperson for North America: *Chris Wells*