

World Peace Conference 2021: Advancing Peace through Social Inclusion

Dhaka Peace Declaration

We, the representatives of governments, legislatures, academia, civil society and media, gathered here at the World Peace Conference from 4-5 December 2021, hereby issue and subscribe to the following Dhaka Peace Declaration.

2. We acknowledge the Conference theme ‘Advancing Peace through Social Inclusion’ as a comprehensive approach to build back better, greener and stronger from the COVID-19 pandemic that has plagued our world in the last couple of years. We recall that the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains a blueprint for economic recovery and inclusive growth in the aftermath of the pandemic. We must not relent on international peace diplomacy to resolve armed conflicts that continue to cause mindless suffering to millions of men, women and children around the world.

3. We appreciate the backdrop for the Conference as Bangladesh observes the ‘Mujib Year’ to mark the 50th anniversary of its independence and the birth centenary of its founding father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We recall that Bangladesh’s journey over the last five decades is a validation for people’s emancipation and empowerment as a pathway to sustaining peace, promoting sustainable development and upholding fundamental rights and freedoms.

4. On this occasion, we pay tribute to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman for his personal commitment and contributions to peace throughout his illustrious political career. We reflect on his words as he singled out peace as the deepest aspiration of all human beings, identified it as essential to the survival and prosperity of all men and women, and stressed that peace to endure must be peace based on justice.

5. We place our appreciation for the able leadership demonstrated by his political successor, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in taking forward his legacy with courage and determination. Her own stewardship of a ‘Culture of Peace’ at the United Nations remains Bangladesh’s signature contribution to the international discourse on peace and human security.

6. We recall the memory of the martyrs and victims of Bangladesh’s War of Liberation in 1971, and reaffirm our pledge of ‘never again’ to the commission of genocides, war crimes and crimes against humanity. We remind ourselves that despite our commitment, millions around the world continue to be subjected to such international crimes as well as a culture of impunity barring justice and accountability for those crimes. We commit ourselves to forge ahead to end such cowardly persecutions and injustices. We recognize the importance of preserving the memory of past atrocities.

7. We reiterate our abiding commitment to promoting and protecting human rights as enshrined in the Universal Declaration for Human Rights and the core international human rights treaties. We attach equal weight to civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights in our quest to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies. We acknowledge the invaluable work done by the UN Human Rights mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council. We commit to ensure protection for human rights defenders. We stress that humanitarian actors be given unhindered access to discharge their mandates. We urge that medical and educational facilities are kept out of harm’s way under any circumstances.

8. We underscore the primacy of international humanitarian law during times of both war and peace. We remain attached to the principles of international protection and assistance for refugees and stateless persons around the world. We renew our commitment to international disarmament and non-proliferation in the backdrop of an intensifying global arms race. We renounce the use or threat of use of all weapons of mass destruction, i.e., nuclear, chemical and biological. We denounce terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We see merit in working through community engagements to prevent violent extremism. We must unite our combined strength against transnational criminal networks preying on countless victims.

9. We emphasize the importance of democracy, good governance and the rule of law as critical factors for peace and stability. We value the role played by national parliaments and local government institutions in giving voice to people’s legitimate demands and aspirations. We condemn colonialism, illegal occupation and unauthorized takeover of power under any pretexts. We recognize the role of peacemaking, peacebuilding and mediation to prevent and end conflicts. We commend the UN peacekeeping personnel for their dedication and services, and maintain our faith in the agency of women and youth in ensuring peace and security.

10. We underline the need for social justice and inclusive development as central pillars of a stable, peaceful and equitable society. We commit to safeguard the right to employment for all adults amid the changing world of work, and to work towards an enabling environment for decent work across all sectors. We call for appropriate policies and legal measures to provide social protection, address inequalities, promote sound investments and conserve the environment. We recognize the critical role played by the private sector in advancing social order and progress. We need a rules-based multilateral trading system as a factor for international peace. We share our common resolve to promote safe, orderly and regular migration. We must ensure that those forcibly displaced get to return home in safety and dignity.

11. We must keep working on redeeming our pledge to 'leave no one behind'. We must continue to keep up our collective battle against poverty, hunger, diseases, malnutrition, illiteracy, homelessness, and all scourges that compromise peace and security. We must create enhanced opportunities for women's political and economic participation. We must redouble our efforts to prevent all forms of violence and exploitation against children. We must give added attention to the special needs of the elderly, persons with disabilities and indigenous persons for their meaningful participation in societies. We have a responsibility to fulfill the internationally agreed development commitments, including for financing, access to innovations, and technology transfer.

12. We subscribe to the underlying and eternal messages of peace across all religions, faiths and belief systems. We believe in the opportunities for continued interface and diffusions among civilizations and value systems. We reject attempts to associate any religion, creed or ethnicity with terrorism and violent extremism. We denounce all forms of violence and abuse on the basis of race, colour or gender. We must allow no space for xenophobia, corruption and disinformation campaigns. We unequivocally condemn communal or sectarian violence.

13. We prize and cherish our diverse cultures, languages and traditions as our shared intangible heritage. We commit to foster human connectivity through education, ethical studies, science, arts, music, literature, media, tourism, fashion, architecture and archeology to build bridges across borders and nations. We need to forge a global consensus to promote responsible behavior in the cyberspace, with special safeguards for our children and youth. We must strive to build defences against wars and conflicts in all human minds, and nurture respect and tolerance for each other by resorting to our common humanity. We must groom our future generations as true global citizens, particularly through education for peace. We urge the UN to actively promote the idea of Global Citizenship.

14. We remain sensitized to the growing security, displacement and ecological challenges posed by climate change and commit to enhanced climate action for a peaceful and sustainable future of our planet. We must join forces to keep our oceans and high seas, outer space and Polar Regions free from armed conflicts and contestations. We need to make the various components and manifestations of the Fourth Industrial Revolution employed at the service of our shared well-being. We must invest in health security and make quality and affordable treatments and vaccines available for all. We envision a world where the existing global inequities no longer persist and where peace and non-violence prevail as inalienable rights.

15. We cannot lose sight of the fact that absence of peace anywhere in the world implies absence of peace everywhere. We must repose our faith and confidence in the spirit of multilateralism. We wish to see the comity of nations made fit for purpose for our evolving global realities. We acknowledge the role of regional cooperation in building trust, understanding and cohesion among peoples. We hope to establish a world order that thrives in harmony with our entire planetary ecosystem. We seek resort to our essential human virtues of love, compassion, tolerance, kindness, empathy and solidarity to achieve lasting peace and security.

16. We take a solemn vow at this World Peace Conference to do our part from our respective vantage points to advance the causes of peace and social inclusion, fundamental rights and freedoms and sustainable development. We take note of the call for continuation of this initiative by Bangladesh to spread the message of peace and friendship to a wider global audience, including by creating a platform to bring the participants together. We thank the government and people of Bangladesh for their gracious hospitality and for rallying us around their shared ideals and vision for peace.
