



Geneva, Switzerland / New York City, USA

RUNNING TO THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations was founded to maintain peace and to foster cooperation among nations, so it is fitting that its two homes were venues of major ceremonies for the 2001 Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run.

On March 23, a team of international runners was greeted by Vladimir Petrovsky, Director General of the United Nations Office in Geneva, as the Peace Run arrived at the Palais des Nations. Numerous UN organisations and missions were represented, and nearly 400 schoolchildren also attended. "We are very thankful to Sri Chinmoy for this very important peace initiative that has become part and parcel of international

peace activities in the new world today," said Mr. Petrovsky in his welcoming speech.

"If we feel peace and spread peace person to person, then this peace will dawn on Earth. It happens person to person, and it begins with me and all of you here today," said Shambhu Neil Vineberg, Executive Director of the Peace Run. Mr Vineberg acted as Master of Ceremonies.

The European Peace Run - a 24,000 km (15,000-mile) relay through 45 European nations - had begun in Lisbon, Portugal, on March 1. It will conclude in Budapest, Hungary on October 24 - United Nations Day. "When people can run together in peace, then they can also live together in peace and harmony," says Dipavajan Renner, the European Peace Run Coordinator.

Since the first Peace Run in 1987, the United States portion has always begun in New York City, with a ceremony at the United Nations headquarters in Manhattan. This year was no exception. On April 14, runners representing 80 countries converged on the UN building from all five boroughs of New York.

"In the United Nations we are trying to play our role to break down the barriers between political, economic, social, cultural, ethnic and religious barriers. The group of Peace Runners here today represents this oneness that Sri Chinmoy is advocating all over the

"When people can run together in peace, then they can also live together in peace and harmony"

world," said Brian Gleeson, Advisor to the Administrator of the UN Development Program. Mr Gleeson was one of the UN officials to attend the ceremony.

The US Peace Run is currently travelling through all 48 contiguous States. (A separate Peace Run was held in Alaska in May, and a Hawaiian Peace Run is planned for November.) It will finish - once again at the UN building - on August 17.

Director General of the UN Office in Geneva Vladimir Petrovsky holds the Peace Torch.



Shambhu Vineberg, Peace Run Executive Director, & the Peace Runners share a moment of peace. Queens, NY.



Notes from the Road...



His Royal Highness Prince Charles takes a step for peace

Ottawa, Canada

Prince Charles Takes a Step for Peace

His Royal Highness Prince Charles, well-known for his concern for environmental and social issues, held the Peace Torch and discussed peace issues with the Canadian Peace Run team on April 25. His meeting with the runners was covered by two television channels, including the national CBC network.

Prince Charles is not the first member of the British Royal Family to take the torch. His mother, HRH Queen Elizabeth II, lit the torch during a 1995 ceremony in Britain.

Georgia, USA

President Carter Holds Torch

Former US President James Earl (Jimmy) Carter and his wife, Roslyn, met the Peace Runners on April 29, as the Run visited their home town of Plains, Georgia. The ex-President held the Torch outside the Maranatha Baptist Church, where he offers a weekly Sunday School Bible class. Mr Carter is best remembered for arranging the 1979 peace agreement between Egypt and Israel. He is also well-regarded for his post-Presidential career as a foreign diplomat. "Meeting him has deepened my appreciation for who he is and



Former US President Jimmy Carter with the Peace Torch

what he stands for," said US Team Captain Arpan DeAngelo, long an admirer of the former President.

Hungary

Euro Peace Run to End with a Bang

The European Peace Run route will finish in Budapest on October 24 - but part of Hungary has already experienced the Peace Run. Organisers held a special Peace Run on March 3 in the southern city of Pécs, linking 20 schools in a 15km (9.3-mile) route through the city. It finished in the main city square, where the Mayor received the Torch. Over 700 children participated in the Run.

Hungarian organisers plan to hold a Peace Run, in a different city, each month until October, leading up to the final event in Budapest. We can expect that to be one of the year's Peace Run highlights.

Ukraine

Camp Peace Run

While other Peace Runs visit schools, children in the Ukraine's Donetsk region find out about the Peace Run through summer camp. This started in 1997, when over 800 children took part in the Run from a single camp - 'Orlenok', on the coast of the Azov Sea. Two years later, 42 camps in the Donetsk region were linked in a camp-to-camp relay. This event has continued to grow, and last year 21,000 children ran with the Peace Torch. Along with summer camps, the Ukraine is part of this year's European Peace Run route, and the runners will visit the nation in July.

Peace Run Covers the Globe

Globally, mid-year is the busiest time for the Peace Run. A single week in May, for example, saw Peace Runs in Canada, Russia, Finland, Slovakia and the US, as well as the European Run heading through the Netherlands and Germany. Additionally, a major Norwegian Peace Run began on May 28.

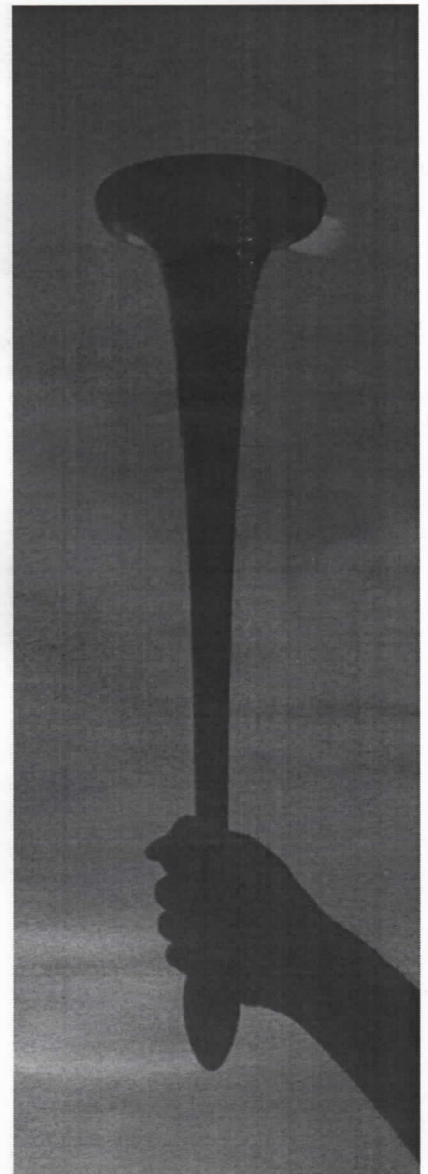
The Peace Run will not be resting, howev-

er. In coming months, events are planned for Africa, India, Australia, Nepal and many other places. Details will be in future newsletters.

The Netherlands

Amsterdam joins the Peace-Blossoms

Amsterdam, the Capital city of the Netherlands, has become the latest Sri Chinmoy Peace Capital. In a ceremony at the "Stopera" (City Hall) on May 15, Vice-Mayor Var der Aa dedicated Amsterdam as a Peace Capital, speaking of Amsterdam's great quality and history of tolerance, before receiving the Peace Torch from runners. Amsterdam follows several national Capitals in this worldwide program, including Bern, Canberra, Guatemala City, New Delhi, Ottawa, Oslo, Stockholm and Wellington.



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Children participating in the recent Geneva Peace Run ceremony in Switzerland.

Washington DC

10,000 Schools

The Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run recently announced a new project: 10,000 Schools for Peace. The first goal of this ambitious project is to organise 10,000 schools worldwide - even those that are not part of a Peace Run route - to hold a local Peace Day. This day, dedicated to peace, can include an assembly, discussions, lessons, performances and special projects. All schools that hold a Peace Day will receive a special certificate from the global Peace Run.

The second goal is to create a permanent global network of educators and parents dedicated to peace education. This network will provide valuable information, ideas and resources.

"I'm very pleased that so many schools have participated in the project. It has been a very inspiring response so far.", says Andrew Kutt, Director of the Peace Run school program.

Involving children in the peace process has always been a major focus of the Peace Run, which has visited thousands of schools since

1987. As the runners arrive at the schools, they are greeted by students who present huge peace banners, drawings and other artwork of their own creation. During the ceremony, children read self-penned essays, poems and messages for peace, perform plays, and give musical performances. Usually the Peace Run stays no more than a few hours in any one place, but the spirit remains.

"All the students and staff knew that they were sharing in something very special," recalled Meredith Wedin, Principal of the T.H. Rogers School in Houston, USA. "The students thoroughly enjoyed preparing the songs, poems and posters used to convey the special unifying spirit of the event."

Additionally, an international competition is being held, encouraging children to submit artwork, poems and essays on the topic of world peace.

For further details, write to P.O. Box 41044, Bethesda, MD, 20824-1044. Or look up www.peacerun.com.

Peace Facts

SINCE IT BEGAN, the Peace Run has covered a distance of 490,000 km (305,000 miles) - greater than the distance to the moon, and 38 times the circumference of the Earth.

SEVERAL NOBEL PEACE PRIZE laureates have held the Peace Torch, including Mother Teresa, Mikhail Gorbachev, President Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

South-East Asia

Peace Walk around the Heart of Myanmar

The Peace Run, well-known for its dynamism and excitement, had a change of pace on December 17 last year, as an international team walked with the Peace Torch around the main stupa of the Shwedagon (Golden Pagoda) in Yangon, Myanmar.

Myanmar (formerly Burma) is a nation with strong Buddhist culture. In both location and spirit, Shwedagon is the heart of Myanmar: the oldest and largest shrine of its kind. It is said to enshrine the relics of Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, and his spiritual predecessors. The soulful Peace Walk celebrated the Buddhist philosophy of inner and outer peace.

The Peace Walk was part of a visit to South-East Asia by the Peace Run's founder, Sri Chinmoy. The visit also saw Peace Runs held at Ayutthaya, Thailand (December 4); Mandalay, Myanmar (December 26); and Denpasar, Bali (January 25).

Children greet the Peace Run in Australia and Indonesia



PEACE RUN: FROM DREAM TO REALITY



"...this burning peace-flame will be alive all the time in each country and in each heart"

Since the first Peace Torch was lit in 1987, the Peace Run has been making history. As early as 1989, it crossed the border between Eastern and Western Europe, uniting the two sides of a continent that had been separated by a Cold War. In 1991, it journeyed through the northern Sinai, linking Egypt and Israel via their former battlefield.

The Peace Run has even faced the ecological barriers of Antarctica, thrice braving the hostile climate of the world's most desolate continent. In 1989, one runner did a solo marathon through the Antarctic wilderness, with the Peace Torch to light his way.

In 1999, to celebrate the coming Millennium, Peace Run events were held every day of the year, encompassing over 100 countries. Even the world's newest nation,

East Timor, held a Peace Run in 2000, with the Nobel laureate José Ramos Horta welcoming the Peace Run only month into East Timor's nationhood.

Around the world, cities, nations and significant landmarks have been dedicated to peace during Peace Run ceremonies. The Peace Torch, the burning symbol of unity, has been held by over two million people. What other cause could link Muhammad Ali with Sir Paul McCartney? Arnold Schwarzenegger with Mother Teresa? Mikhail Gorbachev with thousands of schoolchildren in Bangkok, Boston or Brussels?

Olympic gold medalist Carl Lewis has run with the torch through Houston, and fellow Olympic champion Cathy Freeman has taken it in Melbourne. Countless leaders have held



Peace Run founder Sri Chinmoy with former South African President Nelson Mandela and his wife Graça Machel

the torch, from Pope John Paul II and Queen Elizabeth II to hundreds of mayors, councilors and village chiefs. In 1995, the Peace Torch crossed another frontier, orbiting the Earth on the Mir space station.

The Peace Run has been accomplished not through a multi-million-dollar budget, but through the inspiration of the runners, the participants and of course the organisers - beginning with its founder, Sri Chinmoy. "It is my wish that, from now on, this burning peace-flame will be alive all the time in each country and in each heart," he has said.

"Though the Peace Run began as a biannual event, our program has grown to the extent that Peace Runs are now held every year, somewhere in the world," says Executive Director Shambhu Vineberg. "Now in our fifteenth year, one can safely assume that history will be made many more times before the end of 2001.

