

United Nations Headquarters
New York
30 October 1985

FINAL CEREMONY OF THE PEACE WALK
FOR THE UNITED NATIONS FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

(Sponsored by Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations as well as by the heads of the following delegations: Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Bahamas, Cyprus, Haiti, Malta, Mauritius, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago)

Mr. Abdul Hannan, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the United Nations: The organizers of and participants in today's Peace Walk for the United Nations Fortieth Anniversary, ladies and gentlemen, I consider it a great honour and privilege to say a few words on this occasion, and I profoundly thank the organizers for having arranged this peace march. You are doing a splendid job in offering us a fresh opportunity to rededicate ourselves to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Last week we witnessed a gathering of world leaders here who came to express their support, confidence, trust and dedication to the Charter. Their visit here was in effect an indication of the success and glory of the United Nations. In spite of the prophets of doom who declare that the United Nations has not achieved anything and predict that it will never achieve anything, I for one, coming from a developing, third world country, can greatly value the United Nations for promoting the cause of peace and security, for ensuring our independence and protecting our national sovereignty, and for providing us as well as many other countries with the means for economic and social development.

In addition to these things, during the last forty years the United Nations has averted a major war. It has diminished local and regional conflicts and sometimes stopped them from escalating into a major war. This is not an insignificant achievement. Again, it is the United Nations which has provided the means for food and agricultural production as well as industrial development in many developing countries. It is the United Nations which has saved millions of children from malnutrition and different diseases; I am referring to the contribution of the United Nations Children's Fund. It is the United Nations which is promoting education and culture; I am referring to the

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contribution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It is again the United Nations which is giving us medical care and medical aid; I am referring to the contribution of the World Health Organization. Let me also refer to the contribution of the Food and Agriculture Organization to agricultural growth and the production of food. So the United Nations contributions are manifold, and we cannot underestimate its achievements.

Ladies and gentlemen, our common aspirations are for peace, but peace is interlinked with development. We have noticed that wherever there is lack of development and lack of prosperity in the world, there is conflict and violence in society. In order to secure peace in the world, the international community should strive to increase development throughout the world. But unfortunately we find that the scarce resources of the world are being wasted in the mad race for armament. All of us here know that about a trillion dollars are being spent each year on the armament race, both conventional and nuclear. This is a mad race because we know for certain that in the event of war, it will be a nuclear war, and nobody is going to survive to win that war. The vanquished and the victor will be equally defeated. Both will be crushed and will vanish into smoke and dust, so it will be a futile war. Why spend so much money for this most futile pursuit? Instead, we should redirect these resources for the purposes of development. If we do that, that will bring world peace.

What we need to do today, I think, is to re-anchor our international relationship on the moorings of morality and justice, on the foundations of fear of God and the divine Law, on concern for humanity. Thereby, it will be a better world in which to live. Thereby, science and technology will be used for peaceful purposes. Art and literature will blossom, and the creativity of human beings will find fruition. There will be smiles on the faces of children; there will be smiles on the faces of the sick and hungry. We will no longer be haunted by fear of death and destruction from war. Let us all make concerted efforts to support the United Nations. We know for certain that the United Nations can mobilize public opinion for purposes of development, for purposes of peace. Let us have that faith and confidence.

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Mr. Jean Gazarian, Special Advisor for the Fortieth Anniversary
(receiving a copy of the Preamble to the Charter signed by participants
in the Peace Walk): Dear friends, on behalf of the Secretary-General I would like to thank you very much for the beautiful gift you have just honoured us with. I would also like to express his gratitude for the very important event which has concluded today. As you know, the Secretary-General is always in favour of peace initiatives, whether they occur in world capitals, in conference rooms or in our beautiful United Nations garden.

You have expressed yourselves with what is the most eloquent language on earth. It may be like a paradox, but that most eloquent language is the language of silence. Silence and meditation have for many centuries been the basis of many religions. Whatever way we worship, it is important to meditate. It is a well-known fact, but it should be recalled that in 1949, when the General Assembly was only four years old, it decided to amend its rules of procedure and to insert a new rule whereby the Assembly would observe at the beginning and at the end of every session a minute of silence devoted to prayer or meditation. This is extremely important because it has injected into the General Assembly the Light of a Supreme Being. Of course, in a more facetious vein, I may say that there is a long period of time between the first minute of silence and the last minute of silence, and, if I may say so, there is not much silence in between!

The Fortieth Anniversary is a period of rededication, as the Representative of Bangladesh has just said. It was a fantastic opportunity for world leaders, sixty of them, to come to the United Nations to make a recommitment to the principles of the Charter at the level of Member States. Tomorrow in the General Assembly Hall the Secretariat will also make a recommitment to the principles of the Charter. But today you have blended the two elements, the delegations and the Secretariat, by making your recommitment to the Charter. Your peace initiative has won the respect of all. It has been for all of us a source of inspiration.

On behalf of the Secretary-General I should like to thank you once again for what you have done, which has been exactly in the spirit of the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations. Thank you very much.

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Since I have the floor, may I take this opportunity on behalf of the Office for the Commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary to present you with the commemorative medal for the Fortieth Anniversary. I cannot disguise the fact that I also have the flag of the United Nations. May I also take this opportunity to offer you the official flag of the United Nations, which you may hoist next year for the next peace march.
