



"We the Peoples....."

The United Nations Association
Bexhill & Hastings Branch



"..... of the United Nations"

Discussion Paper for Drafting our Peace Policy Statement

The United Nations Building, New York City, USA



*'Let Us Beat
Swords into Ploughshares'*



UN Culture of Peace



UNKnotted Gun Sculpture

(Reference¹)

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CONTENTS	Page
PREFACE How and Why this Statement came to be and how it might be used	3
THE UNA-B&H PEACE POLICY STATEMENT	4
Rationale and Perspective	4
Briefly About the United Nations	4
1st POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: ADOPTING AND AGREED DEFINITION OF PEACE	5
2nd POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: ‘SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES’	6
3rd POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: HUMAN SECURITY	6
4th POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: NATIONAL DEFENCE	7
5th POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING/BUILDING	8
CONCLUSION	9
APPENDIX: The Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations	10
REFERENCES	11

PREFACE

We begin this account of how and why this Peace Policy Statement came to be and how it might be used, by briefly describing ourselves.

United Nations Association-Bexhill & Hastings Branch (UNA-B&H)

UNA-B&H is an unincorporated constituted association that is recognised by the Board of Trustees of UNA-UK, a charitable company limited by guarantee: registered number 1146016. The Branch's over all purpose is to support the work of the UN and all its agencies, whilst recognising the need for reform to strengthen its credibility and effectiveness – or in other words, ***'To help turn the Ideals of the UN into Reality.'***

Although involved with a range of activities, the Branch's own interests fall into 3 main categories, which are the Environment, Health & Human Development and Peace & Human Security.

UNA-B&H Peace & Human Security Programme

Since 2018, we've held a series of annual UN Day Peace Eventsⁱ. In addition to critically reviewing the structure and function of the UN, we have explored various issues such as the nature of the peace that is to be maintained, UN Peacekeeping, the adverse effects of warfare on other global problems and what needs reforming – the UN or its Member States? Each peace event had its own background information paper and post-event report. This has resulted in a collection of policies that needs sorting out and further discussion. To aid this process, UNA-B&H concluded its 2022 UN Day Peace Report with a suggested Collective Way Forward².

It has now become an absolute imperative that we replace warfare with peace – but how?

One World, One Campaign – Our Collective Way Forward

Along with some other groups and individuals, we are contending that Abolishing Wars and Maintaining Peace, healing our sick Planet Earth and coping with Climate Change, ending Poverty and Promoting Health & Welfare are not separate issues subject to separate solutions. They are interconnected global problems that require integrated, sustainable solutions.

We would like to reassure all other organisations that we are not advocating that they should halt or change their own campaign programmes. But we strongly believe that the only way out of the catastrophic state of the World, is for us like-minded groups to find common grounds for collaborative campaigning. This would strengthen the peoples' voice in dealing with interconnected global problems with integrated, sustainable solutions.

Since the UNA-B&H has already done the groundwork, there is no need to begin this venture with blank sheets of paper or brainstorming sessions. Instead, we are proposing to open the debate on our 'Collective Way Forward' with the rudiments of a Peace Policy Statement, which is based on the accumulated outcomes of the five annual UN Day Peace Events.

Once the Peace Policy Statement has been confirmed, it may then be adopted by other UNA groups and other organisations to become part of their existing policy and campaign strategies.

Finally, it must be understood that we are part of UNA of the United Kingdom and so, when it comes to campaigning for changes at the UN, we can only do so through lobbying our own government. Therefore, the policies and resolutions in the Statement will be addressed to the British Government.

ⁱ We have held these events on the nearest Saturday to UN Day, which is the 24th October.

THE UNA-B&H PEACE POLICY STATEMENT

Rationale and Perspective

The War in Ukraine has painfully highlighted how the UN Security Council has failed in fulfilling its prime responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

Notwithstanding the renewed hope for peace with the New Millennium, so far, every decade of the 21st Century has begun with wars. None have been resolved because the five permanent members (P5)ⁱⁱ of the Security Council were involved as combatants on opposite sides. At the beginning of this decade, the perpetrators of the War in Ukraine were the P5 themselves.

The War in Ukraine has also highlighted how the considerable progress made by government and non-government organisations to deal with climate change is cancelled out by warfare³. The War in Ukraine is but one of many on-going wars all around the world. *The Lancet*⁴ and the Conflict and Environmental Observatory (CEOBS)⁵ have both published articles that describe in detail how warfare causes severe and extensive environmental damage and man-made climate change. Furthermore, warfare both aggravates the causes of, and obstructs the solving of, all other global problems that, in addition to environmental damage & climate change, include social & economic hardship and humanitarian crises the leads to record numbers of refugees.

UNA-B&H proposes that the only way out of this dreadful and catastrophic state of the World is...

TO SUPPORT THE UNITED NATIONS TO FIRST STOP THE WARS.

This would amount to almost immediate relief of human suffering and environmental damage. Because, unlike coal, oil & gas, if warfare, as a major emitter of carbon dioxide, was abolished, it would not have to be replaced with anything else. Therefore, the entire resource thus freed, could be transferred to resolving all other global problems.

However, the CEOBS states that warfare presents 'environmental opportunities'⁵ because the post-war reconstruction can improve on the pre-war construction. Such thinking rests on the assumption that warfare is a necessary pre-requisite to peace. We object on the grounds that after 5,000 years of the war/peace/war cycle and two world wars that failed to 'end all wars' as advertised, wars clearly do not lead to permanent peace. They simply lead to the next war.

Our Peace Policy Statement is built on the premise the United Nations has already put in place the means by which we can by-pass the wars in order to secure a permanent peace.

Briefly About the United Nations

The United Nations came into force on the 24th October 1945. The day by which, its original 51 member states had ratified the UN Charter they had signed in San Francisco on the 26th day of the preceding June. The UN Charter is an international treaty that states the purposes of the United Nations and embodies the major principles of international relations. In summary, the Purposes and Principles of the UN are as follows:

- To maintain international peace and security
- To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples

ⁱⁱ Please Note: Under the terms of the UN Charter, the UN General Assembly appointed the main victors of the Second World War, namely: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (now the Russian Federation since 1991), the Republic of China (now the Peoples Republic of China since 1971) and France, as the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Known as the P5, they each have a veto on the Council.

- To cooperate in solving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

It was presumed that the P5 would lead on transforming the culture of war into a culture of peace. They not only failed to do this but also corrupted the means by which it could have been done. Instead of ensuring the implementation of the UN Charterⁱⁱⁱ, the P5 started the Cold War and thus resorted to pre-UN mentality that distorts the meaning of peace.

1st POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: ADOPTING AN AGREED DEFINITION OF PEACE

The Preamble to the UN Charter^{iv} begins with:

“We the Peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war that twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind””

The UN’s first purpose as stated in Chapter One of its Charter is

“1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;”

This first purpose then became the primary function of the UN Security Council on the assumption that the P5 would always work together.^{vi} The term ‘peace’ is very broad and can mean different things to different people in different contexts and circumstances. However, peace does need to be defined so that we know that we are all working towards a common objective.

The UNA-B&H 2019 UN Day Peace Event discussed the question of whether peace was simply the time between wars or was it something more. The main outcome was that peace existed on two levels. There was the ‘inner’ peace - state of mind – that people must adopt in order to get together to pursue the ‘outer’ peace as in the state of the world of nations.

Our Peace Policy Statement is primarily concerned with the outer or world peace, for which we have drafted a definition of peace as implied by the Preamble of the UN Charter.

Peace is a State where People are Assured:

Of fundamental human rights,

Of equality of men & women and among all nations;

And Are Able: to live under conditions of justice and enforced international law, to live together in tolerance and peace in local communities;

And Are Empowered: to promote equitable and sustainable social and economic development based on the concept of Human Security;

And Are Protected from War by non-provocative national defence policies that include international operations for peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

ⁱⁱⁱ The UN Charter is an international treaty that all member states signed and ratified when they joined the United Nations. Therefore, as they are legally bound by the Charter, they are in effect, committing to reforming the world order in accordance with the terms of the UN Charter.

^{iv} Please see the Appendix for a copy of the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations

^v ‘Mankind’ is an anthropological term used to refer to humankind, human beings or the human race.

^{vi} When the UN was founded in 1945, the Security Council consisted only of the P5. In 1965, the Council was extended to include 10 non-veto members elected for 2-year terms by the UN General Assembly.

2nd POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: 'SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES'

The 'Sword into Ploughshares' philosophy offers both a policy and a strategy for peace.

The 'Sword into Ploughshares' Philosophy

Between 750 and 700 BC, Isaiah prophesied that the House of God would be established as a place to where all nations would flow and all people would come to learn his ways and walk in his paths, and then

"He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning forks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

(Source: Isaiah 2:4, the Holy Bible, revised standard version, 1952)

It is therefore, the epitome of what, 27 centuries later, the United Nations was founded to achieve.

In 1959, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) presented a sculpture depicting a man beating his sword into a ploughshare to the United Nations. Inspired by Isaiah, Evgeny Vuchetich created the sculpture in bronze entitled, '**Let us Beat Swords into Ploughshares**'.

Regardless of particular faith, belief or religion – or none at all – the 'Swords into Ploughshares' sculpture has come to symbolise human desire to put an end to war, and to do so by converting the means of destruction into creative tools for the benefit of humankind. Also, it has given rise to a number of non-government peace movements. The sculpture stands in the grounds of the UN Building in New York City^{vii} and the words of Isaiah's prophesy are inscribed on a nearby wall.

'SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES' PEACE POLICY AND STRATEGY

The 'Swords into Ploughshares' Philosophy offers a vision of what the outer-world peace could be. It also offers a pragmatic guide to realising that vision - the conversion of the destructive means of warfare into constructive means of achieving peace and dealing with all global problems.

3rd POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: HUMAN SECURITY

Beginning with the Second World War, most forms of warfare are now against civilian populations. Therefore, by the end of the Twentieth Century, a government's 'first duty' to protect the state from military invasion had broadened to include the protection of people from a range of threats such as crime, drugs, poor health & education, poverty, intolerance and social exclusion, as well as threats arising from arms, landmines, terrorism & warfare and environmental degradation. This led to a concept of Human Security as opposed to State Security.

At the 2000 UN World Summit the UN's entire membership signed the UN Millennium Declaration. After five years of making little progress, at the second UN World Summit in 2005, the same UN membership reaffirmed its commitment to the Declaration that it summarised in the following way:

"We acknowledge that peace and security, development and human rights are the pillars of the United Nations system and the foundations for collective security and well-being. We recognise that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing."

(UN General Assembly, 2005, UN World Summit Outcome Document A/60/L.1)

This indicated that the UN member states were ready to adopt the concept of Human Security.

^{vii} Please see the front page of this document and Reference 1.

POLICY FOR HUMAN SECURITY IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The adoption of Human Security requires diverting attention and resources away from globalisation and economic growth at all cost, to localisation and human welfare. This means that Britain must do two things.

The first is to re-establish the NHS as a publically funded universal & comprehensive health & social care system, supported by adequate social security in times of need, provided within the context of local government and self-sustaining local communities.

The second thing is to restore both rural and urban local communities as places for living locally. Such communities would become self-sustaining by reforming land-use to promote local farming and local shops & services; and the promotion of local jobs/training schemes and a housing supply that is accessible to, and affordable by, local people. This would foster and enable extended family and neighbourhood networks to demand, support and make the most of formal and informal health & social care services, in/outdoor sports and leisure amenities, locally produced nutritious food and all other essential supplies for daily living from local outlets.

The pursuit Human Security depends on the development of people rather than institutions, schemes and projects. Human Development means to prepare people to take up the opportunities provided by public services and socio-economic development to overcome inequality, poverty, poor health & education and thus become able and empowered to assume responsibility for caring for themselves, their families and their neighbours.

4th POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: NATIONAL DEFENCE

The UN Millennium Declaration requires each UN member state to rework their national defence systems to be in compliance with the UN Charter. But many did not abide by, or misinterpreted, these particular terms of the Declaration.

The worth and status of nations is still measured by wealth and weapons instead of by health and welfare. This causes the prioritisation of economic development and gives justification for re-making national defence as aggressive offensive systems that provoke the wars they claim to be preventing. Also, some nuclear states, including Britain, are increasing their nuclear weapons.

However, the UN's founding member states recognised that it would take time to eradicate war altogether. Therefore, they preserved the right of self-defence in Article 51^{viii} in Chapter VII, "*Actions with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression*" in the UN Charter. Thus stating how the Security Council should legally deal with 'war & peace'.

NATIONAL DEFENCE POLICY FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM

The premise of this policy is twofold. First, nuclear weapons pose such a grave humanitarian threat that they cannot ethically and effectively ever be used. Second, the concept of Human Security modifies, rather than deletes, the concept of State Security.

^{viii} UN Charter, Chapter VII, "Actions with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression:" Article 51 (quoted in full)

"Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take any such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security."

We call upon the British Government to amend its national defence policy as follows:

- 1) Begin by first converting the offensive warmongering defence policies in the Integrative Review⁶ into defence policies consistent with UN Charter and Human Security.
- 2) Desist from initiating or entering war zones as belligerents on opposite sides.
- 3) Lead on re-enabling the P5 to impartially determine breaches of the peace and then to take unbiased actions in accordance with the Chapter VII in the UN Charter, so as to restore and then maintain peace in the international interests and not those of their own and allied nations.
- 4) Accept that in addition to actual or threatened armed conflict, warfare includes sanctions, cyber warfare, and the weaponisation of civilian technical, financial and economic systems.
- 5) Seek further compliance with Article 51^{xiii} by restricting the arms trade and warfare to trading in, and the deployment of, only defensive weapons. Since many weapons can be used either defensively or offensively, call upon the UN General Assembly to convene an international conference to define exactly how and when weapons may be used only for defence. The outcome should be a legally binding list of weapons consistent with the right to self-defence.
- 6) Abandon plans to increase Britain's nuclear arsenal and return to its reduction in complete compliance with the 1968 Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)
- 7) Work towards the final abolition of nuclear weapons by signing and ratifying the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)^{ix}.

5th POLICY ISSUE FOR DISCUSSION: INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING/BUILDING

The UN Millennium Declaration also requires each UN member state to include peacekeeping and peace building in their reformed national defence systems. But, as with other requirements, many states did not abide by, or misinterpreted, the particular terms of the Declaration. Also, many member states, including Britain, do not appear to know much about UN Peacekeeping.

The United Nations describes UN Peacekeeping as follows:

“UN Peacekeeping is the largest and most visible representation of the United Nations. It is a collective investment in global peace, security, and stability.....Peacekeepers protect civilians, actively prevent conflict, reduce violence, strengthen security and empower national authorities to assume these responsibilities. This requires a coherent security and peacebuilding strategy that supports the political strategy. UN peacekeeping helps host countries to become more resilient to conflict, laying the groundwork to sustain long-term peace, including by addressing root causes of conflicts.”⁷

And yet, national news media only reports on UN Peacekeeping when it goes wrong.

On 28th March 2018, the UN Secretary General, António Guterres launched Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) to establish a) a shared understanding of the achievements and challenges of peacekeeping and b) to renew mutual political commitment to UN Peacekeeping by developing a set of agreed principles and commitments to create peacekeeping operations fit for the future.

^{ix} The U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)

After a decade of advocacy by International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and its partners, on 7th July 2017, an overwhelming majority of the world's nations adopted a landmark global agreement to ban nuclear weapons. The official document is the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It entered into force on 22nd January 2021. To date (January 2023): of the 92 countries that have signed it, 68 have ratified this Treaty.

(Source: The campaign - ICAN <https://www.icanw.org> › the campaign)

On 29th March 2021, António Guterres launched A4P+ to review the achievements, gaps, and challenges since 2018, so as to accelerate progress with A4P and strengthen UN Peacekeeping.

On 25 April 2022, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute published its annual report on total global military expenditure. After 6 years of increases, in 2021, the total global military expenditure reached US\$2 trillion (US\$2,113 billion) – which is its highest level ever^x.

While the UN Security Council takes all the decisions, peacekeeping operations are financed by all the UN Member States. And so the UN General Assembly devises and approves the annual budget. In the latest one (1st July 2021 – 30th June 2022) the UN General Assembly approved a budget for UN Peacekeeping Operations as US\$6.38 billion, which is its lowest level ever.

INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING/BUILDING POLICY FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM

The 2021/22 annual UN Peacekeeping budget is 0.3 per cent of the 2021 total global military expenditure. As an expression of what people and their governments most value, these statistics are a contravention of the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

We call upon the British Government to lead strengthening UN Peacekeeping/Building by:

In Principle Initiating a ‘Swords into Ploughshares’ conversion of the offensive part of the annual total global military expenditure to the annual budget for UN Peacekeeping Operations.

In Detail take to following Steps

- a) Accept that the deployment of appropriately mandated and adequately resourced UN Peacekeeping/Building Missions is the most cost-effective means of keeping the peace.
- b) Refuse to accept cuts in the annual budget for UN Peacekeeping.
- c) Advocate for substantial amounts of global military spending to be transferred to the Department for UN Peacekeeping Operations. The amount of money transferred should match the year on year budget increases required to fully fund and resource each customised UN Peacekeeping/Building Mission.
- d) To develop within the national military defence and police systems, peacekeeping/building units able to respond to UN Security Council calls for military, police and civilian personnel to serve in international UN Peacekeeping Missions.

CONCLUSION

In 1945, when Nye Bevan was struggling to get the NHS Bill through Parliament, someone asked “How long do you think a national health service will last?” And he replied, “As long as people have faith in it.”

In 1945, no one asked how long the United Nations would last or spoke of it needing faith, because – probably – it was taken for granted that the UN would last as a better planned replacement for the League of Nations. Also the “*We the Peoples of the United Nations....*” opening line to the Preamble in the UN Charter implied that people would have enduring faith in the UN.

Notwithstanding its current dire state, the NHS has lasted, because – probably - people have retained their faith in it.

The United Nations is also currently in a dire state, because – certainly – the Security Council is failing to maintain international peace and security.

But we the people, must take some of the blame here, because – certainly - we have not obviously, collectively and consistently developed and then maintained faith in the United Nations.

^x [World military expenditure passes \\$2 trillion for first time - SIPRI](https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/world-m...)
[https://www.sipri.org > media > press-release > world-m...](https://www.sipri.org/media/press-release/world-m...)

APPENDIX



The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations



We the Peoples of the United Nations

Determined

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
- to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and
- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

And for these ends

- to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and
- to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and
- to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and
- to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

*Have resolved to combine our
Efforts to accomplish these aims.*

Accordingly, our respective Governments, through representations assembled in the city of San Francisco, who have exhibited their full powers found to be in good and due form, have agreed to the present Charter of the United Nations and do hereby establish an international organisation to be known as the United Nations.

REFERENCES

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<https://www.un.org> › [ungifts](#) › [let-us-beat-swords-ploug...](#)

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³ Ukraine: ‘Little Green Mayhem, the War has Devastated the Environment Too’, in *The Economist*, January 14th – 20th 2022, page 30 in the Europe Section.

⁴ The Lancet, 2022, *The Impact of War on the Environment and Health: Implications for Readiness, Response, and Recovery in Ukraine*, by Francesca Racioppi, Harry Rutter, Dorit Nitzan, Anja Borojevic, Zhanat Carr, Tanya Jean Grygaski, et al. Published 17 Sept. 2022

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⁵ CEOBS (Conflict and Environment Observatory) *How Does War Damage the Environment?*

<https://ceobs.org> › [how-does-war-damage-the-enviro...](#)

⁶ HM Government, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy*. Presented to Parliament by the Prime Minister by Command of Her Majesty, March 2021

⁷ What we do - United Nations Peacekeeping <https://peacekeeping.un.org> › [what-we-do](#)