



"We the Peoples....."

The United Nations Association Bexhill & Hastings Branch



UN Culture of Peace

UN Peace and Human Security Project presented by Sheila Kesby on 28th October 2023

Since 2018, we in UNA-Bexhill & Hastings have held a series of annual UN Day **Peace** Events. Working as a branch team, we have progressively explored the various aspects and issues of peace. Although numerically attendance has been on the low side, each event has had a *Spirit of the UN* atmosphere largely due to those who did attend the events. Now, in addition to having a *Way Forward Plan*, we have a draft comprehensive *Peace Policy Statement* that we hope to use for campaigning and lobbying purposes.

When we began this venture in 2018, there were more refugees in the World then, than there had been in 1945. The P5 had revived their Cold War tactics to deal with Syria and other conflicts in the Middle East. This inhibited the UN Security Council from maintaining peace, which permitted wars to escalate, with impunity, all around the World. This was good news for the arms trade but not for UN Peacekeeping.

In 2018, the UN Peacekeeping budget was **0.5 per cent** of the Total Global Military Expenditure. As soon as the Covid Pandemic was over, Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, which turned the Cold War Hot!!! Thus confirming the *failure* of the UN Security Council. A year and a half later, the seething conflict between Israel and Palestine erupted into a most dreadful war between Israel and Gaza which was more good news for the arms trade.

In 2023, the UN Peacekeeping budget was **0.27 per cent** of the Total Global Military Expenditure. In October 2023, at our sixth UN Day Peace Event, we refuted the idea that war is human nature by addressing the question of Who wants war and who wants peace?

We set the scene with a video and picture show of the 1914 *Christmas Truces* during the Great War and the *Community of the Cross of Nails* that arose from the 1940 bombing of Coventry Cathedral and the *Peace Memorial Parks* that arose from the 1945 Atomic bombing of Japan. We then conducted six short interviews to 'showcase' the good progress that people are making in peace, social and environmental development.

Our Keynote speaker, gave a presentation of the work of UNESCO, as an example of how most of the UN agencies are working well. It's just the Security Council that is not and this matters because the Council has the Power to undo all the good work done by the other UN agencies and civil society.

So what are we to do? Are we going to allow five nations – the P5 – to ruin the World by making war instead of peace? Or are we going to accept our **Collective Responsibility** of

"We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war....."

.... And get ourselves organised to **Revive** the campaign to **Reform** the UN Security Council so as to enable it to achieve the kind of peace as envisaged in the UN Charter.