



# Building a Peaceful World

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When Ricky Kej received a Grammy award this year for *Divine Tides*, he made a remarkable statement about “coexistence”. He said, “Coexistence is about living in peace with the rest of the human family but we have to go beyond the human species and live in peace with all entities on this planet, whether it’s the animals, the wildlife, the forests, the elements of nature — that is the water we drink, the air we breathe, the land we walk on. *Divine Tides* is about coexistence. Vasudevah Kutumbham. This world is One Family.”

Even in the 21st century, the planet Earth still seems to be an unjust and inhospitable place for most of its creatures. It might be either because of our own developmental condition or the insensitive environment in which we find ourselves placed. Human beings have come to a position of supremacy through struggle and strife and through dominating other species by the power of their intellect. There have always been some who have enjoyed the luxury of being the rulers and others who have been the victims of their domination and enslavement. We have never been able to create a world of coordinated cooperation, a safe world free from domination and subjugation, a world of happiness and well-being for all. We have made many advances and continue to do so, but it is still not an easy thing to come together and build a peaceful society guided by the highest virtues. Politics is still about lust for power and less about a service spirit and united actions for collective betterment.

As we see the brutality in Ukraine and other places, we are once again reminded how narrow self-interest, ideology, and nationalism shape human history. We see business interests, geopolitical insecurities, and the ambitions of our leaders at play. We see the war machinery whose job is just to kill and destroy, not just people and their works but the fragile balance of the ecosystem. Who is to blame? Global power brokers? Leaders bereft of higher consciousness? The silence of the helpless, terrified masses? A lack of creative, imaginative solutions to problems facing us all? There are endless questions that arise in the minds of all concerned individuals.

Realizing the seriousness of these issues, Shrii Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar propounded a new set of philosophies, such as Neohumanism and PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory), for addressing the challenges that face us or lie ahead of us. He made a clarion call to our awakened conscience to oppose unjust wars, shun violence, and raise the consciousness of individuals to solve problems through dialogue, rationality, and compassionate outlook. He called for a cosmic sentiment and an anti-exploitation sentiment to address the deep-rooted problems facing us all.

First, a world where economic power is centralized is bound to create political systems that are disconnected from the aspirations of the common person. Economic power must be decentralized and limits must be placed on material accumulation to avoid the use of wealth for fueling the war machineries.

Second, the consciousness of the people must be raised so that only those who are moral and principled come to positions of leadership, and so that leaders are held to account for their actions.

Third, so-called superpowers must be subservient to a higher body or a set of principles, a world constitution, which all must agree to. A neo-magna-carta is needed to protect innocent individuals, nature, and mute species. This is not easy to achieve, yet our efforts must continue in that direction. Lifestyle changes that reflect cardinal moral values are crucial.

Fourth, the will of the people and leaders must be evaluated with the yardstick of universal outlook and awakened conscience. No one can be given the license to kill other creatures or fellow beings, nor should vested interests be allowed to impose their military or economic power on others without global sanction or endorsement. Actions guided by desire for genuine peace and well-being are not possible until love for humanity is aroused in one and all.

Every conflict or challenge provides us another opportunity to attain a new reset. Hopefully, this time the reset will be in favor of the interest of the greater humanity and not directed by narrow sentiments such as geopolitics, religious interests, or selfish economic interests even at the cost of others. May we all unite to establish a safe, peaceful and prosperous world for one and all.