

# **Nuclear Disarmament – Reconciling Security Between India and Pakistan with Basic Ethics and Through Nonviolence<sup>1</sup>**

## **Security Has Been the Basic Concern of Humanity**

Ever since the beginning of civilization a main problem that humanity has faced is that of security. Even in the stone age human beings were exposed to a potential threat to their lives, so they built stone weapons to protect and secure themselves. But the threat to them didn't come from other human beings then. It came from wild animals that could easily make them their food. As the civilization grew, humans, who are endowed with intelligence and insight, made their lives comfortable by building houses, tools and implements for agriculture. They could easily control animals such as horses, elephants, cows, buffalos and used them for their comforts. But with the increase in their skills to manufacture tools and implements for their survival, their ambition to acquire wealth, dominate and rule other human beings also grew considerably. In order to strike terror into the hearts of ordinary people, they built bows and arrows, swords, daggers, lances, knives etc. and imposed their authority. Their lust for power made them arrogant and haughty too and they began to behave as superhuman beings subjugating and suppressing the weak and the poor. They built armies, occupied territories, erected palaces, castles and established their empires. Their greed to expand their empires led them to declare wars against neighboring states without any ostensible reason and provocation. Fighting and winning wars became a status symbol for them. It was the physical power of a warrior, his ability to use weapons and kill a large number of soldiers that endeared him to all and he won laurels. Even the epic battles of Ramayana and Mahabharata were fought mostly with bows and arrows. Though wars and battles were in vogue in all parts of the world, their destruction was confined to limited regions on account of the use of conventional weapons but the discovery of gunpowder in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and its subsequent use in warfare after the 14<sup>th</sup> century added new dimensions to the ferocity of wars. Cannons began to be used in wars and casualties increased manifold.

## **The Age of Scientific Advancement and Destruction**

The advent of 20<sup>th</sup> century brought both suffering and comfort to humanity on an unprecedented scale. Science changed the shape of the world. It enabled man to conquer not only the land and the sea, but also the sky. Through technology distances were reduced to almost nothing and the world became smaller and smaller. Man's lust for power knew no bounds. Unfortunately the progress of man's ethical development lagged far behind. Moral decadence reached its nadir when atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 to defeat the unyielding enemy. The irony is that the most of the warmongers who launched the Second World War escaped death and it were mostly innocent people, numbering more than two million, who bore the brunt of the ravages of war. Though the atomic catastrophe brought an abrupt end of the war, it triggered a formidable race for the manufacture of nuclear arms among the nations. After USA, England and France also acquired nuclear capabilities and carried out a series of tests. The seven nuclear powers that include USA, Russia, UK, France and China, India and Pakistan are in possession of more than 50,000 nuclear weapons. The birth of UN in 1945

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<sup>1</sup> Afternoon workshop on Elimination of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Dismantling Terror Through the Power of Nonviolence, Franz Meyer Auditorio, Roon Museo, Mexico City, September 9, 2009

was a turning point in human history. It is playing an important role to diffuse tension and prevent wars though it has only partially succeeded. Its efforts to disarm the world need to be strengthened. It is the only hope against hope.

### **Partition of India and the Birth of Pakistan**

Religion has taken a dip, giving rise to fanaticism. Despite the presence of an apostle of peace like Gandhi who demonstrated to the world the power of ahimsa by winning freedom for India without a war with the British, India's partition in the name of religion couldn't be prevented. Hindu-Muslim riots took a toll of a million lives. Though Pakistan is an Islamic Republic and ninety eight percent of the population are the followers of Islam, murders, robberies, rapes, exploitation and atrocities are as rampant there as in any non-Islamic country. The myth that if there is only one religion it will bring the people a heaven of freedom, riches and happiness has been proved false. We find that Pakistan which sympathizes with *jihadists* on account of their innate sentiments of Islamic brotherhood is now a victim of terrorism itself. It should make them realize that religion can show better results if it is made an instrument of inner transformation and moral development and is not used as a tool to gain political power. We have also seen in India that the political parties who tried to mobilize people in the name of Hindutva have been rejected. If a person wants to have a clear picture of the magnitude of suffering caused by partition I would advise him to read *Freedom at Midnight* by Lapparire and Lapparire, which portrays human suffering in an amazing way.

### **Nuclear Tests and Their Aftermath**

The animosity between the Hindus and Muslims, both in India and the Islamic nation of Pakistan, has percolated deep into the psyche of the peoples of the two nations. The Hindu-Muslim divide in India too has widened due to the politicians who lose no opportunity to fuel communal frenzy for narrow selfish ends. Both India and Pakistan have fought three wars, but peace continues to elude the two nations. The cold war between Soviet Union and USA that dominated the world in the wake of the Second World War ended in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the gulf between India and Pakistan has widened after the two countries carried out nuclear tests in 1998. The Vajpayee Government thought that the successful nuclear tests in 1998 would prove a nuclear deterrent to Pakistan but the latter too joined the race for nuclear armament by engaging itself in Changai1. Now both the countries have nuclear capabilities and considering the magnitude of animosity intensified further by Pakistan Govt.'s support to *jihadi* groups indirectly, the peoples of the two countries are exposed to a threat of nuclear war. What makes us shudder at the very thought is that if the atom bombs fall into the hands of the *jihadis* what will happen? It will spell disaster not only in the Indian subcontinent, but also in other parts of the world. No part of the world would remain unaffected by the widespread destruction. Though the third world war has not happened so far, nevertheless, if it materializes, it will push the wheel of humanity to the Stone Age. The solution lies in nuclear disarmament of the whole world, but it is not possible since the five nations who are 'officially' recognized as nuclear nations do not wish to part with their nuclear warheads. Their only wish is that no other nation may acquire this power and their political and military hegemony remains intact. Their discrimination is the stumbling block in the path of the goal of nuclear disarmament of the whole

world. Even if one atom bomb is left behind in any part of the world, the threat will persist. The prerequisite for a peaceful world is the destruction of all weapons of mass destruction.

In consonance with the spirit of the theme of this 62<sup>nd</sup> UNDPI/NGO conference at Mexico City I believe that if the people of India and Pakistan want to fight poverty, diseases, hunger in the Indian subcontinent and raise the standard of living of their people, they must first compel their governments to destroy their nuclear weapons, reduce the number of soldiers in their armies, dismantle terror, and initiate measures of confidence building at the political level. It is the governments that talk of war, ninety percent of the people want the problems between the two countries to be solved nonviolently. The crisis that prevails in the world today is the result of the degeneration of moral and spiritual values at a global level. All religions stress righteousness, high moral behavior and honesty in our day-to-day interactions. The word Islam stands for peace, so it is the duty of the Islamic clergy worldwide to educate its followers in peace which is the basic tenet of Islam.

Glorification of war by the people should come to an end. Peace depends on the attitude of the politicians of the two countries, their ability to mould public opinion in favor of peace and sincerity in what they say aloud and what they talk in private circles. Both the countries have common enemies in poverty and hunger, which they can fight if they are inclined to fighting.

### **The Anuvrat Way of Peace and Friendship**

The Anuvrat organization is committed to nonviolent resolution of all conflicts in the world. We believe that nuclear weapons cannot act as deterrents and they do no good to humanity. The atom bombs that were dropped at Hiroshima and Nagasaki were small as compared with their counterparts today, but even after 65 years, the after-effects of the nuclear holocaust continue to cause suffering to the people of that region. Thousands of Japanese who live in these areas are suffering from many dreadful diseases including cancer.

Late Acharya Tulsi, the then head of a Jain religious order was highly distressed at the genocide caused by nuclear holocaust at Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9 in 1945. He reflected on this human catastrophe deeply and came to the conclusion that durable peace in the world could be created only if the people begin to realize that violence exploitation, dishonesty, lust for power and immorality were minimized through rejuvenation of moral and spiritual values. He launched the Anuvrat Movement in 1949 to rid the world of moral filth. I would like to quote from the speech he delivered at the first convention of Anuvrat in Delhi in 1950:

*If an atom has in it the monstrous power to destroy the world, amply demonstrated in the unprecedented holocaust at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I want to tell the world that we have its counterpart in anu-vrat – a small or atomic vow – which alone has the power to ward off and counter the threat of an atom bomb.*

Acharya Tulsi was of the view that all religions believe in ethical code of conduct. A person who is morally elevated will never resort to unjust war.

The people of Pakistan and India should realize that atom bombs will not satisfy their hunger nor will they extricate them from the mire of poverty. Instead the atom bombs will destroy both the nations. The Anuvrat Movement under the leadership of His Holiness Acharya Mahapragya lays down the following guidelines for the people of Pakistan and India for a new era of friendship, cooperation and co-existence.

1. Nuclear weapons must be destroyed and both the countries should simultaneously pledge that they would not test nuclear weapons in the future.
2. Civil society has a great role to play. It should promote people to further democracy and inspire the peoples of the countries to drop enemy image for each other.
3. Since there is democracy in the two countries, people should compel their Governments to abandon the path of confrontation.
4. Pakistan should declare that it wouldn't adopt a different attitude while dealing with the terror related complaints from India.
5. Pakistan and India should sign a treaty of friendship which should make it obligatory for the two nations not to go to war and to solve their problems through mutual dialogues.
6. Pakistan should sign a treaty of trade with India. It will open up new avenues for the people.
7. Every citizen of the two countries should be persuaded to accept the following *anuvrats* (small vows):
  - (a) I will not kill any innocent creature.
  - (b) I will neither attack anybody nor support aggression, and I will endeavor to bring about world peace and disarmament.

We believe that it is only through the healing power of ahimsa which includes ethics that the two countries – India and Pakistan – can become friends and be instrumental in each other's progress and development. That is the only way to achieve peace.

I draw your attention to the statement made by Acharya Mahapragya made on the eve of the New Year. He said:

*The first principle of ahimsa is the purity of one's thought, purity of one's emotion and purity of one's deeds. We can practice it only by experiencing it in the totality of these conditions. If we do not have a feeling of equality towards all living beings, our dream of peace will just remain a daydream. It will never become a reality. In order to change it into reality, what is needed is the inculcation of a feeling of equality towards all creatures and the practical form that emerges from it is the human solidarity. Besides the legacy of anuvrat (a campaign exhorting people to commit themselves to some basic ethical norms), Acharya Tulsi also gave us an aphorism – let us have faith in the unity of humankind. It means an attitude of equanimity, a feeling of equality towards all, considering all human beings equal. No one is small or big, no one is low or high, no one is inferior or superior. After all a human being is just a human being.*

If we really want peace, we must first of all, develop a feeling of equanimity towards all.

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