Culture of Peace

Working Group 1 discussed the impact culture and art have on achieving and sustaining peace.

On the occasion of the 30th Year Anniversary of the Japanese UN volunteer District Electoral Supervisor, The LATE NAKATA ATSUHITO and Cambodian interpreter Lek Sophiep were killed in an ambush in Kampong Thom, Cambodia in 1993, a conference was organized by the Kyoto Peacebuilding Center, Kyoto University of the Arts and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the UN Volunteers Programme as well as the Japan Parliamentary Committee of the Diet of Japan for World Federalism at the Kyoto University of the Arts on 5 and 6 April 2023. As part of the conference, Working Group 1 discussed what is Culture of Peace and how people can implement it.

Summary of Group 1:
Culture of Peace

Moderator:
Mr. YAMAMOTO Tadamichi, Former Ambassador to UNESCO and Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Afghanistan
Rapporteur:
Mr. NAKAYAMA Hiroki, Professor, Kyoto University of the Arts
Discussants:
Mr. OONOGI Hiroto, Executive Director for External Relations, Kyoto University of the Arts
Ms. SUGIMURA Miki, Professor, Sophia University
Mr. TANAKA Tomokiyo, Secretary-General, Japan Religious Committee for World Federation and Visiting Professor, Kyoto University
Mr. TSUCHIYA Kishou, Assistant Professor, Kyoto University
Ms. FUNANAMI Keiko, Lawyer, Former UN Volunteer in Cambodia
Mr. IKEGAMI Keitoku, International Christian University

<u>Summary :</u>

In the meeting, everyone agreed that people share the common wish to eliminate fighting and live content with their families. The facilitator, Mr. Yamamoto then asked the following questions, "can we link this common wish to peacebuilding? Is it the "culture of peace" that makes it possible to share benefits with each other? In response, it was concluded that in order to share interests, respect is necessary because it is in the recognition of others that leads to peace. Furthermore, the facilitator asked, "what impact does culture and art have on people's hearts and minds? Can it create a "culture of peace"?" Moreover, "can a "culture of peace" be achieved through education?"

According to Mr. Tomokiyo Tanaka, a culture of peace can be learned from Japanese cultural values. Japanese people have set the precedent of collaboration that does not permit for religious conflicts to occur. Furthermore, there have been prayer communities all over the world for an extended period. In the heart of these communities, "mutual respect" is considered the most important factor to ensure trust and happiness among people.

The meeting then discussed the root of conflict concluding that it arises as a reaction to an aspect or entity that is foreign or outside one's own values, presented by Mr. Hiroto Oonogi. For instance, in Kyoto, people of various statuses have existed in a very small city. In turn, people of different statuses in such spaces have engaged in the same traditions including weddings and funerals. Moreover, the SDG's have also been in Kyoto for over 1,000 years. Therefore, if one studies "Kyoto," there may be hidden ways to not only promote such goals but peacebuilding. The component of art in this process is about recognizing people, which ultimately leads to a culture of peace.

However, in order to understand conflict, one must also understand the layers of adversity. Ms. Keiko Funanami shared that there are distinctions and discrimination against sexual minorities and people with disabilities. Nonetheless, they form part of the larger societal community. Though support is necessary for disadvantaged groups, it is also as important to be aware that they are members of the same society and treated as human beings. Another layer to this goal is understanding the importance of "a spirit of mutual understanding," which cannot be fostered unless people have the financial means and basic needs met.

Therefore, as a society, the group agreed that we should aim for an inclusive environment, as this is also a detriment to a sense of horizontal alignment.

The meeting then shifted to a specific SDG related to education as Ms. Miki Sugimura presented. It was discussed on the theme of education for human dignity and peace, based on the perspectives of education in conflict areas and multi-layered crises. She mentioned that the role of education is to contribute to human development and observance of human dignity, and education beyond borders is necessary to educate for peace building. She also introduced some important points on the relation between human security and the role of education, education for building a sustainable future society, diversified societies and education to protect human dignity and peace.
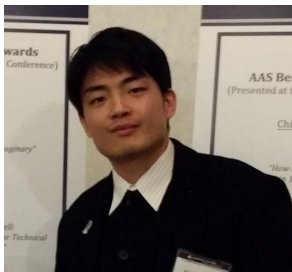
Timor-Leste was brought up as an example for a "culture of peace." According to Mr. Kishou Tsuchiya, the leaders who took the initiative after independence were seen as *alien* to the Timorese people because they did not understand the social situation and how people perceived them. The involvement of international organizations without understanding the history and culture of the partner country may have created a country that the local people did not necessarily want. Therefore, control based only on superficial impressions, such as internationally accepted principles, is dangerous.

Mr. Keitoku Ikegami noted that the desire for peace is universal among human beings, and differences in the "scope of peace" may become a source of conflict. The "scope of peace" can be broadly categorized into a self-interested aspect and an altruistic aspect. Hence, accepting others' self-oriented thinking with one's own altruistic thinking, including the spirit of making a virtue of this seemingly "damaging" act, is the foundation of a culture of peace.

Finally, Mr. Hiroki Nakayama pointed out the importance of looking beyond the problems and concentrating on "living," which requires what the late Dr. Satoshi Nakamura called the "three NOisms" (no ideology, no stubbornness, and no thinking of waste). Hence, art is generally taken up as a "means," but at the same time, it is as important to understand its meaning in terms of "artistic thinking; which means to look beyond problems and concentrate on "living," in other words, to look at the world from a fundamental perspective.

The group concluded by emphasizing that it is possible to realize a "culture of peace by incorporating these ideas from each individual's experience, position, and research into our education, and by developing human resources who can appreciate diversity."