

# MINDFUL LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE: A BUDDHIST APPROACH WITH REFERENCE TO UN CHARTER

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## ABSTRACT

*We have witnessed the two disastrous world wars, which have devastating effects on the humanity. Our society has faced so much havoc at that time only due to wrong leadership, which brought untrustworthiness towards them by community. Therefore, establishment of UN was necessary which is committed for Maintenance of international peace and security.*

*What we need is the attentive and thoughtful leadership for sustainable peace and harmony. The Buddha's teaching finds the way for universal peace. It brings harmony in thought process, ultimately needed for reconciliation and understanding which is require for overall development of individual and society. Five precepts (Panchsila) and Ten Parmitas remain the backbone of Buddha's philosophy. This philosophy has potential to tranquil human mind and companionship approach towards society. It teaches that the sole aim of human existence is peace and not a war.*

*Morality and ethics are supreme values for human survival in spite of higher intellectual technologies. If leaders are not morally awaked then the society they are governing will remain discontented and never lead a healthy life. As mental and physical healths of individual are important*

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*for social harmony, leaders should accomplish themselves by pursuing spiritual health for self-development by means of Buddha's Philosophy. So that sound thought- process will bring harmony among society for universal peace.*

- i. In this backdrop, certain issues have been discussed in the present paper. The objectives of the research are as under.*
- ii. To discuss the present day scenario in respect of mindful leadership and sustainable peace.*
- iii. To evaluate the Buddhist approach in respect of mindful leadership and sustainable peace.*
- iv. To focus on the relevant provisions of the UN Charter for maintenance of peace in the world.*
- v. To compare the Buddhist teachings with the UN Charter.*
- vi. To suggest the remedial measures for mindful leadership for sustainable peace.*

## 1. WORLD PEACE – PRESENT SCENARIO

After the two world wars, considering its devastating effects on human being and environment it was expected from the world community to lead the life with peace and harmony. The establishment of the United Nations in the year 1945 was one of the great works done by the then leadership in the right direction of maintaining peace. Nevertheless, it seems that in spite of The Charter provisions the world is not safe for humanity. The quest for power by different leaders driven them to be part of havoc on different parts of the world. There are no. of issues which the world are facing since long time includes genocide, poverty, migration, refugees rehabilitation, gender discrimination, arms race together with nuclear and biological weapons, extreme religious violence, food - health and hygiene, etc. Of course, the United Nations through its different specialised agencies are trying to deal with these issues.

However, one thing must not be forgotten that these issues are somewhere at the root of violence in the world.

Hence, it is pertinent to consider the primary purpose and

principles of United Nations. Article 1 clearly says, i) to maintain international peace and security and to that end; to take effective 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 the 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. ii) to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace. iii) To achieve international cooperation in solving international problem of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion; and iv) To be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.

Article 2. - The organisation and its members, in pursuit of the purposes stated in Article1, shall act in accordance with the following principles:

- i. The organisation is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members.
- ii. All members, in order to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from membership, shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the present charter.
- iii. All members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered.
- iv. All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purpose of the United Nations.
- v. All members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present charter, and shall refrain from giving assistance to

State against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action.

vi. The organisation shall ensure that States which are not members of the United Nations act in accordance with these principles so far as may be necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security.

vii. Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State or shall require the member to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII .

If the world leaders decided to act according to the principles enshrined in the Charter, there will be peace in the world. Friendly relations and cooperation at international level is expected. However, we are not acting accordingly.

There are number of incidences took place after the establishment of United Nations Charter. It clearly shows that the basic purpose of maintenance of international peace and security is affected. The examples are - Russian Intervention in Hungary, 1956; Intervention by U.K, France and Israel in Egypt (1956). American Intervention in Cuba (1962); American Intervention in Cambodia; U.S. troops land in the Dominican Republic (1965); Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia ,1968; The Turkish invasion on Cyprus (1974), Indo Pak war (1965) , Indo-China war(1962), The Vietnamese Intervention in Cambodia (1978); Tanzanian Invasion in Uganda , 1979-1980; The Afghan Issue: 1986; Argentine Intervention in Falkland Islands(1982); United States invades Grenada (1983); The U.S. Intervention in Nicaragua(1984); U.S Attack on Libya (1986). American Intervention in Panama (1989); Iraqi invasion and annexation of Kuwait (1990); Somaliya Conflict (1992-93); The NATO intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992); Intervention in Haiti 1994-Rwandan intervention in Eastern Congo (1996); Conflict in Kosovo , Russia –Chechnya Conflict; The United States invasion of Afghanistan (2001); American

intervention in Iraq (2003); Israeli Air strikes Against Syria (2003); Israel – Lebanon Conflict (2006); Russian Invasion of Georgia (2008); The NATO Intervention in Libya (2011); Kenya's Military Intervention in Somalia (2011); Mali Conflicts and Intervention by France (2012-13); Saudi Arabian Intervention in Yemen (2015); The ECOWAS military intervention in the Gambia (2017). It reveals that, these conflicts are due to lack of strong and mindful leadership. Hence, we required the leadership based on Buddhist philosophy to lead the life with peace.

Similarly, 9/11 attack on twin towers of America, 26/11 attack in Mumbai (India), and alike incidences in Russia, France, Britain etc. places indicates the violent mind of extremist & terrorist to create violence and kill innocent people. They are enemy of the human being. Hence, Buddhist way of life is the only answer for peace of mind of individuals.

The exploitation of the working class by businesspersons also subject to create the sense of insecurity in the minds of working class. The selfishness and exploiting attitude on the part of industrialist shows the carelessness due to greedy mindset. It ultimately resulted into class conflicts.

The above examples clearly indicate that, absence of mindful leadership is responsible for all kinds of conflicts irrespective of local, regional or international nature. Hence, to attain the sustainable peace in every occupation, world needed the conscious leaders from local to global level.

## 2. BUDDHIST APPROACH IN RESPECT OF MINDFUL LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE

Buddha, the enlightened one believes that everything in this world happen due to cause and reason. There is no any supernatural God behind activities in the universe. Everything is subject to change and impermanence (*Annicca*). It reveal that his philosophy is based on scientific principles. As far as the behaviour of human being is concerned, Buddha believes that man is behind all his sorrow. Man is responsible for his happiness and sorrow (*dukkha*). Hence, he prescribes for ethical behaviour in the society and that can be possible if man follows five precepts, eightfold path and

ten *paramita* (moral principles). He said attachment or craving for materialistic things brings sorrow in the life. The world peace cannot be achieved in isolation with individual's peace. 'Buddhists believe that the minds of all living beings are totally interconnected and interrelated, whether they are consciously aware of it or not. To use a simple analogy for the interconnection, each being has his or her own transmitting and receiving station and is constantly broadcasting to all others his or her state of mind and is constantly receiving broadcasts from all others.'<sup>(1)</sup> So what important is, if we concentrate on putting our own minds at peace, then we can broadcast peace mentally and generate peace through our actions. We should use a peaceful mind to act for peace in the world.

Everything begins from the individual, if he is happy in his life then family can be happy, if families are happy the society become happy, so the country and then the entire world. The society with a moral behaviour can only give birth to sensible leadership in the society and ultimately, we can found such leadership at the world level. For that purpose Buddha recommend for meditation at individual level. It helps to cultivation of mind and body. Meditation is instrumental to keep one's mind at peace and healthy body. Verse 282 of Dhammapada is very clear...

*Meditation helps keep one centered  
In the oneness of Infinity  
And the neglect of meditation  
Tends to lead one down the path of confusion  
In the manifestation of the Infinite,  
Meditation is the path of Peace and Harmony<sup>(2)</sup>*

The Buddha appeals to His disciples and common person to follow the path of "Dhamma" to maintain world peace. He taught the world about peace and Non-violence. He discovered the four noble truths (*Aryasatya*). i) Life inevitably involves suffering

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1. [sfsu.edu/rone/Buddhism](http://sfsu.edu/rone/Buddhism), Buddhist ideas for attaining world peace, Ron Epstein (lectures for the global peace studies program, san francisco state university, November 7 & 9, 1988).

2. [http://www.johnworldpeace.com/buddha.asp#THE\\_PATH](http://www.johnworldpeace.com/buddha.asp#THE_PATH) The Dhammapada saying of the Buddha: The path of peace and harmony by John, 1986 (Chapter 18, Verse 282)

(*Dukha Satya*), ii) Suffering originates in desires (*Samudaya satya*), iii) Suffering will cease if all desires cease (*Nirodh satya*), iv) Cease of desire is possible by engaging in the noble eight-fold path (*margasatya*).

These four noble truths unveil the secret of human life. It is based on cause and effect theory, which is scientific and can be, tasted everywhere. Sufferings can be diminishing if people in their daily routine follow *panchsila*.

### 3. PANCHSILA: MORAL CONDUCT FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE

Buddha prescribes the five-precept (*panchsila*) as the minimum moral obligations for living a harmonious life. It is in the prayer form, which people themselves take pledge to behave in an ethical manner in the society. It is self-declared commitment by the people that they will abide it for better life. They are as under:

- i. to abstain from taking life
  - ii. to abstain from taking what is not given
  - iii. to abstain from sensuous misconduct
  - iv. to abstain from false speech and
  - v. to abstain from toxicants as tending to cloud the mind.
- (Buddhaghosa's Papanicasudani Sutta, in Buddhist Scriptures, 1959: 70).<sup>(3)</sup>

If people follow these principles then their life will be peaceful and ultimately entire society will be at peace. If we correlate these moral principles with today's legal system, we found that killing, stealing, toxication, abusing etc are punishable offences.

### 4. UN CHARTER ON MAINTENANCE OF PEACE IN THE WORLD

The purpose of The United Nation is to maintain International peace and security in the world, to develop friendly relations among nations, and to achieve international cooperation in solving

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3. [http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol11\\_1/11n1Yeh.pdf](http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol11_1/11n1Yeh.pdf), International Journal of Peace Studies, Volume 11, Number 1, Spring/Summer 2006, The way to peace :A Buddhist perspective-article by Yeh, Theresa der, see also P.Lakshmi Narasu ,The Essence of Buddhism,Buddhabhumi Prakashan Nagpur,3rd Edn.2017.



international problems of economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character. Also in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion...

The Preamble of the charter stated that , the United Nations determined –to save the succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind and:

- i. 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
- ii. to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of International law can be maintained, and
- iii. to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom and for these ends
- iv. to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours and
- v. to ensure ,by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, armed force not be used ,save in the common interest, and
- vi. to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, has resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims.<sup>(4)</sup>

The charter guaranteed the equality of men as well as states, moreover promotes the fraternity. It is possible to implement The Charter in spirit and words if the leadership is good. If leadership intends to violate the Charter, it will bring disaster like Second World War. Hence, attentive leadership is very important to maintain world peace.

So far as the limiting the right of war or use of force, the Covenant of the League of Nations under Article 12 to 16 imposed

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4. David Haris, *Cases and Materials on International Law*, Sweet & Maxwell, South Esian 7th Edn,p.885.



certain restriction upon the States about their right to resort to war. These Articles provided that before resorting to war the States should settle their disputes through arbitration, judicial settlement or by inquiry. Even if their disputes were not satisfactorily resolved through these means, they could not, under the said provisions go to war before lapse of three months. It was also provided that if any state went to war violating the provisions of the covenant then that State would be deemed to be the enemy of the whole League of Nations. Thus, the Covenant of the League of Nations for the first time imposed certain restrictions upon the rights of the States to resort to war.

The next important event in this connection was the Paris Pact of 1928, which is also popularly known as Kellogg-Briand Pact. In this Pact, the States agreed to renounce war as an instrument of national policy in the settlement of international disputes. Article 1 of the Treaty of Renunciation of war, 1928 (Kellogg-Briand Pact) provides: “The High Contracting Parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn resource to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another.”

Article 2 further provided that the solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or whatever origin they may be which may arise among them shall never be sought except by pacific means.

Thereafter UN Charter contains provisions about restricting and even prohibiting war by States.

- i. Preamble of the Charter says that ‘armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest.
- ii. Article 2 (4) of the U N Charter says that, all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purpose of the United Nations. Thus, instead of the word ‘War’, the Charter mentions the words ‘threat or use of force’. The scope of the Charter is wide enough because it prohibits not only war but the use of force or threat thereof.

iii. Chapter VI provides certain methods for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. They include negotiations, good offices, conciliation, judicial settlement, inquiry or any other peaceful means of choice.

iv. Under Chapter VII, Security Council is empowered to take collective action against the State, which has committed aggression or has otherwise committed a breach of international peace<sup>(5)</sup>.

In principle though Use of force is prohibited by the UN Charter, individual and Collective self-defence is permissible as an exception as per Article 51. It runs as follows ‘Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self defence if an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by members in the exercise of this right to 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 the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.

The principle of non-intervention is part of customary international law and founded upon the concept of respect for the territorial sovereignty of States. The principle of non –intervention is in fact the search of an ideal of equality and sovereignty of States. In accordance with this principle, a state should not interfere in the affairs of another State. The Government of States also accept this principle .But so far as the real practice is concerned the States does not follow this principle. In 1970,General Assembly adopted unanimously a resolution 2625(XXV) entitled *Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the UN* , it declared: “Every State has the duty to refrain from organising, instigating, assisting or participating in acts of civil strife or terrorist acts in another State or acquiescing in organized activities within its

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5. Dr. S. K. Kapoor, *International Law and Human Rights*, 709 (Central Law Agency, Allahabad, 116thEdn, 2007)

territory directed towards the commission of such acts, when the acts referred to in the present paragraph involve a threat or use of force.”

As regards, the principle of non-intervention the resolution added: “No State or group of States has the right to intervene directly or indirectly for any reason whatever, in the internal or external affairs of any other State. Consequently, armed intervention and all other forms of interference or attempted threats against the personality of the State or against its political, economic and cultural elements are in violation of international law.”<sup>(6)</sup>

The Security Council of United Nation in certain circumstances can take action against State involved in violation of Charter. For example, when Iraq invaded Kuwait and annexed its province in the year 1990. The Security Council passed resolution asking Iraq to withdraw its forces from Kuwait, and had taken action against Iraq as per Chapter VII of the Charter. Thereafter S.C. also passed resolution on 5th April 1991 that “repression” of Kurds in Iraq posed a threat to international peace and security; hence, its action of intervention in Iraq for violation of human rights was justified.

Prof. Leland M. Goodrich said that, ‘Art.2 Para 4 lays down one of the cardinal principle of the United Nations. As an organization established to maintain international peace and security, its success is obviously dependent on the extent to which its Members respect this basic principle and the effectiveness of its organs, notably the Security Council, in obtaining respect for it. This provision is to be compared with the corresponding provisions of the League of Nations Covenant, notably Article 10 by which members undertook “to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League” and Article 12, 13 and 15 by which members undertook not to “resort to war” under certain conditions.’<sup>(7)</sup>

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6. G.A. resolution 2625(XXV) 1970.

7. Leland M. Goodrich and Edvard Hambro, *Charter of the United Nations-Commentary and Documents*, p103 (Published under the auspices of The London Institute of World Affairs, Stevens & Sons Limited, London, 1949).

## 5. BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY AND THE UN CHARTER

Buddha's principles and the provisions contained in the preamble of the charter are similar up to some extent. Buddha believed in equal rights of men and women, promote justice, provide better standards (*Panchsila*) for human being, teach tolerance and guide for avoidance of armed force to resolve the dispute between states. To avoid the war between Shakya State and Koliya State he opt for accepting *Pravajjya* and got succeed in avoiding war.

Article 2(4) of the UN Charter deals with prohibition of use of force. It clearly says, "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations."

"...This paragraph is comprehensive in its reference to 'threat or use of force' and it will be suggested subsequently that one of the principal exceptions—the reservation of the right of individual and collective defence in Article 51—should be given a narrow interpretation. The other principal exception, action authorized by an organ of the United Nations. The obligation of Article(2), paragraph 4, is complemented by paragraph 3 of the same Article which provides that members shall settle their disputes by peaceful means, and Chapter VI of the Charter on 'Pacific Settlement of Disputes', particularly by Article 33.<sup>(8)</sup>

As far as the economic and social advancement of people is concerned, Buddha suggests people to earn money by doing ethical business and serve the poor for their socio-economic upliftment.

Buddha was against *slavery* and promotes principles of equality and brotherhood. That find place in Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948(UDHR). Art.1 says, "*All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in spirit of brotherhood.*"

Buddha was believer of social justice, therefore suggest for observance of eightfold path of morality for just and equitable society, which will leads human being towards world peace. ILO also agree

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8. Ian Brownlie, *International Law and The Use of Force by States*, Oxford, 1963, p113.

that universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice; and hence enumerated it under the Constitution of ILO.

## 6. ARBITRATION: BUDDHA'S SUGGESTION FOR SETTLEMENT OF CONFLICTS

Buddha gave the way of settlement of dispute by Arbitration. After 8 years of his becoming member of Shakya Sangha, there was conflict between states of Shakya and Koliya on distribution of water of river Rohini. The Senapati/Commander of Shakya intends to wage war against the Koliya. However, Gautama strongly opposed the resolution and said; war does not solve any question. Waging war will not serve the purpose but it will sow the seeds of another war. Therefore, he suggests that Shakya and Koliya should ask to elect two men from them respectively, four members should elect a fifth person, and they should settle the dispute.<sup>(9)</sup> It shows that even before his enlightenment, Buddha was against the war and in favour of settlement of dispute by peaceful means i.e.by Arbitration.

In the present era, we have adopted the mechanism of Arbitration to settle the disputes between the parties at national as well as at international level. Article 33 of the UN Charter provides different means including Arbitration for pacific settlement of disputes. Similarly, At International level, UNCITRAL (United Nations Commission on International Trade Law) draft conventions are followed. Therefore, it is true to say that Dispute resolution system of Buddha is equally having importance in the modern period.

## 7. SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW

The purpose of the united nation is to maintain international peace and security. Therefore, under United Nations Charter, 1945, Art.33 is very important provision in that regard. It says that, the parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall first,

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9. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar, *The Buddha and His Dhamma, The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, Taipei, Taiwan, p.24-25.*

seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements or other peaceful means of their own choice.

## 8. CONCLUSION

As universal peace and harmony is the sole intend of Buddha's philosophy and mindful leadership is the need of hour, it is the time to retrospect and explore thoughts of Buddhism. The UN Charter is also encouraging for peaceful society. Hence, focus should be on the propagation of Buddha's idea of peace. It will be in the interest of entire humanity to create egalitarian society.

Buddha stood for Ahimsa and denounced *Hinsa* (killing). However, he did not deny that *hinsa* might be the last resort to save good being destroyed by evil. Ahimsa taught by the Buddha was fundamental but it was not absolute. He taught that evil should be cured by the return of good but he never preached that evil should be allowed to overpower good. So also, the Charter of the UN permits to use force in self-defence if State is attacked by other states. The provision of Collective self-defence as an exception to use force also noteworthy to maintain peace and security in the world.

To avoid conflicts/war Buddha suggests correct ethical behavior i.e. *Panchsila* and observance of other teachings of *Dhamma*. The Buddha's teaching is about respect for life and the prohibition against taking life. The life not of human beings only but all other living creatures. Therefore, he goes beyond the concept of *Karuna* and asked for *Maitri*. *Karuna* includes love only for human beings but *Maitri* is love for all living beings. Therefore, if we end killing, the world will definitely be at peace. The practice of Meditation will be definitely helpful to attain peace of mind of individuals and society.

Buddha also suggests to follow the eightfold path of morality for just and lawful society i.e. right views, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right efforts, right mindfulness and right contemplation

The Buddha's Dhamma teaches about ethical behaviour in the society, *pradnya*, *karuna*, *maitre*, *panchasila*, *eightfold path* of morality,

non-violence etc. which ultimately lead towards human rights protection and sustainable peace. Therefore, it can be concluded that ethical way of life is the only solution for proper leadership and for sustainable peace in the society.

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