

Speech to the European Parliament on the occasion of 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, 9th May 2007

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“In the age of plenty, according to the latest report of the World Hunger, 842 million of our sisters and brothers die of hunger. The report says that by 2020 HIV will have killed 20 % of African workers, especially among farmers. I find myself repeating too often that 9/11 was, to quote Roosevelt on the bombing of Pearl Harbor “a date which will live in infamy.” Over 3,000 people were killed in the name of Allah. And on that same day 35,615 children died of starvation, and no one said a word. About 40,000 children die every day of hunger. In a world that is able to feed itself but chooses to grow weapons instead of food, we, so-called Christians, should be ashamed to allow this to happen.

Every 6 seconds in our world a child dies of hunger or of avoidable diseases.

Over the years, I have had the privilege to listen to many brilliant men and women, each one an expert in algebra data. Unfortunately, the only data I can present to you today are the tragic ones of death and destruction. The time has come to change this intolerable situation. The time has come to force governments to take responsibility for the sufferings of the innocent. The time has come to stop using the name of the creator whatever it is called, God, Allah, Buddha, Brahma or the Great White Father, to kill, mutilate and destroy. As human beings we must all commit ourselves with dedication, determination and courage to change the horrors perpetrated in our world every day.

The global military expenditure and arms trade represent the largest expenditure in the world, exceeding one trillion of dollars per year, and every year this amount increases. This madness must no longer be tolerated by mankind. This is why I ask the European Parliament to pass a new law stipulating that 1% of the military budget of each member state should be used to support peace projects that raise the quality of life everywhere on our planet.

My organisation World Centres of Compassion for Children International aims to create a new paradigm for those little innocents who die because they have no political voice. We will give them a loud and clear voice. A voice that will become a leading force and will be heard.

This year, the Wcc will start building the first ‘City of Peace for Children’ in Basilicata, Italy. A city where the children will be loved, welcomed, nurtured, educated, cared for, a city outside of any attack, a city completely neutral where peace will be educated and children can be truly free.

I ask the European Parliament and my graduate colleagues to help me turn a dream, which has lasted 32 years, into reality. Common sense tells us that if you teach peace to future generations, then peace will be applied.

I will finish my speech with the ‘Universal Declaration of the Rights of children’:

We, the Children of the World, declare our inalienable right to be heard and to have a political voice at the United Nations and at the highest levels of government throughout the world.

We, the Children of the World, must live in peace, justice and freedom but above all with the dignity that we deserve.

We, the Children of the World, demand a Marshall Plan, a Geneva Convention, and a Human Rights Tribunal for the Children of the World, who meet regularly to hear testimony about the reality of what is happening to us. We intend to provide our own testimonies.

We, the Children of the World, demand the right, in war situations, to be transferred to secure shelters.

We, the Children of the World, consider hunger, disease, forced labour, and all forms of abuse and exploitation committed upon us as acts of war.

We, Children of the World, have never had a voice in politics. We request that such a voice will be given to us.

We, Children of the World, will develop our own leadership, and we will be an example that will show governments how to live in peace and freedom.

We, the Children of the World, are warning those who abuse us and our exploiters, whoever they may be, that from today we will hold them responsible for our suffering.

We should remember that these words are the words of our greatest resource, our children.

And one day, not too far away, the children will force the governments to take their responsibilities.

I am sure of it, do you know why? They told me.

**1976 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.*