



Coordination internationale pour la Décennie International Coalition for the Decade

Press Release

The International Coalition for the Decade calls for the celebration of the International Day of Peace on September 21st 2006

A day to celebrate and observe peace: this was what that the UN General Assembly wished for by adopting in 2001, the 21st of September as the “*International Day of Peace*”. This day is an international day of ceasefire and non-violence, an occasion to strengthen the ideals of peace and to soothe tensions and causes of conflict. It is part of the dynamics of the “*International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010)*”.

This International Day should allow the large public to discover, in all the countries of the world, the various initiatives of peace actors who endeavour courageously, and sometimes at the peril of their own lives, to reconcile the enemies of the past, to educate to peace and non-violence, to defend human rights and to promote social justice and the respect of the dignity of all humans.

The International Coalition for the Decade invites all those who wish to, to celebrate the International Day of Peace 2006 by bearing the symbols of peace, such as the rainbow flag and the International Day of Peace sticker¹, by participating in events such as peace prayers, educational and awareness-raising events and symbolic acts or by starting local initiatives. The Coalition calls, in particular, upon all the cities of the world to get engaged in the celebration of this International Day, as did the city of Montreal in 2005 and the city of Paris in January 2006. Various examples of actions could be consulted on the website www.peaceday.org

At the UN headquarters, the Day will be observed with the traditional ceremony in which Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, will ring the Peace Bell for the last time during his term in office. Numerous commemorative events and activities are planned around the world by UN offices. <http://www.un.org/events/peaceday/2006>

On the occasion of the International Day of Peace, the member organizations of the International Coalition for the Decade also rally for peace:

- The local coalitions and the member associations of the **French Coalition for the Decade** organize various events in numerous regions of France to celebrate peace and non-violence: distribution of documentation in Alsace, exhibition on the culture of peace and non-violence in Bourgogne, a marionette festival and an alphabet project in Champagne-Ardenne, ecumenical prayer in Ile-de-France, booths, workshops and forums in Lorraine, a whole week for peace in Nord-Pas-de-Calais, street performances in Rhône-Alpes. www.decennie.org
- The **World Council of Churches (WCC)** calls upon its member Churches to pray for peace, in all the countries of the world. The WCC actively contributes to the UN International Decade

¹ Flags and stickers are available at the French Coalition for the Decade www.decennie.org

through its own “Decade to Overcome Violence” (DOV). The theme of this year “... *and still we seek peace*” was chosen by Churches in Latin America, a region that has been highlighted in 2006 by the DOV annual focus. This initiative is also supported by Pax Christi International. www.wcc-coe.org, www.overcomingviolence.org and www.paxchristi.net

- From the 21st to the 24th of September, **Church and Peace** organizes with its partners in South-eastern Europe an inter-religious encounter under the theme “*When we work for peace, we give glory to God*”. It will take place on the Island of Krk in Croatia. The participants will come from all the countries of ex-Yugoslavia and from all the faiths represented in this region. The organizers insist on the fact that this event wishes to make a sign amidst the climate of violence and war that marks our age. <http://bocs.hu/chp/leaflet/chpl-a.htm>
- The **Réseau Foi, Culture et Education – Africa** organizes in Yaoundé (Cameroon) during the month of September training and awareness-raising sessions aiming at promoting the culture of peace and non-violence. On September 21st, a roundtable will be organized, followed by a church service to pray for victims of violence.

Members of the International Coalition September 2006
National Coalitions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comitato Italiano per il Decennio (Italy) • Coordination française pour la Décennie (France) • Österreichisches Netzwerk für Frieden und Gewaltfreiheit (Austria) • Platform voor een Cultuur van Vrede en Geweldloosheid (Netherlands) • Kooperation für den Frieden (Germany) <i>Observer</i>
International Associations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caritas Internationalis • Church and Peace • FIACAT • Franciscans International • Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers) • International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) • Pax Christi International • Pax Romana / ICMICA • Réseau Foi, Culture et Education (Central Africa) • Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
Observing Members:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Council of Churches (WCC) • Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace • Servicio Paz y Justicia en América Latina (SERPAJ)

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