



Focus on Peace and Conflict Resolution

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF PEACE

RIDDING THE WORLD OF LAND MINES

ROTARY CENTERS ALUMNI SOUND OFF

GLOBAL OUTLOOK

Is peace possible?

Future peacemakers will face new challenges in an era marked by smaller conflicts

In the 20th century, about 150 million people died as a result of war and genocide, victims of violence carried out systematically by other human beings. That staggering statistic, though only an estimate, tells a sobering story. But it doesn't even begin to account for the countless deaths and injuries that came about because of individuals inflicting violence on each other for reasons selfish and trivial or, perhaps even worse, for no reason at all.

It was the bloodiest century in human history, one that combined the brutality associated with the lowest level of human behavior and the technological innovation associated with the highest level of human intelligence. And in this, the early part of the 21st century, some might say the pattern is continuing, with the war in Iraq, ongoing hostilities in the Middle East, fighting in Africa, disputes involving Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan, and acts of terrorism throughout the world. With the 11 September 2001 attacks on New York

City and Washington, D.C., and subsequent assaults on Madrid, London, and Mumbai, it became clear that a small group of people with murderous intent could inflict severe harm not just on the weak and vulnerable but also on those who appeared to be strong and secure.

Is it sheer folly to embrace the vision of a world without war? Is it hopelessly naive to believe that conflicts can be resolved in a reasonable, thoughtful manner? What are the root causes of conflict, and how do we address them before they escalate? In the aftermath of World War II, after the full discovery of the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps and the realization of the destruction that could be inflicted by a single weapon in Japan, such questions did not discourage would-be

peacemakers, including Rotarians, from working for the creation of the United Nations. And they do not deter the efforts of organizations and individuals dedicated to building peace today.

Simply getting enemies to speak to each other is the first step of communication, the first step to mutual understanding.

— Cyril Noirtin

Human rights

Rotary has embraced the cause of peace since the first decades of the organization's existence. Rotarians work for peace through worldwide community service projects, coordinated efforts with the UN and its affiliates, and financial contributions to The Rotary Foundation, which supports humanitarian and educational efforts that promote peace. Hundreds of graduates of the Foundation's seven Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution, located on five continents, are taking their place in the next generation of peacemakers.

One nongovernmental organization (NGO) that shares Rotary's vision is the Carter Center, founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, with the hope of building "a world in which every man, woman, and child has the opportunity to enjoy good health and live in peace."

John Stremlau, who spent eight years teaching in South Africa before becoming the center's vice president of peace programs, believes the key to achieving peace can be traced back to 1948 and the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. "People have to accept the idea of equality — it starts with human rights," he says. "Until you can secure human rights, you have the seeds of discontent, which can get stirred by terrorists."

Stremlau applauds organizations and individuals who work to cure disease, a feat many experts

believe is key to achieving stability. But he thinks the basis for bringing peace involves establishing a political structure. "If you cure people, but they are being attacked because of their ethnicity, then you haven't gotten very far," he explains.

Implicit in the declaration of human rights, Stremlau says, are "obligations to hold free and fair elections." He sees election monitoring as an important way in which NGOs can move the peace process forward. Stremlau helped monitor the 2008 Ghana election

There is now a whole generation of new experts coming out, full of knowledge and full of enthusiasm.

— Jan Egeland

with the Carter Center and notes that outside pressure helped ensure a smooth and democratic transition of authority.

"Not to sound self-serving, but I really think that if we, in [partnership] with the other election watch groups, hadn't been there, forcing them to accept the outcome, we might not have had that handover of power," he explains. According to

the UN, electoral assistance is becoming an increasingly important part of its peace operations. It has supported elections in numerous post-conflict countries — among them Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Haiti, Iraq, Liberia, and Nepal — with populations totaling more than 120 million, giving about 57 million citizens an opportunity to exercise their democratic rights by casting a vote.

Cases like the Ghana election prove that the investment in peace and stability is far less costly, in social and economic terms, than the alternative. "It was a thrill to be involved in the Ghana election. It was a way of saying to the world that people can afford democracy," Stremlau says.

Education and health

"To me, the greatest obstacle to resolving conflict and achieving peace is lack of communication," says Cyril Noirtin, a member of the Rotary Club of Paris Agora, France, and an RI representative to UNESCO. "Without communication, we cannot create awareness of cultural differences, or of major problems and potential solutions. Simply getting enemies to speak to each other is the first step of communication, the first step to mutual understanding."

Also important — and an area in which Rotary makes a difference — he says, is "securing access to vital resources such as safe water, food,

1901 The first Nobel Prizes, named for the inventor of dynamite, Alfred Nobel, are awarded.

1907 At the second International Peace Conference at The Hague, some rules of war are established.

1914 The Rotary Club of Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, sends a proposal to the International Association of Rotary Clubs, suggesting that all clubs become peace advocates in their communities.

1919 The Treaty of Versailles ends World War I.

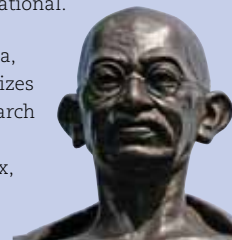
1920 The League of Nations is established.

1922 At the Rotary convention in Los Angeles, delegates resolve to establish international peace as part of the Object of Rotary and to change the name of the organization to Rotary International.



1928 The Rotary Foundation, first proposed in 1917 as an endowment fund, becomes an entity within Rotary International.

1930 In India, Gandhi organizes a 240-mile march against the British salt tax,



basic education, and health care. Communities plagued by a scarcity of resources have nothing to lose, and war and conflict become the only option.”

Andreza Zeitune, a former Rotary World Peace Fellow who now works at UNESCO in Paris as a liaison with international NGOs, agrees with Noirtin and praises the groundwork for peace that Rotary has helped build through its fight against polio. “A society that is free of disease and well educated is less susceptible to conflicts and much more open for development and peace,” she says. Zeitune believes that a major impediment to peace is corrupt governments that prevent development by using their countries’ wealth for private gain. “The key to overcoming that is an educated populace.”

Zeitune views Rotary’s programs for youth and young adults as a smart step on the long path to peace. “I do believe that peace is possible through friendship, and that a real difference can be made by starting with youth,” she says. “One day those young adults will be the future world leaders, and they will be able to take advantage of their international experience to make decisions that will be beneficial for their countries and also for their friends’ countries.”

Though the past century was one of the most violent, it also saw the flourishing of academic peace and conflict studies programs, such as the Rotary Centers. Jan Egeland,



Courtesy of Izabela Pereira

Izabela Pereira, who works for the UN in Timor-Leste, researched conflict in Senegal as part of her Rotary World Peace Fellowship.

a veteran UN peacemaker and director of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, sees great potential in these programs.

“I think it’s a brilliant idea for Rotary to invest in the education of young people in this area of peace mediation and conflict resolution,” says Egeland. “There is now a whole generation of new experts coming out, full of knowledge and full of enthusiasm.” Graduates of the Rotary Centers “can do real peace work,” and that involves “pushing the UN to do more,” he says.

“I’m an optimist,” he continues. “I think we will see great, great things.” But Egeland also believes that many nations — and individuals — could be doing more now, especially in the area of disease prevention, to foster greater stability. “We cannot have 10 million children dying each year from preventable diseases. We can afford to end the misery on our watch.”

A reason for hope?

The beliefs of these peacemakers — that democracy, improved communication, better education, and gains in health are leading the world down a path to peace — are built on a sturdier foundation than optimism and hope. Despite the suffering that goes on daily for people living in or, in the case of refugees, outside of one of the 16 countries where UN peacekeeping operations are underway, there is strong evidence that the world is becoming more peaceful.

According to the *Human Security Report 2005* — a research project based at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada — after the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, armed conflicts declined by more than 40 percent, and the deadliest variety (those involving more than 1,000 battle deaths) dropped by 80 percent. “With the Security Council no

an event that leads to the independence of India.

1939 World War II begins.

1940 At the RI Convention in Havana, delegates resolve that where “freedom, justice, truth, sanctity of the pledged word, and respect for human rights” do not exist, “Rotary cannot live,” providing

the framework for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights issued by the United Nations eight years later.

1942 London Rotarians convene a world peace conference attended by representatives from 21 governments. The leadership



group that emerges from this event evolves into UNESCO.

1945 At the UN Charter Conference in San Francisco, more than 40 Rotarians participate as delegates or consultants.

U.S. Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius declares the invitation is a “simple recognition of the practical part Rotary’s members have played and will continue to play in the development of understanding among nations.”



World War II ends.

longer paralyzed by Cold War politics, the UN spearheaded a veritable explosion of conflict prevention, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building activities,” the report said. Even with the genocides in Rwanda in 1994 and Bosnia in 1995, there was a decline of 80 percent in mass killings due to religion, ethnicity, or political beliefs.

The report indicated that since the beginning of the 1990s, “more conflicts have ended in negotiated settlements and fewer in victories, in large part because peacemaking efforts are increasingly successful.” The downside is that nearly a third of those agreements are broken within five years.

It also confirmed an association between armed conflict and poverty, noting that “higher per capita income tends to mean a stronger state, which means more resources to crush rebellions or to address the grievances that drive them.”

The connection between peace and democracy is supported by a finding that the decline in conflicts has been accompanied by an increase in the percentage of democratic countries — from 26 percent in 1975 to 58 percent in 2005.

“Countries that are less violent do tend to be democratic,” says Steven Pinker, an acclaimed professor of psychology at Harvard University and author of the book *The Better Angels of Our Nature: How We Became Less Violent*, due out in 2011. Pinker says the idea that the world may be more peaceful than ever



Veteran peacemaker Jan Egeland speaks at the 2009 Rotary World Peace Symposium.

before still comes as a surprise to many people.

“Contrary to the popular belief that we are living in extraordinarily violent times, our ancestors were far more violent than we are,” says Pinker, lending a long-term perspective. “Today we are probably living in the most peaceful time in our species’ existence.”

Egeland, speaking to Rotarians and alumni of the Rotary World Peace Fellowships program at the 2009 Rotary World Peace Symposium in Birmingham, England, pointed out that “conflict in this day and age is mostly internal — there are civil wars, tribal groups fighting each other, often religious or ethnic or cultural rebellions, such as in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

“Those who become the peacemakers of the future are not going to negotiate between major countries. They are going to be working in complex situations — they must concentrate on alleviating the suffering of the civilian population, the

women and children who are the victims of war.”

The view that major conflicts between states are in steady decline has been advanced by John Mueller, a noted professor of political science at Ohio State University and author of *Atomic Obsession: Nuclear Alarmism from Hiroshima to Al Qaeda*. According to Mueller, regional conflict has diminished. In Africa, most violent activity, while no less painful for the people who are subjected to it, is closer to “criminal enterprise” based on personal gain and corruption rather than to civil war waged for political reasons.

Not only have we seen an end to war between developed countries, but the threats posed by terrorists also are overblown, Mueller says. “The likelihood of an individual or a terrorist group setting off a nuclear device is microscopic,” he explains. “I’m distinctly in the minority in this opinion.” But he notes the comfort inherent in his convictions: “Even people who think I’m wrong hope I’m right.”

Mueller says that if he is correct in his belief, then “one of the most interesting things in the history of the human race may be taking place. Assuming it’s true, it’s astoundingly important.”

Does this mean that we really are on the road to peace?

“It would be crazy to say for certain, but the pattern is there,” says Mueller. “Let’s put it this way: It looks pretty good.”

— Paul Engleman

1958 British artist Gerald Holtom draws a symbol for the Direct Action Committee Against Nuclear War. It comes to be known simply as “the peace sign.”

1959 At the RI Convention in New York City, a new RI-published book on international



service, *Seven Paths to Peace*, is introduced.

1962 Cuban Missile Crisis

1964 U.S. civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

1968 Student uprisings and violent protests in cities worldwide. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated. Warsaw Pact nations invade Czechoslovakia.

1975 End of the Vietnam War, a 16-year conflict.

1980 Civil war breaks out in El Salvador.

1981 At the RI Convention in São Paulo, Brazil, the first Rotary Award for World Understanding and Peace is given to Noburu Iwamura of Japan for his work with the sick and poor in Nepal and throughout Asia.



The deadly remnants of war

Rotarians are part of a global effort that is working to rid communities of land mines and treat victims in places like Cambodia

Almost from the moment the first atomic bomb detonated over Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945, the discussion on disarmament understandably has focused on weapons that cause immediate mass destruction. As the arms race accelerated and technological advances led to the creation of more expensive and efficient killing machines, lost in the conversation about controlling their spread was one of the most insidious weapons of modern warfare: the land mine.

Cheap and unsophisticated — and designed as much to maim as to kill — the land mine is a weapon that keeps on doing its dirty work long after the battles have been fought, the treaties have been signed, and the wars have ended. The land mine first came into widespread use in World War II. Since then, it has been used in many conflicts, including the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the wars in the Balkans, and the civil wars in Africa.

Initially, land mines were deployed defensively to protect borders or camps. Eventually, they came to be used as offensive weapons, intended to harm civilians. When mines were used as a defensive strategy, minefields were

often marked and mapped. Once that practice ended, the process of clearing the fields became more dangerous, more time consuming, and more expensive. It has been estimated that it costs only US\$1 to produce a land mine but about \$1,000 to find and remove it.

Live land mines and other explosives still contaminate the landscapes of about 80 countries. They caused more than 5,000 casualties

ing Physicians for Human Rights and Handicap International, came together after seeing the devastating effects that mines had on the communities in which the NGOs were working. In October 1992, they formed the ICBL, which has since grown into a network that spans more than 70 countries. The organization prodded government officials around the world to take action, leading 122 states to sign an inter-

national Mine Ban Treaty in Ottawa in 1997. For its efforts, the ICBL was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize that year.

Currently, 156 countries are parties to the Mine Ban Treaty. The non-parties include China, India, Russia, and the United States. Although the United States provides more funding to the ICBL than any other country, it has resisted signing the treaty because of the one million mines it has along the demilitarized zone near South Korea, which it says are a deterrent to a North Korean attack. India's refusal to sign is related to land mines it maintains along its border with Pakistan.

Significant to Rotarians' work against land mines is Mine-Ex, a charity foundation of districts 1980, 1990, and 2000, which cover

It has been estimated that it costs only US\$1 to produce a land mine but about \$1,000 to find and remove it.

in 2007, about 1,400 of which were fatal, according to *Landmine Monitor*, a journal of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). Nearly 75 percent of those casualties were civilians, and about half of those were children. But this was a significant drop from 2002, when about 11,700 casualties were reported, an indication that the efforts of many organizations, including Rotary, are having an impact.

The movement to ban land mines took hold in the early 1990s, when a group of six nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), includ-

1985 Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev announces policies of glasnost and perestroika.

1988 The Rotary Foundation holds its first peace forum, laying the groundwork for the Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution.

1989 Fall of the Berlin Wall. Tiananmen Square protests in China.

1990 Lech Wałęsa becomes the first democratically elected president of Poland. In South Africa, Nelson Mandela is released from prison.





Rotary club projects are helping land mine victims in Cambodia. In Phnom Penh, a girl receives care at a rehabilitation center supported by U.S. and Korean clubs and grants from The Rotary Foundation.

Liechtenstein and Switzerland. It began in 1994, after the late surgeon Hans Stirnemann returned from a three-year assignment treating land mine victims in Southeast Asia. He reportedly told members of his Rotary Club of Burgdorf, Switzerland, "Actions, not words! Something must be done."

Peter Eichenberger, the president of Mine-Ex and a member of the Rotary Club of Bern-Münchenbuchsee, Switzerland, says the group works in close collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross, providing financial support for companies that make and fit artificial limbs, caring for victims

by arranging local rehabilitation, and training local artificial limb manufacturers. Most of its efforts are focused in Cambodia, where an estimated one-third of the country is peppered with mines.

Eichenberger emphasizes that Mine-Ex is entirely a volunteer effort. "All help goes to those who need it," he says. "It is a founding principle of the organization that every cent of the donations goes to helping the victims, without any administrative or other costs."

Another group involved in the cause is Rotarians for Mine Action, formed spontaneously at the 2002 RI Convention in Barcelona, Spain, by

Rotarians from Andorra, Canada, France, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States. It later evolved into a Rotarian Action Group that works to promote awareness of land mines, supports mine-clearing efforts, and provides assistance to land mine victims and their families.

The group supports the HALO Trust, a charity based in Great Britain and bolstered by the late Princess Diana. With nearly 8,000 full-time mine clearers working in nine countries, HALO estimates that, since its founding in 1988, it has removed more than one million mines and cleared

more than 6,000 minefields.

The action group's Web site, www.rfma.org, provides links to more than a dozen other mine-related sites and a growing database of Rotary club projects related to de-mining around the world.

"The road to success will be very long," says Eichenberger, but he draws hope from the situation in Cambodia. "We can see that the number of new victims is decreasing and, thanks to the common efforts of the different partners, existing victims are coming to a better and brighter life — a life as comfortable as possible."

— Paul Engleman

1991 The Soviet Union collapses. USA launches Operation Desert Storm. South Africa repeals last apartheid laws.

1992 UN-brokered peace deal ends Salvadoran Civil War.

1994 Genocide begins in Rwanda. Nelson Mandela is elected president of South Africa.

The Rotary Club of Skøyen, Norway, establishes a peace project through which Israeli and Palestinian students attend an all-expenses-paid

summer study program in Oslo.

1995 The Dayton-Paris Agreement puts an end to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.



AP Photo/Amel Emric

Rotary Centers alumni sound off



Effendi



Mukalazi



Nedziwe



Pranckevičius

In 1999, The Rotary Foundation established the Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution to promote peace and develop the next generation of community and world leaders. In partnership with eight prestigious universities in six countries, the program trains up to 100 Rotary World Peace Fellows each year. Last year, more than 400 participants, including numerous Rotary Centers alumni, attended the second Rotary World Peace Symposium, held before the RI Convention in Birmingham, England. We asked four peacemakers trained with support from Rotary about their vision for peace.

and to the most brutal totalitarian regimes in the world's history, I begin to believe that peace is possible.

Maria Saifuddin Effendi (University of Bradford, England, 2006-08) is an assistant professor in the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at National Defence University in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Godfrey Mukalazi (University of Queensland, Australia, 2004-06) is a cofounder of the Great Lakes Center for Conflict Resolution in Kampala, Uganda.

Cecilia Nedziwe (University of Queensland, Australia, 2006-08) is the operations director at the Centre for Peace Initiatives in Africa, a regional peace organization based in Harare, Zimbabwe.

Arnoldas Pranckevičius (Sciences Po, France, 2002-04) is the administrator of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.

Global Outlook: What gives you hope that peace can be achieved?

Maria Saifuddin Effendi: At the international level, my ray of hope

is charity work, social welfare, and service. Peace can be achieved by addressing human security issues, from food and water security and environment preservation to economic prosperity and free education. Once these issues are identified and addressed, people will fight less; there will be fewer conflicts in the world.

Godfrey Mukalazi: The success stories of conflict resolution and peace-building around the world create great hope in me that someday our efforts will yield good results. Though peace cannot be realized in a specified time, the little bits we contribute every day will create a tremendous change someday.

Arnoldas Pranckevičius: What gives me the greatest hope is the example of the European Union, where I live and which I serve. When I look at this area of peace, stability, and democracy that the EU managed to create on the continent which only last century gave birth to the two most devastating wars

GO: In your work, what do you see as the greatest obstacle to resolving conflict and achieving peace?

Cecilia Nedziwe: Obstacles to peace are at various levels. Many things have gone wrong in Zimbabwe due to misinformation or lack of information as a result of a polarized, divided, and politicized media. Here, reform of the media requires urgent attention.

Mukalazi: With respect to my country, the major obstacle is bad leadership. Poor political leaders have created and escalated conflict by engaging in maladministration of state affairs, misappropriation of state funds, and suppression of the opposition. They have failed to deliver social services to our citizens, thereby sparking conflict.

GO: What do you think Rotarians can do, as individuals or in club projects, to help move us toward world peace?

1998 The Good Friday Agreement, considered a milestone in the peace process in Northern Ireland, is reached.



2001 Thousands die during the 11 September terrorist attacks in the United States.

2002 Angolans sign peace deal, ending a 27-year civil war.

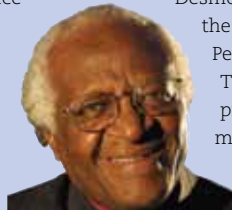
The first Rotary World Peace Fellows begin studying at the Rotary Centers, established by The Rotary Foundation at highly regarded universities around the world.

2006 The Democratic Republic of the Congo holds its first free presidential election in more than 40 years.

2007 Rotary hosts its first Rotary World Peace Symposium, a pre-convention opportunity for current and former

Rotary World Peace Fellows and Rotarians to connect and exchange ideas. It draws nearly 400 participants.

2009 Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu speaks at the second Rotary World Peace Symposium. The Rotary Centers program now has more than 400 alumni.



Effendi: The Rotary World Peace Fellowships program is an excellent initiative of Rotarians. But people can [reap] the benefits only after going through a tough competition at the international level. I would like to suggest that Rotary clubs introduce 10-day peace workshops at the regional level, which could be attended by students and professionals of conflict resolution and peace studies. Such workshops will spread the word of peace throughout the conflict-prone areas. People will become more aware and well informed.

GO: Human beings have been engaging in conflict for thousands of years, leading many people to think that the goal of peace requires changing human nature. What makes you believe this change is possible?

Nedziwe: I am not a Quaker, but I subscribe to their belief in the worth of every person and faith — in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice. I believe that the goal of peace should be guided by the power of love, which changes human nature. This is a challenging and daunting task. The Rotary Foundation is leading the way through polio [eradication], providing communities with clean water, and in empowering young people by providing them with educational opportunities. These efforts are very commendable and should continue.

Effendi: Human nature is not innately destructive. When people are ignored by the social system and suppressed by their fellow beings, they raise their voices against the economic, political, or social ills. If their voices remain unheard, their emotions transform into frustration. We need to provide the conditions that enable human beings to grow at their best.

GO: What recent events do you see as encouraging?

Nedziwe: In the case of Zimbabwe, despite the challenges faced in past years, the formation of the all-inclusive government has brought some sense of relief in many quarters. Although the first all-stakeholders conference was disrupted by spoilers, there is still a great sense of hope and political will among the parties to move toward a people-driven constitution. Furthermore, the initiative by the all-inclusive government to move toward national healing, reconciliation, and an integration process is commendable despite the fact that the sincerity of the leadership remains questionable to some extent.

Pranckevičius: I often ask myself how the world will look in 20 or 50 years. Will it be a world of strong international institutions and supremacy of international law, or a world defined by narrow national interests and unilateral action? Will it be a world of sustainable development with the gains of globalization available to everybody, or a world of economic protectionism, rising inequalities, and exploding poverty in places like Africa? It is [critical] to come up with a long-term vision for our planet and to know the direction we would like to move in the future. The concerted effort of the international community to tackle the enormous challenges of the global economic crisis and climate change provides a glimpse of hope that we are moving in the right direction.

Mukalazi: The reconciliation developments in Australia regarding the recognition of the Aborigines, the political trends in the United States, the situation in South Africa — these are precursors of a green light toward world understanding that is sweeping the globe.

Learn more about building peace

Building Peace: Rotary World Peace Fellows is a seven-minute DVD highlighting the Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution. The promotional video features interviews with former Rotary World Peace Fellows, like Jeyashree Nadarajah (pictured),



about how support from The Rotary Foundation has helped them gain footing in their peace work. Share the video with other Rotarians at your next club meeting or community event. Order the DVD (830-DVDC) at shop.rotary.org. Available in English, French, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, and Spanish.

More online

Read more about Rotary's work in peace and conflict resolution at www.rotary.org/go.

Contributors to this issue

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