

Manila Declaration of 2018

We, ambassadors, educators, parliamentary members, and performing, visual and media artists of nations across the globe, as the delegates and participants in the global launch of the peace movement, “Not by Force, but by Art” under the patronage of UNESCO and the endorsement of the UNDP in celebration of UNESCO International Arts Education Week and marking the 70th Anniversary of UNESCO’s responsive post-World War II creation of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), while observing the ASEAN Decade of Marine and Coastal Resources Protection, convened from May 20th to 23rd, 2018, for the Art Speaks for Peace Festival-Forum, organized by the Earthsavers UNESCO Dream Center Artists for Peace and held at the EAC Theatre and the Senate in Manila, Philippines,

Recalling the UN’s Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Declaration on a Culture of Peace, UNESCO’s World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, UNESCO’s Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist, the Hangzhou Declaration Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies, the 2030 Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action, The Paris Agreement, and other relevant international instruments of the United Nations system, such as that which formed the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC);

Acknowledging that “a key role in the promotion of a culture of peace belongs to parents, teachers, politicians, journalists, religious leaders and groups, intellectuals, those engaged in scientific, philosophical and creative artistic & sports activities, health and humanitarian workers, social workers, managers at various levels as well as to non-governmental organizations,” (Declaration on a Culture of Peace);

Reaffirming the UN’s declaration that art, under the greater umbrella of culture, is a human right, “fundamental to human dignity and identity,” and that “everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits” (Article 27 of the Declaration of Human Rights),

In concurrence with UNESCO’s Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, that “respect for the diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation in a climate of mutual trust and understanding are among the best guarantees of international peace and security”;

And recognizing the constant and ever-pressing need for peace in our globalized world, as devastating deaths, destruction and disunity caused by war has been witnessed in all parts of the world; the Philippine Encounter is an antidote to violence against mankind and Mother Earth;

Do hereby affirm this declaration:

Art is the universal language of humanity, in its essence, empathetic and communicative; deeply rooted in history and culture; distinctly and uniquely human; a perennial bonding agent; and a trait and practice commonly shared by all peoples, simultaneously integral and transcendent over political affiliation, nationality, race and creed. It can bring together the greatest adversaries, affirm friendship and regional solidarity, and open platforms for collaboration to mitigate or prevent armed conflict.

As such, the arts carry great potential power toward helping to alleviate social ills which plague communities—including poverty, inequity, addiction, inter-group conflict, disaster preparedness and environmental concerns—as well as healing and rehabilitation processes for all individuals, especially

those facing psychological challenges resulting from delinquency, drug addiction, war and displacement, disability, climate catastrophes, trauma, imprisonment, and other difficult circumstances.

“The safeguarding and promotion of culture is an end in itself,”(*UN Sustainable Development Goals*) with the unique capability to concretize, clarify and transmit complex messages like the SDGs, and popularize scientific data. The essential role of art, which links the ethos of environmental issues to the pathos of universal citizens, is effective towards informing and motivating current and future generations to confront climate change towards a more ecologically aware and sustainable global society. This includes its potential in bringing due attention to the ocean as a carbon sink, global commons, and source of food security, advocating for its protection from piracy, pollution, sea-level rise, and further destruction of its vital coral reefs.

An essential ingredient in governance is that of cultural communication, by which the local cultures are considered, respected and utilized as an instrument and bridge among peoples and their governments. Thus, it is appropriate and necessary for governments to foster artistic creations, protect cultural resources, and defend freedom of artistic expression, through material and environmental empowerment of artists in every sphere, including music, dance, theatre, literary, visual arts, media arts, martial arts with other related forms of sport, and all other artistic endeavors within the womb of culture. Furthermore, cultural intercourse within and among nations should not be hampered by political changes in administration, prejudice or gender bias.

The solution to the problems which confront this nexus of society in our increasingly globalized world must be a peaceful means which addresses its multifaceted nature. As the new wave of dynamic application of the arts, we hereby declare our purpose to utilize the comprehensive value of art as a bridging mechanism in all areas of society—including but not limited to governance, education, environmental protection, disaster prevention, rehabilitation and resilience, conflict prevention, resolution and reconciliation—not by compulsion but by persuasion

Based on our own national experiences, with proof in the results of methodological artistic action and cultural mediation within our various communities, **we thus propose the following 10-point Framework Agenda for Action** to be carried out on the local, regional and international levels, for the achievement of this vision of peace and global citizenship. We pledge our commitment to dedicated work alongside our national governments, various partner organizations, and corporations, for immediate and effective legislation and action towards:

- 1. Creating open, collaborative artistic environments which cultivate mutual respect, challenge stereotypes, and promote inclusivity and unity in diversity, in order to foster interfaith dialogue, ethnic conflict resolution and inter-class collaboration,*

Ordaining shared spaces in which the unifying similarities of faiths and beliefs are recognized and celebrated;

Allocating public spaces for creativity throughout all regions, especially rural, impoverished, or underserved localities, in order to encourage artistic discovery within and among all cultures and peoples;

- 2. Further capital investment in the arts and other cooperative cultural endeavors, asserting its profitable role not only in commercial entertainment, but also as a rich and worthy enterprise for societal cohesion and economic stimulation,*

Fortifying creative industries within impoverished or developing communities to thus invigorate economies;

Formulating franchise grants which incentivize corporate networks to dedicate a percentage of airtime to artistic public service presentations which promote peace;

3. Applying art's inherent therapeutic qualities to healing and rehabilitation processes for all individuals and especially those facing psychological challenges,

Activating artistic workshops within communities for victims of war as well as the physically and mentally differently-abled or handicapped, thus improving the quality of life, facilitating their active societal integration and participation, and helping them to discover their further potential as *handicapable* artists;

4. Promoting the Right to Culture of every citizen through intensive measures, policies and mechanisms that collaterally promotes sustainable tourism,

Fueling the collaborative interactive arts to thrive in local communities, with pride of habitat heritage, history, language and indigenous arts & crafts; that can be showcased sensitively as a magnet to enhance the tourism industry,

5. The organization of extensive awareness campaigns which promulgate art as a vital tool for intercultural learning among the masses,

Utilizing the internet, television, radio, cinema, social media and all possible platforms as a means to extend the offer of artistic and cultural works beyond their immediate community of creation;

Particularly assisting the dissemination and mainstreaming of indigenous artistic and cultural practices, not only across one's country but also overseas, to provide opportunity for the greatest number of people to appreciate them;

[Already proven effective was the broadcasting of a theatre festival beyond borders to expand communication among nations, as well as a soap opera promulgating tasks of heroism in times of war; a similar device utilized to promote the SDGs, providing best practices in resolving disputes, or getting to know other artistic traditions through broadcast media]

6. Reintegration, revitalization and renewal of the arts into the agenda of educational curricula and lifelong learning programs, thus infusing academic curricula with the necessary components of creativity, passion, innovation and techno-arts skills, as well as knowledge of world cultures,

Building the concept of public service through free cultural caregiving workshops aimed at serving those on the margins of each community;

Teaching conflict resolution to youth through various artistic, sports and cultural genres, addressing issues of bullying, discrimination, depression and social isolation;

7. Empowering artists as conduits of social change and cultural diplomatic initiators, by elevating their status and increasing their material means towards financial security and facilitated travel,

Granting due respect for artists' entrance into foreign countries through visa approval, so as not to be prevented by changes among political relations, thus upholding the value and importance of culture for peace and sustainable development;

8. Actively engaging and facilitating the cooperation of artists, educators, scientists, entrepreneurs, environmentalists, athletes, leaders of faith and civic leaders to synergize the efforts of all sectors of society toward common goals,

Comprising one unarmed, creative “Rainbow Army for Peace” to complement the UN “Blue Helmets” Peacekeepers;

Encouraging the incorporation of the arts as a means to success and collaboration into the corporate social responsibilities of businesses, firms and foundations;

Artistically advocating for protection of the oceans as essential to the health of our global ecosystem and economy particularly addressing the plastic gyre crisis, underscoring the importance of abiding by the rule of law and a code of conduct as well as encouraging the ratification of the convention on the protection of the underwater cultural heritage assisting countries of the Asia Pacific Region.

9. Encouraging the governments of all countries to host regional and global events, utilizing the UN observance of International Arts Week as a focal point of celebration with other relevant occasions, providing UNESCO patronage to hosts of subsequent events continuing the International Peace Movement “Not by Force but by Art”,

Examples of such relevant occasions including: World Theatre Week, International Dance Day, Earth Day, United Nations Week, World Peace Week, International Day for Persons with Disabilities, Indigenous Peoples Day, Human Rights Week;

10. Forming linkages between and among individual nations’ projects, thus furthering the global citizenship paradigm and to unify our vision for a sustainable world through the Assembly of UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors and Artists for Peace, with members of the International Theatre Institute (ITI),

In November 2018, the Art Speaks for Peace Movement will be continued in Colombia through cooperation with the South-South Cooperation Council;

Focusing on South Asia and small island states in the Pacific, Sri Lanka will host the following forum of the Peace Movement “Not by Force but by Art,” with Janakaraliya through the ITI social change network in the Philippines;

In liaison with InSEA, a following International Peace Movement event will be held in Namibia in 2019.

We, the signatories of the Manila Declaration, abide by our declarations and hereby affirm our dedication to its consequent responsibilities, having arrived at this declaration after extensive discussions at the Senate Forum with consideration of various cases of successful application of art as a means towards the aforementioned ten objectives. a trait and practice commonly shared by all peoples, simultaneously integral and transcendent over political affiliation, nationality, and creed;

We submit this declaration to UNESCO, the Office of the UN Secretary General, our state governments, appropriate local government agencies, the media, concerned business firms and foundations, other persons and bodies that can act on the issues mentioned above, in particularly, the ASEAN Secretariat for Social-Cultural Community Department, SEAMEO and United Nations Development Program Resident Coordinator of each country.

This declaration and the Action Plan which follows were agreed upon in principle by participants individually and/or in behalf of their respective organizations in the year 2018, in observance of UNESCO International Arts Education Week.

Signed on behalf of 217 Participants from the Philippines, Japan, Germany, Switzerland, UAE, Sri Lanka, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, China, Singapore, Fiji, Sudan, Ecuador, Colombia, Saudi Arabia, INSEA and ITI.

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Hosted by

The Senate of the Philippines
Philippine Senate Committees on Foreign Relations & Climate Change Environment & Agriculture
Senate Spouses Foundation
Emilio Aguinaldo College Theater

Other Government and Affiliated Organizations of the Philippines:

City of Manila Mayor's Office/Universidad de Manila
Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP)
Office of the President – Presidential Management Staff and Cabinet Secretary
Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO)
Philippines Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR)
National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA)
Department of Education (DepED)
Department of Tourism, Intramuros Administration (DOT-IA)
Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations
Department of Foreign Affairs-UN and International Organizations (DFA-UNIO)
Commission on Higher Education (CHED)
Department of Public Works & Highways (DPWH)
Department of Interior & Local Government (DILG)
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ZenDance Association

Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA)

Cooperating Manila Hotels: Eurotel- Pedro Gil, The Manila Hotel, The Pearl Manila Hotel, Hotel Jen