



International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression – 4th June

Dear Sweet Children,

Stop attacks on children

When we think that children are our most precious resource and the future of our nations, it is tragic so that so much harm is inflicted on children's situations of armed conflict. Children are the vulnerable members of societies, and especially those who are most affected by the consequences of war. The six most common violations are recruitment and use of children in war, killing, sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access.

On 19 August 1982, at its emergency special session on the question of Palestine, the General Assembly, alarmed by the great number of innocent Palestinian and Lebanese children made victims of unspeakable aggression at that time, decided to commemorate 4 June of each year as the International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression.

The purpose of the day is to acknowledge the pain suffered by children throughout the world who are the victims of physical, mental and emotional abuse. This day affirms the UN's commitment to protect the rights of children. Its work is guided by the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), the most rapidly and widely ratified international human rights treaty in recent history.

Millions of children are caught up in conflicts in which they are not merely bystanders, but targets. Some fall victim to a general onslaught against civilians; others die as part of a calculated genocide. Still other children suffer the effects of sexual violence or the multiple deprivations of armed conflict that expose them to hunger or disease. Just as shocking, thousands of young people are cynically exploited as combatants.

The state of our society

The present-day statistics are shocking enough, but more chilling is the conclusion to be drawn from them: more and more of the world is being sucked into a desolate moral vacuum. This is a space devoid of the most basic human values; a space in which children are mercilessly killed, abused and maimed; a space in which children are exploited as soldiers; a space in which children are starved and exposed to extreme brutality. Such unregulated terror and violence speak of deliberate victimization. We need to pray to lift the consciousness of humanity.

The lack of control and the sense of dislocation and chaos that characterize contemporary deteriorating societies can be attributed to many different factors, such as dramatic political upheavals and struggles for control over resources in the face of widespread poverty

and economic disarray. Others see the callousness of modern warfare as a natural outcome of the social revolutions that have torn traditional societies apart. Until some years ago there was an understanding not to attack women and children, or hospitals, schools and humanitarian spaces but these rules of engagement in warfare are no longer respected. Whatever be causes of modern-day brutality towards children, the time has come to call a halt by all of us speaking up and taking action.

The entire world suffers when children suffer

Violence against children has lifelong impacts on health and well-being of children, families, communities, and nations. Violence against children can: Result in death. Homicide, which often involves weapons such as knives and firearms, is among the top four causes of death in adolescents, with boys comprising over 80% of victims and perpetrators. Violence against children demoralizes society.

In recent years, the number of violations perpetrated against children have, in many conflict zones, increased. More needs to be done to protect the 250 million children living in countries torn by wars.

Everyone's responsibility

The impact of armed conflict on children must be everyone's concern and is everyone's responsibility; Governments, international organizations and every element of civil society. Each one of us, each individual, each institution, each country, must initiate and support global action to protect children. Local and national strategies must strengthen and be strengthened through international mobilization.

Let us claim children as "zones of peace". In this way, humankind will finally declare that childhood is inviolate and that all children must be spared the pernicious effects of armed conflict. Children present us with a uniquely compelling motivation for mobilization. Universal concern for children presents new opportunities to confront the problems that cause their suffering. By focusing on children, politicians, Governments, the military and non-State entities will begin to recognize how much they destroy through armed conflict and, therefore, how little they gain. Let us take this opportunity to recapture our instinct to nourish and protect children. Let us transform our moral outrage into concrete action. Our children have a right to peace. Peace is every child's right.

The ultimate spirituality

We want a society where people are more important than things, where children are precious; a world where people can be more human, caring and gentle! A world where we are at peace with ourselves. That is self-realization and the way to our emancipation.... the path of true spirituality.