

**GERARD MCCANN** 

ST MARY'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, BELFAST

# EDUCATING FOR PEACE

 ARTICLE 26 OF THE UN UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (1948) STATES THAT: "EDUCATION SHALL BE DIRECTED TO THE FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN PERSONALITY AND TO THE STRENGTHENING OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTALS FREEDOMS. IT SHALL PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING, TOLERANCE AND FRIENDSHIP AMONG ALL NATIONS, RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS".

### **REFINING THE DEFINITION**

 UNESCO, 'LEARNING TO BE: THE WORLD OF EDUCATION TODAY AND TOMORROW, REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION' (1972): "IN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES, ANYTHING DESIGNED TO HELP MAN [HUMANITY] LIVE AT PEACE WITH HIMSELF [HERSELF]... ALSO HELPS TOWARDS HARMONY AMONG THE PEOPLES. FOR HOSTILITY TOWARDS OTHERS, THE DESIRE TO DESTROY, ARE CLOSELY LINKED TO FRUSTRATION, FAILURE AND DIVERSE FEELINGS OF INFERIORITY... EDUCATIONAL ACTION MUST DISSIPATE SUCH SELF-DEFEATING ATTITUDES, BY CONTRIBUTING TO A FULL DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS [HER] PERSONAL INTEGRITY. THEN... IT WILL BE ABLE TO DEVELOP IN ALL HUMAN BEINGS A PROFOUND ASPIRATION FOR PEACE".

## THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

 ARTICLE 29 OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (1989):
"...THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILD SHALL BE DIRECTED TO...THE PREPARATION OF THE CHILD FOR RESPONSIBLE LIFE IN A FREE SOCIETY, IN THE SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING, PEACE, TOLERANCE, EQUALITY OF SEXES, AND FRIENDSHIP AMONG ALL PEOPLES".

## DEFINITIVE UNDERSTANDINGS

 THE UNICEF 'PEACE EDUCATION' (1999) DECLARATION STATED THAT: "THE DEFINITION OF PEACE EDUCATION, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN UNICEF, MAKES A BASIC ASSUMPTION: THAT THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE, WHETHER INTERPERSONAL OR SOCIETAL, OVERT OR STRUCTURAL, IS A POSITIVE VALUE".

## AREA APPLICATIONS

 IN AREAS THAT HAVE UNDERGONE RECENT PERIODS OF CONFLICT THE TERMINOLOGY OF PEACE EDUCATION TAKES SIMILAR FORMS. IN RWANDA IT IS TERMED 'EDUCATION FOR PEACE'; IN SRI LANKA, 'EDUCATION FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION'; IN SOUTH AFRICA, 'PEACE AND RECONCILIATION'; IN LEBANON 'GLOBAL EDUCATION'; IN MAURITIUS 'EDUCATION FOR DEVELOPMENT'; AND IN BURUNDI 'PEACE-BUILDING IN SCHOOLS'. IN NORTHERN IRELAND, 'EDUCATION FOR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING', 'SHARED' AND 'INTEGRATED' EDUCATION HAVE ALL ALLUDED TO PEACE BUILDING.

## ACADEMIC CONSIDERATIONS

 PEACE EDUCATION BY IAN HARRIS AND MARY LEE MORRISON, INTRODUCES THE TOPIC AND ITS THEMES SUCCINCTLY: "PEACE EDUCATION IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERED TO BE BOTH A PHILOSOPHY AND A PROCESS INVOLVING SKILLS, INCLUDING LISTENING, REFLECTION, PROBLEM-SOLVING, COOPERATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION. THE PROCESS INVOLVES EMPOWERING PEOPLE WITH THE SKILLS, ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE TO CREATE A SAFE WORLD AND BUILD A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT". (HARRIS AND MORRISON, 2003: 9)

### DEVELOPING A CULTURE OF PEACE

• AS ROBIN BURNS AND ROBERT ARPESLAGH NOTED IN THREE DECADES OF PEACE EDUCATION AROUND THE WORLD: "PEACE EDUCATION CLEARLY EMERGED AS A CONCERN FOR "ONE WORLD, OR NONE", FROM ITS EARLY CONCERNS WITH PERSONAL PEACE TO AN OVERRIDING CONCERN WITH SOCIETAL PEACE ISSUES". (BURNS AND ARPESLAGH, 1996: 11) THEY GO ON TO NOTE THAT THE IMPLICATION OF THIS PROCESS IS THE SHIFT FROM STUDYING THE UNDERLYING TENETS OF A PEACEFUL SOCIETY TO ENGENDERING A CULTURE OF PEACE, WHICH IS INTERPRETED AS AN OBJECTIVE, IN THE UNDERSTANDING THAT: "... PEACE EDUCATION CAN SHAPE THE CONDITIONS FOR A PEACE CULTURE..." (IBID.: 20).

### A GLOBAL LEARNING AGENDA

 THE UN'S HAGUE AGENDA FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ('GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR PEACE EDUCATION') FOR PRACTITIONERS OF PEACE EDUCATION THIS AGENDA WAS IN MANY WAYS SEEN AS RECOGNITION OF THE WORK AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE. CONSEQUENTLY, THE YEARS 2001-2010 WERE DESIGNATED THE 'INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD' BY THE UNITED NATIONS.

## THE DEVED INTERFACE

- AGREEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION (DE) WITHIN THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) HAS BEEN EVOLVING FROM AS FAR BACK AS 2001 WHEN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE REQUESTED A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IT TERMED 'GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE'.
- SINCE THEN THERE HAS BEEN DIALOGUE AROUND THE NATURE OF DE OR 'DEVED' ACROSS THE MEMBER STATES AND A SERIES OF SUBSTANTIAL MOVES TO CREATE A DE FRAMEWORK WHICH WOULD OPERATE AT A TRANSNATIONAL LEVEL. THIS DIALOGUE CULMINATED IN THE COMMISSION'S WORKING DOCUMENT OF DECEMBER 2012 UNDER THE TITLE 'DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING (DEAR) IN EUROPE'.

### THE DE AND PE INTERFACE

 THE DARE FORUM (BASED IN BRUSSELS) ENDORSED DE AS: "AN ACTIVE LEARNING PROCESS, FOUNDED ON VALUES OF SOLIDARITY, EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND CO-OPERATION. IT ENABLES PEOPLE TO MOVE FROM BASIC AWARENESS OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, THROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF GLOBAL ISSUES TO PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT AND INFORMED ACTIONS".

### GLOBAL LEARNING AS PROCESS

 COMPLEMENTING THE DEVELOPMENTS ON THE CONTINENT AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF AN AGREED DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AGENDA WITH A STRONG UN INFLUENCED PEACE ENHANCING COMPONENT RUNNING THROUGHOUT, HAS BEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM'S GLOBAL LEARNING PROGRAMME (GLP). IT ENCAPSULATES MUCH OF THE PEACE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PEDAGOGY AND METHODOLOGY, AND SIGNIFICANTLY WAS DESIGNED BY PRACTITIONERS FROM THE NGDOS, SUPPORTED BY ACADEMICS AND THE DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DFID).

### CONSOLIDATING THE PRINCIPLES

 PEACE BUILDING IS A CROSS CUTTING THEME WITH DISCOURSE THROUGHOUT ON THE HIGHLY TOPICAL ISSUES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION, DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICE, SOCIAL ASSIMILATION AND OVERCOMING STEREOTYPING. THE FRAMEWORK MAY BE A LONG WAY FROM THE EARLY VENTURES INTO PEACE BUILDING THROUGH EDUCATION IN THE 1970S, BUT A LOT OF GROUND HAS BEEN COVERED TO THE POINT WHERE, WITH THE EU CONSENSUS AND THE GLP, THERE IS AN UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS INFORMED AND OFTEN MANAGED BY NGDOS, SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENT RESOURCES, AND WITH A CULTURE OF PEACE AT THE FORE.