

# Permanent Mission of India to United Nations New York

Press Release

**'International Day of Non Violence' commemorated at the United Nations'**

The Permanent Mission of India to United Nations, New York hosted a special event today at the United Nations to commemorate the "International Day of Non Violence".



UN Secretary General (UNSG) H.E. Mr. Ban ki-moon and President of the 68th UN General Assembly (PGA) H.E. Ambassador John Ashe graced the event and delivered the key note and presidential address respectively.

Other speakers on the distinguished panel included the Permanent Representative of South Africa to UN, H.E. Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, and featured interventions by the Permanent Representative of Argentina, H.E. Ambassador María Cristina Perceval, the Permanent Representative of Czech Republic, H.E. Ambassador Edita Hrdá, and Permanent Representative of Norway H.E. Ambassador Geir O. Pedersen

The event had a packed audience of 450 plus, which included 65 Permanent Representatives of UN Member states, in addition to members of the media and several other dignitaries including Ambassador Vijay Nambiar, the Special Adviser on Myanmar to U.N. Secretary-General and other senior UN officials.

Ambassador Asoke K Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to UN, welcomed the distinguished gathering and underscored the increasing relevance of Gandhian ideals by stating *'that the path of non-violence and dialogue is the surest path to sustainable peace, sustainable development and indeed, sustainable reforms. It is through such an approach that we would be best equipped to deal with the challenges of change, whether political, social, economic or environmental, and find solutions on the basis of the strength of dialogue.'*

Delivering the key note address UN Secretary General called on member states to 'draw strength from the courage of individuals like Mahatma Gandhi' and quoting him said : *"I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent"*. UNSG emphasized that it was from this ideology that the UN has *"insisted throughout the war in Syria that all concerned must work for a political solution"* and reiterated that *"whatever one's sympathies or convictions, violence is a poor means to an unsatisfactory end."*

In his Presidential Address, Ambassador John Ashe, President of the 68th UN General Assembly, stated that as the General Assembly embarks upon setting the post 2015 development agenda, it was important that *"laying the groundwork for this new agenda, is laying the groundwork for a non-violent world - one that values peace and well-being for all"*.

In the subsequent statements by the Ambassadors of South Africa, Czech, Argentina and Norway, the need for the world to resort to 'non violent' pathways as the only available solution to conflicts around the world, was emphasized as a common resonating theme.

Ambassador John Ashe, President of the 68th UN General Assembly was also presented with a life size portrait of Mahatma Gandhi by renowned artist, Dr. R.D. Pareek, who had flown in from Mumbai to present his painting to the PGA. In addition, a special edition book on the life of Mahatma Gandhi was presented to the UN Secretary General for his personal collection by the Permanent Representative of India to UN, Ambassador Asoke K Mukerji.

The Special Event also featured an exclusive Sarod recital by Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, his sons Amaan and Ayaan and accompanying artists. The performance included special renditions of tunes of 'Vaishnav Jan to Tene Kahiye' and 'Raghupati Raghav Rajaram' to mark the occasion and **drew a standing ovation** from the packed audience at the UN.

It may be recalled that the UN General Assembly had adopted resolution 61/271 with a record number of 143 co sponsors in June 2007, whereby it declared October 2, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, as "International Day of Non Violence" and invited all member states, NGOs and individuals, including the United Nations to organise events to commemorate this day.

**New York**  
**2 October 2013**

[BACK TO PRESS RELEASES](#)