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APRED

Overview of APRED's fields of work

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APRED sees peace as a non-conflictive state of progress, a harmonious evolution. Of course, progress is never granted, it is a permanent and sustainable human improvement. Yet progress happens best, easily and naturally, when it is mature.

The lack of peace or a state of the world that could be more peaceful leads us to two conclusions :

- First, there is a cultural need for peace to be made a value and a standard, an achievable state of both being and evolving. This goes beyond conflict ; it transcends it into something different, new and more peaceful. There are many peaceful moments in our lives, at all levels of activity and in most of our relations. These peaceful moments and happy relations are what we would like to live more frequently. For our future and for our well-being, as a species and as individuals, these are the relations and happenings we want to cherish and to expand in all dimensions of life.

Notwithstanding that conflict or violence may happen, but consciously making the choice to go beyond it or at least to address violence without aggravating the situation we do want to live in, to work for a culture of peace. For this to be, there is a need to move from oppositional postures and to walk as united as may be, worldwide, towards a peaceful, and therefore a sustainable future.

- Secondly, violence when it exists beyond its direct manifestation, it is also enshrined or tolerated, if not practiced, in our political and economical institutions. Thus reinforcing or justifying a culture of violence in which individuals find it harder to be or to become more proactive for peace.

So despite the individual responsibility to go beyond violence and to practice peace, there is a need for our institutions to progress towards peace and to be of good example, sincere and accurate peace promoters and practitioners.

This has been the focal point, the central issue in APRED's work so far : **non-violence of institutions**.

Human rights have provided a fairly good start, though still largely incomplete, to assure that States are non-violent towards their own population. Similarly, the progress of freedom has assured a greater control of population over their governments or some of their governments activities.

However, this had little effect on the relations between States, where war and war materials are at first generated and then justified. The ban on war, or more precisely the duty to refrain from the use of force or threat and to solve conflicts peacefully, present in the United Nations charter (art 2, § 3 & 4) had so far little effect towards disarmament.

- **Countries without armies** are a perfect example that disarming is possible, or even largely beneficial.
- **A human right to peace** could also bring States to be accountable of their peace (or conflict) policies and practices.
- Stating that **peace** is an overarching value in a **constitution** and grounding **peace policies** in these texts can also bring States, themselves or through their example to be more peace prone.
- **Peace zones** can greatly limit the effect of warfare and help to progress towards more peace, step by step.
- **Democracy** can be a very efficient **peace** promotion tool as it empowers people and institutions to work together towards humane solutions. However, there is still huge progresses to be done in this field and our own research on the links between peace and democracy are only at their beginning.

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All these peace tools mainly aim at making peace a goal and a (possible) reality for each and all, individuals and institutions as well.

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This is the work of APRED.