

Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture 2003

*Challenges to
Peace and Reconciliation
in the Twenty-first Century*

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik
Prime Minister of Norway



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Challenges to Peace and Reconciliation in the Twenty-first Century

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UN House, Tokyo, 27 May 2003



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Foreword

I am very pleased to introduce this lecture by Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, the Prime Minister of Norway. The theme of Mr. Bondevik's lecture, Challenges to Peace and Reconciliation in the Twenty-first Century, is both timely and important.

United Nations University (UNU) has, for several years now, taken as an overarching theme for its work "advancing knowledge for human security and development." The concept of human security is both complex and simplistic: it is complex in that it incorporates many factors, such as military, political, economic, social and environmental concerns, and the many linkages between them.

But security is also a very simple concept: everyone knows what it means to have her or his security threatened. Poverty and hunger, threats to health, illiteracy, environmental degradation, civil conflicts, resource scarcity, human displacement through war, underdevelopment, threats of illegal narcotics and organized crime, all present critical threats to life and livelihood.

In recent years, our conceptions of human security, and our approaches to maintaining security, have changed. Security is perceived as going far beyond military defence of territory. The idea of human security argues that contemporary security, if it is to be relevant to changing conditions and needs, must focus on the individual or people collectively. Traditional ideas of state security are a necessary but not sufficient condition of human welfare. The citizens of states that are "secure" according to the traditional concept of security can be perilously insecure in terms of health, literacy, nutrition and opportunities. This does not exclude the importance of traditional ideas of security, but it does suggest that it may be more effective to reorient the concept and provision of security around people. Military defence of territory remains important, of course, but human security embraces a broader, more comprehensive set of issues of importance to people throughout the world.

In his address, Prime Minister Bondevik focuses on the role played by Norway in the quest for peace and reconciliation, and most specifically, in regards to the situation in Iraq, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Prime Minister Bondevik highlights the common responsibility we all share today in promoting peace and human rights in all parts of the world. "*The quest for peace and security is our common, principal challenge – a challenge in which all responsible nations should come together across the boundaries of nation and culture.*"

Prime Minister Bondevik stresses that no individual state can alone bring peace: cooperation and partnership are needed between actors in order to reach common goals such as peace and reconciliation. He also highlights the importance of stabilization forces, i.e., in Iraq, being firmly anchored in binding decisions by the United Nations Security Council.

Indeed, present times are characterized by the need to support multilateralism rather than national interest-driven policies; and in our views, at United Nations University, it is our role more than ever to strengthen our efforts to address today's

challenges and fulfil our mission, which is “to contribute, through research and capacity building, to efforts to resolve the pressing global problems that are the concern of the United Nations, its Peoples and Member States.”

Mr. Bondevik was first Prime Minister in 1997–2000 and is now heading his second cabinet as from 2001. Previously, Mr. Bondevik served as Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Church and Education.

To conclude, let me say just a few words about the Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture. It is held to commemorate the birth of Norwegian explorer, statesman, humanitarian and Nobel laureate Fridtjof Nansen (1861–1930). Although renowned first as an arctic explorer, and then as a statesman in service of the newly independent Norway, Fridtjof Nansen is perhaps best remembered today for his service as a humanitarian.

In the years after World War I, as a delegate to the League of Nations from Norway, Fridtjof Nansen undertook the task of repatriating hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war. In 1921, he was appointed as the League’s High Commissioner for Refugees (a post in which he served until his death). Also in that year, he was asked by the International Red Cross to direct relief efforts to save millions of persons in famine-stricken Russia from starvation. For these humanitarian efforts, Fridtjof Nansen was awarded the 1922 Nobel Peace Prize. He continued his humanitarian service throughout the 1920s, most notably in assistance of over a million Greek refugees and then to protect remnants of ethnic Armenians from threatened genocide. In addition to his other activities, Fridtjof Nansen was a scholar: his writings include *Eskimo Life* (1893), *Russia & Peace* (1923) and *Armenia and the Near East* (1928). Following his death in 1930, the League of Nations honoured his long service to humanity by creating the Nansen International Office for Refugees, which won the 1938 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture is held annually in a number of capitals around the world to commemorate the life of Fridtjof Nansen. Since 1998, the first Nansen memorial lecture organized at UNU, the Nansen Memorial Lecture has served as a forum for eminent members of the international community to speak on issues confronting the United Nations and its Member States and to share information about Norwegian research.

It was a privilege to have Prime Minister Bondevik at United Nations University for the fourth Nansen memorial lecture. Certainly his message demands continuing attention in relation to efforts to enhance peace and reconciliation all over the world.

Hans van Ginkel
Rector
The United Nations University



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Rector of the United Nations University, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

In 1905, when the old Norwegian nation received her independence, Japan was among the first to recognize Norway's young statehood. Today, as I have the privilege to visit your great nation as my country's prime minister, I pay tribute to almost a hundred years of bilateral relations.

I pay tribute also to the United Nations University, a pinnacle of academic excellence. I am honoured to address this highly respected institution.

I last visited Japan during the successful Olympic Winter Games five years ago. The Olympic torch had been passed to Nagano from the Norwegian town of Lillehammer, which hosted the Games in 1994.

I was impressed with the Nagano Games. The people of Japan created a true Olympic spirit. People of all nationalities and faiths came together in peace, with respect for fundamental human values. That is the very symbol of what we seek to achieve. That is the goal of all peacemaking efforts.

The quest for peace and security is our common, principal challenge – a challenge in which all responsible nations should come together across the boundaries of nation and culture. This quest for peace and security is a key element in the relations between Norway and Japan. There is no prouder objective.

The great Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw once said, "peace is not only better than war, but infinitely more arduous."

In this spirit, my countryman, the scientist, diplomat, politician and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Fridtjof Nansen became a symbol of the Norwegian humanitarian tradition and work for peace. Nansen's sense of international responsibility arose from the chaos that followed the First World War and the Russian Bolshevik revolution. Nansen's empathy combined with a practical, hands-on attitude that made him an efficient problem-solver in the most extreme circumstances.

The soul of Fridtjof Nansen's work was his compassionated creativity and his ability to find unconventional solutions. He is a source of inspiration to us all.

Today, we seek to live up to his example.

In my Government, we seek to promote ethics and fundamental values as a core of day-to-day politics. This we seek, also, to reflect in our approach to the wider world.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The challenges to peace that we face in the twenty-first century have their roots in the situation after the end of the cold war. Yet, with history as our guide, we know that many conflicts trace their origins much further back in time.

Since the 1990s, we have witnessed a large number of conflicts that have been a threat to regional stability. Apparent "internal" conflicts are seldom any longer confined to one nation.

These conflicts have led to widespread suffering, to the loss of human lives and to continued poverty in large areas that were already poverty-stricken.

Poverty, war and suffering are breeding grounds for international terrorism. In total, they represent the main challenge to our common security.

To promote peace, a wide range of means needs to be put into action.

To promote peace is an international responsibility. We need alliances and partners to play reinforcing roles to reach common goals. No individual country is strong enough to bring about peace alone. No individual country carries the political support or the economic strength to shoulder that responsibility.

By working together, we can be stronger and more persuasive.

The United Nations has been a cornerstone of my country's foreign

policy since the organization's foundation some 60 years ago. Norway is firmly committed to multilateralism. It makes me proud to say that few countries can match Norway's commitment to the United Nations. It is in our very own national interest to promote international co-operation based on the principles of rules of behaviour that are equal and binding to all.

The United Nations University in Tokyo is a monument to Japan's commitment to these same ideals, and to the importance of the United Nations.

We must continue to strengthen the United Nations. We must continue to strengthen the UN's ability to deal with peace and security. Peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict prevention must remain key functions of the UN in this century.

A key challenge is to consolidate broad political support and the resources needed for the UN to undertake its complex tasks.

We cannot consider challenges to peace without discussing the situation in Iraq. The evil regime of Saddam Hussein has been brought down by the American-led coalition. There were differing views as to the legitimacy of the campaign, but there are no differing views as to the outcome: We all welcome the rapid fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. The fall of his regime is a building block for a safer world community.

Saddam Hussein's defeat has paved the way for a new way of life for the Iraqi people. After decades of tyranny and misrule, civil society must be rebuilt from scratch. We – the international community – must do our utmost to assist in the restoration of law and order and the construction of democratic institutions.

This is the final test of our commitment: That the people of Iraq can decide their own destiny and live in peace with all countries of the region.

The road to stabilization and reconstruction in Iraq is still a long one. It is a road strewn with obstacles. Therefore, reconstruction must start immediately.

We have noted with satisfaction Japan's strong commitment. Norway also seeks to contribute, as is our duty to the world community. My Government has allocated close to 60 million dollars in humanitarian assistance and transitional development aid to Iraq.

We all welcome that the Member States of the United Nations Security Council unanimously supported a resolution drawing up the way

forward for the engagement of the international community in Iraq. Norway has consistently emphasized the significance of the UN playing a central role in Iraq. The decision by the Security Council ensures such a role. We are pleased with the decision of the Council to lift the sanctions against Iraq.

Norway has underlined the significance of establishing a representative authority by the Iraqi people as quickly as possible. This view is reflected in the resolution by the Security Council.

The Council has urged the international community to contribute to stability and security in Iraq. The stabilization force should be firmly anchored in a binding decision by the Security Council. Norway will contribute to the stabilization force in Iraq.

In Iraq's reconstruction, we must maintain a flexible attitude. We must draw on past experiences. We must work together to ensure that our efforts coincide with the larger good. And, we must avoid debilitating competition between organizations and initiatives.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Afghanistan remains, alas, a key challenge.

Japan has played an admirable role in Afghanistan's reconstruction. The ministerial conference in Tokyo last year was no less than an international milestone. The conference pledged a total of 4,500 million dollars in aid over five years.

Time has come to make good on our promises. We must act with a long-term perspective. Only in this way can peace be sustained in that most complicated of countries, among the ancient groups of nationalities of Afghanistan.

Security is key among our challenges. Safety and security cannot be ensured by armed forces alone. Broad security requires effective policing and a functioning judicial system. If reconstruction is to succeed, security is essential.

Norway and Japan have both demonstrated a commitment to a better future for the people of Afghanistan. Japan is the lead country in the efforts to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate former combatants. Japan's impressive financial commitment of 500 million dollars over two-and-a-half years was an expression of solidarity with the Afghan people and the international effort.

As chair of the Afghanistan Support Group in 2002, my Government greatly appreciated the close co-operation of the Government of Japan.

But the road ahead is long. The humanitarian situation continues to be difficult. For Afghanistan to become a stable and well-governed country, sustained international support will be required. We must not lose focus and not be disheartened. We must keep up our support. We must continue to be present when the media has turned its attention elsewhere.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As for decades in the past, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict clouds the horizon of international peace and stability.

The conflict is a tragedy for the peoples of Israel and the Palestinian areas. It is a burden and a cause for unrest in the region. It is also a challenge to the world community at large.

The breakdown of the Middle East peace process in the last several years has been a bitter experience. It has disillusioned the Israelis and the Palestinians as well as the international community. Yet, it has taught us certain lessons:

First, from the start of the Oslo process in the early 1990s onwards, there should have been a system for monitoring both parties' adherence to the agreements. The Quartet of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and the Russian Federation have learned that lesson. They are now working to support the implementation of the Road Map for Peace that was recently presented to the parties.

Equally important, the end result – a Palestinian state in 2005, living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security – is now clearly stated.

The second lesson must be that, at the time of the signing of the Declaration of Principles in 1993, the leaders were ahead of their peoples. There was a lack of a wider political dialogue among Israelis, among Palestinians, and between the two communities. There should have been a massive campaign of promotion and education. Although there were efforts that were supported by Norway and by other countries, I believe both sides could and should have done much more.

A third lesson is that there is a strong need for sustained involvement by the international community. The Quartet, and in particular the United States, has taken on a significant mission. This I welcome. The implementation of the Road Map is key.

Norway, for her part, will continue to support the process through the chairmanship of the ad hoc liaison committee of major international donors to the Palestinian areas. In this work, I pay tribute to Japan's perseverance, vision and generosity.

A fourth lesson to be learned from the breakdown of previous Middle East peace efforts is that to support a political process is a decision with long-term implications. We will have no credibility in any peace process if we pull out the moment difficulties arise.

We must continue to be involved. We must emphasize co-existence, human rights and economic development as core elements of any settlement. And we must carry on the work for as long as it takes. We must remind both sides, repeatedly, that only a peaceful outcome will be accepted.

With such lessons fresh in our minds, Norway and Japan are engaged in efforts to contribute to peace and security in several other areas of the world.

In the rich and bountiful island state of Sri Lanka, Norway has supported the peace process since 1998 as an impartial, third-party facilitator. The two parties, the Government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers, invited us to play such a role.

As a facilitator, Norway's task is to assist the parties in their efforts to reach a political solution. Our role is not to impose a solution upon them.

The Sri Lanka peace process has made substantial progress since the parties entered into a cease-fire agreement in February last year. The parties have held six sessions of peace negotiations since September, focusing on four interrelated tracks. The aim is to consolidate security, address humanitarian and reconstruction needs in the war-devastated areas, develop the elements of a political solution, and build trust. Such elements are, indeed, key to reaching a lasting peace agreement.

The parties have agreed on the basic principles of a political solution. They are working systematically towards giving these principles a practical expression. However, the process of reaching and implementing a final settlement is complicated. It will, again, take time. It will, again, demand our continued commitment.

Further political progress depends on the creation of a tangible peace dividend. Only such visible progress will help show the entire Sri Lankan

population the benefits of peace.

The parties in Sri Lanka continue to work in partnership to identify priorities for assistance. Despite the current pause in political talks, both parties are committed to a negotiated solution. Both parties are working to ensure that aid reaches the war-affected populations. The parties will need the continued, active support of the international community to reach their ultimate goal.

Norway is committed to assist the parties as a patient partner. Many other governments are also providing significant assistance to the process.

Japan is an active supporter of this peace process. Your close relations with Sri Lanka are critical in the support of building the peace and reconstructing the country after twenty dismal years of internal conflict.

Japan's commitment to use economic assistance to support conflict resolution is most timely for the Sri Lanka peace process. The Japanese Government has taken a lead role in advising the joint committee of the parties on assistance to the war-affected areas.

Japan has taken a highly significant initiative: The Japanese Government will arrange a donor conference to secure substantial international funding for reconstruction and development in Sri Lanka. Continued Japanese support, and sustained donor commitment, is critical to success.

I welcome and look forward to a continued close dialogue between Norway and Japan on developments in Sri Lanka.

For any process to be successful, it is essential that the neutral facilitator take fully into account the fragility of progress and the sensitivities of the parties. We must treat the parties on equal terms. We must take into account their different needs and concerns.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I deeply regret the recent developments in Aceh in Indonesia. The people of this conflict-ridden province deserve peace. The situation cannot be allowed to escalate further.

I strongly urge the parties, within the framework of the territorial integrity of Indonesia, to seek a peaceful solution. An agreed-upon peace is the only way forward.

The Government of Norway has given financial support to the peace process facilitated by the Henry Dunant Centre. We stand ready to provide

further support to the parties.

Japan took an admirable initiative when hosting a donor conference for Aceh in late 2002. The international community must deliver on its promises made in Tokyo.

For years, I have been personally committed to working for peace and reconciliation in Burma.

International attention continues to be as important as ever. My Government and I seek to be proactive. Several paths have been explored in the search for a constructive dialogue with the Burmese authorities.

Critically, the international community must pursue a coherent approach towards freedom and democracy in Burma.

Japan is importantly placed to play a constructive role. Your minister of foreign affairs was the first representative of a G8 country to visit Burma after Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest a year ago. Her release raised hopes that, to this day, have not been redeemed.

At the United Nations conference in Tokyo hosted by the Government of Japan earlier this year, the need to establish a Burmese dialogue was reaffirmed. A comprehensive approach, as proposed by Japan, would meet the need for political change, for economic reform and for humanitarian action.

Finally, let me move to Africa: the most poverty-stricken and conflict-ridden region of the world. As Iraq, Afghanistan and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict tend to dominate our outlook, Norwegian development assistance continues to focus primarily on this continent.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, or TICAD. I am pleased to note that TICAD III will be taking place at the beginning of October here in Tokyo. TICAD has helped keep Africa's development needs on the international agenda. The conference this autumn will be a significant event at a time when the newly established African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development initiative are taking shape.

It is a deplorable fact that a number of areas throughout Africa continue to be dangerous places in which to live. Millions of Africans still live in conditions of extreme insecurity and poverty. The process towards peace and prosperity has not advanced as we all had hoped for.

Our common commitment is crucial in Africa, also. Yet, regional leaders must show that they have the political will – the political will to bring about peace.

The situation is not all hopeless. In Sudan, progress is being made. Norway has, for a number of years, sought to support the peace process.

It is high time that this civil war is brought to an end after 20 years. Two million people have lost their lives. Four-and-a-half million people are internally displaced. A huge number of people are refugees in other countries.

The talks headed by regional leaders have led to substantial progress towards peace in Sudan. I share the hope expressed by the leaders of the two parties that a peace agreement can be signed by the end of June.

Norway has been working with other nations to support the process and monitor the steps that are taken towards a cease-fire and to secure humanitarian access. The international community will have a decisive role in assisting the parties in their implementation of a peace agreement.

I commend Japan in setting a good example by her active support for the peace process and respect for human rights in Sudan.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Peace is not only better than war, but can often seem infinitely more difficult.

Despite the challenges, our experience is that resolutions can be achieved even in deep-rooted conflicts when the involved parties and the international community combine forces and move decisively. A consolidated international community must isolate the enemies of peace. Indeed, they must be won over.

The United Nations is responsible for international peace and security and must remain the driving force. We must continue to support the UN and make full use of the organization as a political and operational instrument.

Above and beyond that, countries such as Norway and Japan must continue to support individual peace processes where the UN, for a variety of reasons, cannot play a role. Individual countries and organizations can offer useful advice and contribute to creative solutions where other efforts have not produced results.

In 1963, shortly before his death by an assassin's bullet, President

Kennedy said “a more practical, more attainable peace [must be] based not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution in human institutions.” Peace must be built, he continued, “on a series of concrete actions and effective agreements which are in the interest of all concerned. There is no single, simple key to this peace, no grand or magic formula to be adopted by one or two powers. Genuine peace must be the product of many nations, the sum of many acts. It must be dynamic, not static, changing to meet the challenge of each new generation. For peace is a process, a way of solving problems.”

Forty years later, I join President Kennedy in that committed analysis.

My Government and my country look forward to continued, close co-operation with Japan. Together, and with partners in the international community, we do not shrink from the challenges of peace and reconciliation. To the contrary, we welcome these challenges.

Mr. Bondevik's Biography

Kjell Magne Bondevik was born on 3 September 1947, in Molde in the County of Møre and Romsdal. He is married to Bjørg Bondevik and has three children.

Mr. Bondevik is a theological candidate from Norway's Free Faculty of Theology in 1975. In 1979 he was ordained as priest in the (Lutheran) Church of Norway.

Mr. Bondevik was Prime Minister 1997–2000, Minister of Foreign Affairs 1989–1990, Minister of Church and Education 1983–1986, Deputy Prime Minister 1985–1986, and State Secretary at the Office of the Prime Minister 1972–1973.

Mr. Bondevik has been a member of the Storting (Parliament), for the County of Møre og Romsdal, since 1973, and was previously a deputy member 1969–1973. He was his party's parliamentary leader 1981–1983, 1986–1989, 1993–1997, 1997 and 2000–2001. He was member of the Storting's standing committee on foreign affairs 2000–2001, 1993–1997 and 1986–1989, the standing committee on defence affairs 1990–1993, the standing committee on finance 1977–1983 and the standing committee on church and education 1973–1977.

Mr. Bondevik was leader of the Christian Democratic Party 1983–1995, leader of the party's youth organization 1970–1973, and deputy leader 1968–1970. In 1972–1973 he was a member of the municipal council and the school board of Nesodden in the County of Akershus.

Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik holds an honorary doctor of law degree from Suffolk University in Boston, USA (2000); an honorary doctor of politics degree from Wonkwang University Seoul, Republic of Korea (2000); and an honorary doctor of philosophy degree from Kyung Hee University in Seoul, Republic of Korea (2002).

Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lectures

Dr. Astrid Noklebye Heiberg, former president of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, delivered the 1998 Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture on “*The Humanitarian Challenge in a World of Conflict: The Plight of Land-Mine Victims*,” 4 November 1998.

Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), delivered the 1999 Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture on “*Preparing for the Worst: Can We Give Hope to Victims in Complex Emergencies?*” on 17 November 1999.

Mrs. Sadako Ogata, former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, delivered the 2001 Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture on “*State Security – Human Security*,” on 12 December 2001.

Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Prime Minister of Norway, delivered the 2003 Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture on “*Challenges to Peace and Reconciliation in the Twenty-first Century*,” on 27 May 2003.

The African Renaissance: South Africa and the World, by Thabo Mbeki, Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa (presentation: April 1998), 1998

The Declaration of Human Rights: A Living Document, by Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (presentation: January 1998), 1998

The Humanitarian Challenge in a World of Conflict: The Plight of Land-mine Victims, Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture 1998, by Astrid Nøklebye Heiberg, President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (presentation: November 1998), 1999

African Development in the 21st Century, Public Forum on African Development in the 21st Century, by Cassim Chilumpha, Minister of Finance of the Republic of Malawi; and Delphin G. Rwegasira, Executive Director, African Economic Research Consortium (presentation: October 1998), 1999

Donor Coordination and the Effectiveness of Development Assistance, by Hisashi Owada, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations; Joseph Stiglitz, Senior Vice President, The World Bank; Patrizio Civili, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations; and Carol Bellamy, Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (presentation: June 1999), 1999

Preparing for the Worst: Can We Give Hope to Victims in Complex Emergencies?, Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture 1999, by Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director-General, World Health Organization (presentation: November 1999), 2000

State Security – Human Security, Fridtjof Nansen Memorial Lecture 2001, by Sadako Ogata, Former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (presentation: December 2001), 2002

How Can the Impoverishment of the Poorest Countries Be Stopped?, by Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of UNCTAD (presentation: November 2002), 2003

The Future of Higher Education in Japan, by Dr. Akito Arima, former Minister of Education of Japan and former President of the University of Tokyo (presentation: December 2002), 2003

