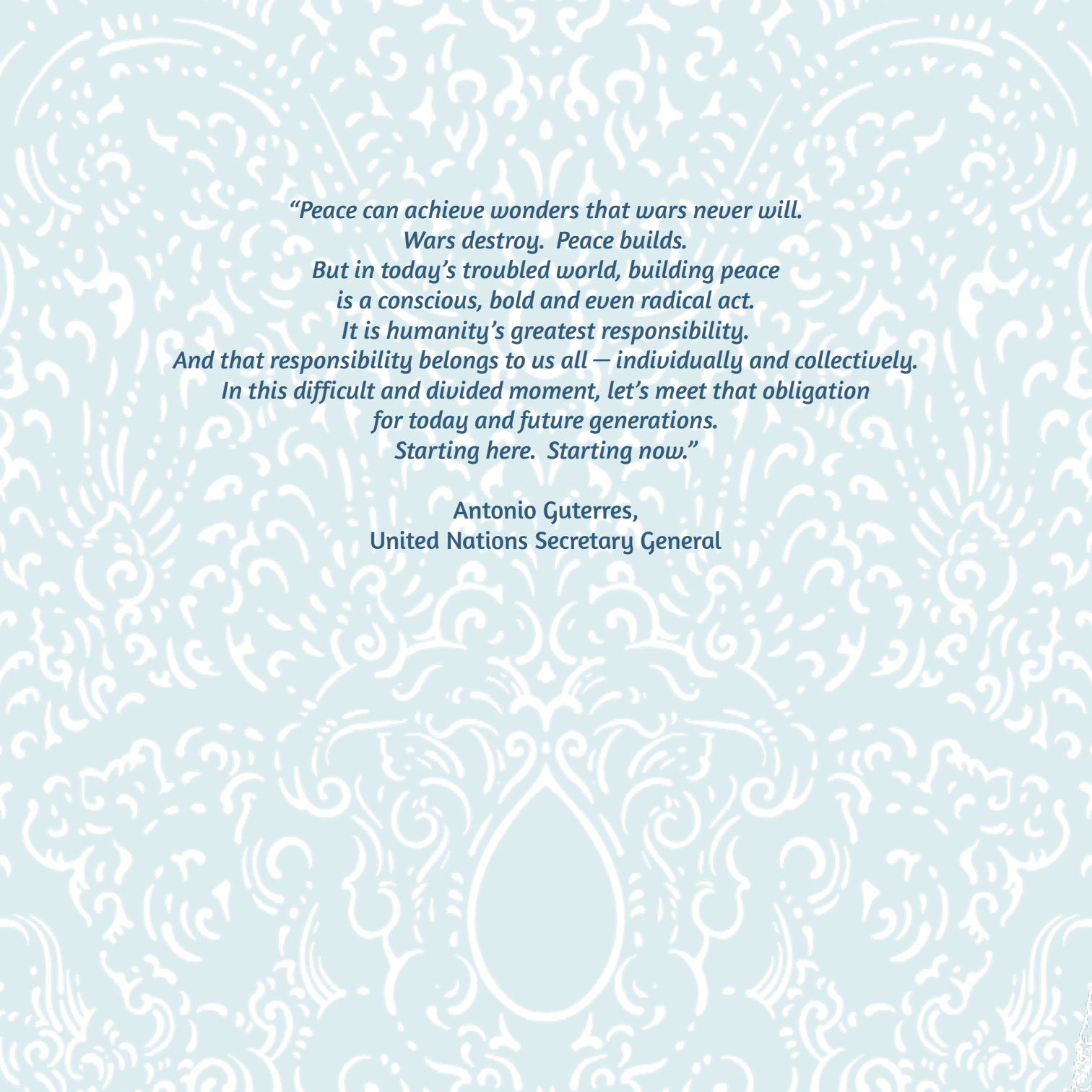




BRAHMA KUMARIS
at the United Nations

Time and Transformation:
**The Moment
We're In**





*“Peace can achieve wonders that wars never will.
Wars destroy. Peace builds.
But in today’s troubled world, building peace
is a conscious, bold and even radical act.
It is humanity’s greatest responsibility.
And that responsibility belongs to us all — individually and collectively.
In this difficult and divided moment, let’s meet that obligation
for today and future generations.
Starting here. Starting now.”*

**Antonio Guterres,
United Nations Secretary General**

Foundational Awareness Sustaining Transformation (FAST)





he United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Agenda promises two things, universality, and transformation. Universality has been explained, but to date no definition of transformation has been offered.

As an non-governmental organization (NGO) with consultative status to the UN, we have committed to bringing our expertise, which is spiritual, to the secular contexts in which the UN serves. Our reflections in this paper are intended to offer a spiritual perspective on what the UN, with its unparalleled convening power, might do to inspire a new order of transformation in this fragile time.

True transformation is a spiritual process. The inner world and outer world are parts of the same wheel of life. For the outer state of the world to be transformed,



the inner state of the world must first be transformed. If peace is to be attained, we must start with inner peace. If world stability is needed, we must start by cultivating inner stability. If corruption is to be eliminated, we must eradicate corruption from our minds and souls returning to our original nature of peace and nonviolence.

We know that every expression of human beings is rooted in the subtle level of awareness, which in turn affects the attitude, vision and then words and actions. The quality of each word and action can be traced back to the inner state of awareness one had when the action was taken. Many understand this in the context of the philosophy of karma, of individual and collective action. It follows then, that the world we have is the world created by the collective thoughts, words, and actions of the 8 billion human beings on earth. So, transformation of this world must start in the souls of human beings.

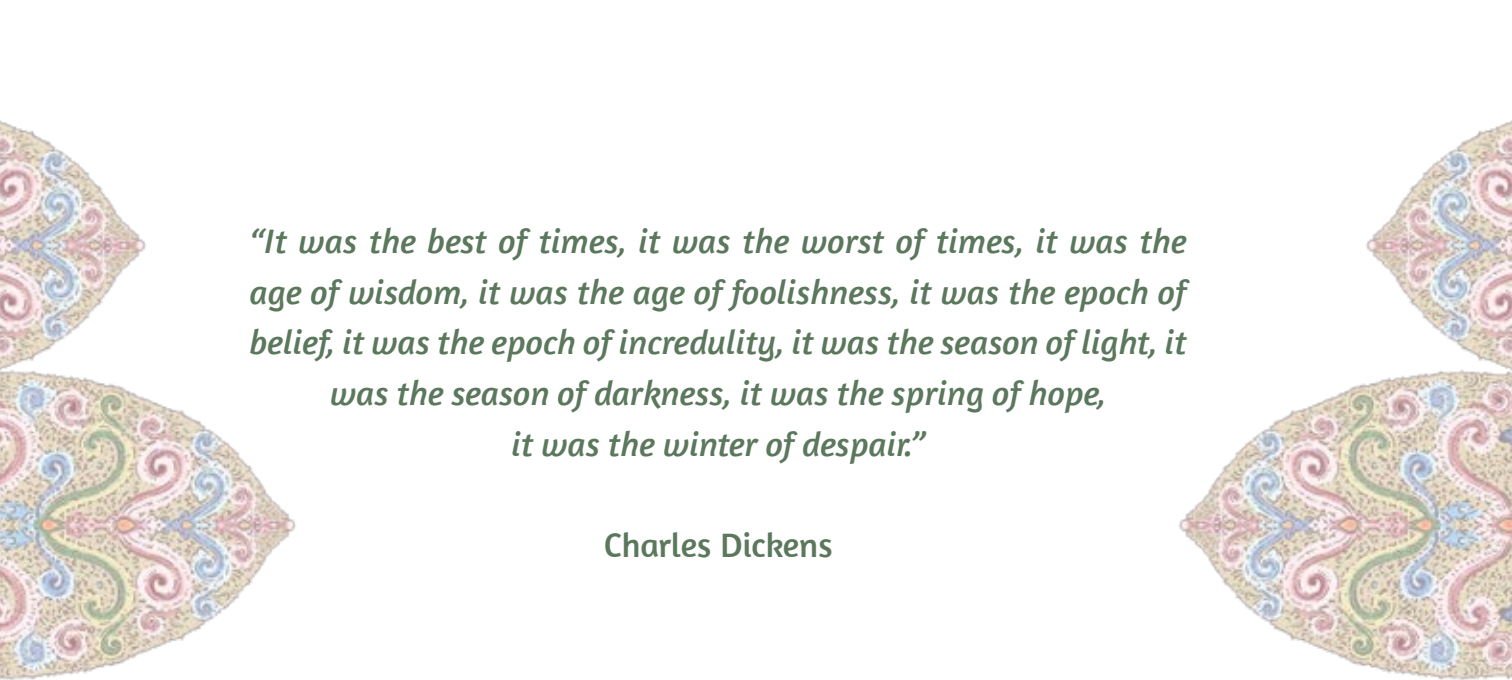
Real transformation is not just a change in surface appearances. It is deep transformation in the subtle inner form that causes change in the outer material form. It's what we witness in the classic metaphor of the caterpillar's transformation in the cocoon into a butterfly. While change may happen on the surface, better treaties, greater financial investment and so on, real transformation happens on the inside, with deeper understanding among opposing parties, for example, and generosity of spirit.



Confluence:

The Meeting of an Age of Darkness
and an Age of Light



Four decorative mandala patterns are positioned in the corners of the page. Each mandala is a complex, symmetrical design with a central point from which various colored lines (red, blue, green, yellow) radiate outwards, forming intricate swirls and floral-like shapes. The patterns are set against a light beige background.

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.”

Charles Dickens

We find ourselves in a time of setbacks and disappointment. The confidence and conviction we used to have about the future has given way to uncertainty and worry.

Our old methods — resolutions, treaties, and armed interventions — haven’t improved the state of the world and we can see that applying the same instruments we’ve tried in the past will not be adequate in these times. Trying to repair the old world has exhausted our energy and created despair. The light in the world is growing dim, and we are longing for a miracle.

The knowledge base of the Brahma Kumaris explains that this is an auspicious and benevolent time, the confluence of an old era with a new one. The transformation that takes place at the Confluence Age, happens because the eternal Source, God, connects with human beings igniting a new age of peace and truth. For human beings to be touched by God, we must transcend the notion of ourselves as only material beings and attune to our subtle inner consciousness, the living spark that gives life to the human being. In this subtle consciousness we are closest to God and can experience God's purifying and transformative current.

In this fortunate age, we experience three subtle movements occurring simultaneously: the creation of something new, the sustenance of the new creation and the destruction of the old. Creation is the most subtle of these movements, a new awareness, a new day breaking in the world. Sustenance is the support



and reinforcement of this dawning awareness. To experience these subtle energies of creation and sustenance requires stillness and a heightened focus on what is emerging in our consciousness. Destruction of the old is the most gross and visible of the energies, the falling away of that which has lost its integrity, its truth, and its strength. Much of the old is no longer relevant for a new era.

These three dynamics are taking place within the consciousness of human beings and on the stage of the world. Those with the ability to sense both the explicit evidence of an old world in breakdown and the emergent inner growth of a new era of peace and truth will engage with the transformation taking place and experience “the spring of hope” that Dickens refers to.



The Call of the Time





“We all have within us a center of stillness surrounded by silence. This house [the UN], dedicated to work and debate in the service of peace, should have one room dedicated to silence in the outward sense and stillness in the inner sense . . . It has been the aim to create in this small room a place where the doors may be open to the infinite lands of thought and prayer . . . ”

Dag Hammarskjöld, second Secretary General of the United Nations, and creator of the Meditation Room at the UN.

Though the spectacle and fragmentation of the outer world pulls our attention, much of it is the playing out of history that was set in motion long ago. When we turn our attention away from this breakdown and shine a light inside, we begin to sense the emergence of something fresh and original that signals a new order, and we are moved to sustain this creation. The emergence of a new future starts inside individuals. And while the UN is a collection of nation states, each nation state is guided by the highest aspirations of its people. Many who are working in service of peace are

feeling pulled to this “center of stillness surrounded by silence” that Hammarskjöld alluded to. They are feeling touched by God and called to a deeper truth.

For over two decades the Brahma Kumaris have been convening thoughtful people in positions of influence in all fields to explore our collective wisdom, including some from the UN community. We began in 1998 with dialogues on the “Call-of-the-Time,” which included periods of silent reflection. Some of our thinking about topics on the UN agenda emerged from these dialogues.

Over these years, we sent delegations to the UN Conference of Parties (COP) on climate change to discuss topics such as *Consciousness and Climate Change*. We created journals that included articles on how delegates, given an opportunity to prepare themselves in silence, might produce different outcomes in treaty negotiations such as the one that



produced the Kyoto Protocol. We supported work in poverty that was grounded in prosperity of spirit and work with women starting with the feminine qualities of inclusion and care as they manifest in both men and women.

More recently we have created *Experiments in Silence*, offering spaces over more extended periods of time to experiment with different methods of heightening inner awareness, encouraging enlightened conscience and seeing the world as a whole system rather than as separate silos. There is still much to do in these domains of silence and stillness to reset the agenda for the future we all want. We encourage everyone to strengthen their own reflective practice, and we welcome a chance to partner with others on *Experiments in Silence* to support a higher order of transformation in the vast global network of the UN towards a new age of peace and truth.

Women as Spiritual Leaders





CREATING COMMUNITIES OF GREATNESS

“What we need at this time is not for one person to be great, but to create communities of greatness.”

Dadi Janki

The Brahma Kumaris was established in 1936 in Hyderabad Sindh, in undivided India. From its inception the founder, Brahma Baba, recognized the latent attributes of women and provided an environment where women and girls were nurtured as leaders and were placed in positions of authority. A group of young women were selected as trustees to lay a foundation for the organization. They became change-agents; the catalyst to attract other women, building a community of both women and men of about 300 aspiring world servers.

This evolutionary community came together at a time when women were regarded as second-class citizens, a conditioning reinforced by cultural norms and religious beliefs. To break this formidable conditioning, the young women went through a deeply spiritual process of self-transformation. The foundational principle of their transformation was the recognition of their inherent quality of divinity, trust in God, faith in the self, and an incredible bond of love and friendship with each other.

For fourteen years (1936–1950), they engaged in this process that moved them from a consciousness of powerlessness to women of authority (shakti), from oppression to liberation and from being voiceless and vulnerable to having equality and strength.

They spearheaded the early growth of the organization, first to a national presence in India, and then to an international movement serving on many global platforms.



The model of altruistic service they learnt made them into selfless leaders and is the legacy that continues to inspire the succeeding generations of the Brahma Kumaris. They served with selfless love, courage and compassion, purity of heart and intent, and with a commitment to manifesting the intrinsic value of all people.

Their lives were distinguished by the same principles they stood for in the world; their inner life and their outer life were completely integrated. Their approach was always one of mutual respect creating partnerships of equality between men and women.

Today with a presence in over 120 countries and with a membership of well over a million embracing all genders, cultures and races, it is the largest spiritual organization led by women.





Kayon

The Kayon is a profound spiritual symbol in Indonesian culture - a reminder of life's dualities, cycles, and interconnectedness. Whether in art performances or ritual ceremonies, it encourages reflection on universal truths, personal transformation, and the pursuit of harmony between the divine, nature, and humanity.



*"I believe that spirituality is the only light source
that can guide humanity on the right path."*

Droupadi Murmu,
President of India

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU), with its spiritual headquarters in Mt. Abu, India, comprises a worldwide network of centers in 120 countries. It is an international non-governmental organization of the United Nations accredited with General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); Associate Status with the Department of Global Communications; Observer Status to the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP; Observer Organization to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

OFFICE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

Suite 436
866, UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
U.S.A.

Tel.: +1-212-688-1335
Fax.: +1-212-504-2798
bk@un.brahmakumaris.org

SPIRITUAL HEADQUARTERS

Pandav Bhawan
Mount Abu 307501
Rajasthan
India

Tel.: +91-2974-238261
Fax.: +91-2974-238952
abu@bkivv.org

INT. COORDINATING OFFICE

Global Cooperation House
65-69 Pound Lane
London NW10 2HH
U.K.

Tel.: +44-20-8727-3350
Fax.: +44-20-8727-3351
london@brahmakumaris.org

