

## **GANDHIAN PHILOSOPHY OF NON-VIOLENCE AND NEW WORLD ORDER**

Dr. Sunil Kumar<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Former Research scholar in Department of Political Science in  
Central University of Haryana, India

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### **ABSTRACT**

Gandhi was a persuasive leader, and a humanitarian, passionately who was purely dedicated to save the humanity. Though much discussion of Gandhi since his death has focused on his efforts to free India from British rule, it is important to realize that Gandhi's philosophy extended far beyond national- borders, inspiring movements around the world. In this backdrop, the present paper aims to focus on the relevance of Gandhian approach for resolving social and political conflicts with a particular objective to promote world peace and security. His legacy lives on, and his ideas still inspire movements and spark debates. As today the world is facing a number of greatest questions such as the implications of self-determination, humanitarian interventions, terrorism, environmental hazardous and the questionable effectiveness of international institutions in addressing inequalities among nations, Gandhi's philosophy provides a challenging perspective.

**Keywords:** Non-Violence, Peace, Cooperation, Security, Developing.

### **GANDHIAN MODEL FOR PEACE**

In the discipline of international relations, world peace is defined as the absence of any type of military threat from outside the sovereign territory of a state. It denotes cooperation and understanding among all nations across the globe so that people enjoy a happy life and derive all advantages from modern science. From this perspective, world peace is inclusive in nature which incorporates human security in terms of health, education and economy along with environmental and military security. This perspective shows the importance and relevance of Gandhian philosophy. Ghandian world order model is entirely different form the existing world order approaches like Marxian approach, Liberal approach, etc. Liberal model is based on J.S.

Mill's 'economic man' and Adam Smith's 'Invisible hand'. This model generates political power concentration in some people of society and social as well as economic inequalities.

<sup>i</sup>Realists argue that balance of power would reduce conflicts and manage disparities in power. Intervention in the affairs of other states is not justified unless it is necessary for the intervening state's survival. In other words, the nation state system is the best alternative because it helps to maintain international peace and security.<sup>ii</sup>

Similarly Marxist models focus on "class struggle" "abolition of property" and finally a stateless and classless society through violent revolution in the world. Marxism degenerates the individual into a mere machine made for production, thus negates individual and individualism. Marxist world order model imagines the establishment of peaceful and equitable world order through violent means.<sup>iii</sup>

Gandhi rejects the "materialistic and state-centric models," based on violence, exploitation and inhuman perceptions. Unlike the existing theories of capitalism or communism, Gandhi did not consider man separate from the society and world; rather he called human being as integral part of world order. Gandhi did not concern himself much about global problems. However, the occasional remarks he made about international affairs together with an extension of the implications of his utterance in the domestic context reveal a fairly clear global order he had projected. Gandhian world order essentially aims at developing a culture of peace, whereby human beings would be able to curb aggressiveness and prepared to follow a policy of peaceful coexistence or at least a policy of non-military global competition. Gandhi focused on the unresolved problems of international relations.

## **BASED ON NON-VIOLENCE**

The search for peace, according to Gandhi, should be in the way of non-violence alone. Gandhi in fact advised to mobilize millions of people for non-violent resolution of conflicts and for the establishment of world peace. Gandhian concept of non-violence postulates positive relationship between man and man, man and nature, man and society and society and society. Human values are to be promoted and nurtured so as to develop feelings among the people that they are not citizen of one specific country rather citizens of the whole world.<sup>iv</sup> Gandhi has presented non-violence in a new form and shape before the world. The form of his non-violence is no escape or exile but resistance. He marched forward using non-violence as the best weapon to encounter immorality for morality, inhumanity for humanity and injustice for justice. His objective was to create a society based on the principle of non-violence, where alone man's freedom would be safe and mankind would be free from repression and tyranny, whereby peaceful social life is ensured.<sup>v</sup> There are tasks that need to be undertaken on a continual basis at different levels.

Humanity is passing through a very difficult period. Violence and terrorism have become the catch words of international politics. After the 9/11 attacks on World Trade centre and Pentagon, there is increasing realization that existing military solutions are inadequate to provide security to the people concerned. People all over the world are living in constant fear and insecurity. This precarious situation and the futility of the weapons of mass destruction in ensuring peace prompt one to think about non-violent methods.<sup>vi</sup> Violence has become a cult in the world since the early twentieth century. More than 20 million people have been killed in around 150 wars since 1945. Even the domestic violence has increased tremendously. We are living under the shadow of violence and no life is safe on this earth. The developed countries in the name of national security spend around twenty times as much on military expenditure as they provided for economic aid. 70 percent of the world military spending is by six major military powers, 15 percent is by other industrialized countries and remaining 15 percent is by the developing countries. The progress in areas like health, education and housing is slowed by the diversion of precious human resources for national security, military purposes and in combating terrorism, and separatist movements. In this backdrop, there is relevance of Gandhian approach for resolving social and political conflicts with a particular objective to promote world peace and security.<sup>vii</sup>

Gandhian world order model presented a blueprint of the peaceful, just, and egalitarian world free of violence and exploitation. It is a critique of all the existing world order approaches and models and a fundamental departure. It comprehends individual as basic unit of bringing transformation in existing order. Besides, it is totally non-materialistic and non-exploitative in nature. Forsaking war as a solution to any international problem, Gandhi considered that “war could never end wars. Violence breeds only violence but can never end violence. War is destructive and peace is constructive. They are opposite to each other.” But Gandhi had firm belief in the power of peace as he said that “peace is a positive force of cementing people. The search for peace, according to Gandhi, should be in the way of non-violence alone.<sup>viii</sup> Gandhi, indeed, considered economic equality as the “master-key” to non-violent world order. Peace must have its roots in fraternity rather than in fear. He considered that global peace could not be possible unless the present world social order is replaced by a new social order that would be committed to non-violence and exploitation free social order. Gandhi held that peace for the sake of peace is a meaningless social goal unless it is linked to social equality, economic justice and human rights. He states that a hungry man cannot be fed with philosophy. Therefore, peace can only be achieved by changing the social conditions of toiling masses all over the world. He never considered peace as the absence of conflict, but the ability to cope with it. Since peace begins in our minds and hearts, moral regeneration of individuals on the one hand and an equitable social order on the other are necessary requirements for achieving global peace.<sup>ix</sup>

## **MEANS TO SUSTAIN PEACE**

Gandhi prescribed three other important concepts in his blueprint for durable peace: internationalism, world government and disarmament. For Gandhi, nationalism was an essential prerequisite of internationalism. Nationalism was not narrow or exclusive in Gandhi's mind, nor inherently dangerous. It was greed and selfishness that caused nationalism to get out of hand and threaten international cooperation. In Gandhi's world, healthy nationalism was essential in creating a spirit of international understanding. Gandhi was not concerned that internationalism would threaten national identity, for he believed true internationalism only functions if nations maintain their individuality while working together.<sup>x</sup> The second component for peace was a world government, preceded by a world government. The government would be based on voluntary interdependence. The first step to further integration would be the freedom of exploited nations and once this was accomplished with India leading the way, a World State could replace the federation. The World State "takes its place in which all the states of the world are free and equal ... no state has its military." It would be composed of one central governing body, and while it retained no permanent army, if required, it would have a police force during the transition period to complete the nonviolent evolution towards the World State. Gandhi supported for unilateral disarmament as one of the most important steps towards global peace. His world order was aimed at free from arms race. He wanted to achieve universal disarmament through unilateral disarmament. He perceived nuclear threat as the worst threat for the existence of humanity after witnessing devastation at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Gandhi emphasised on beginning of arms reduction by any state willingly and unilaterally. He considered that unilateral approach of disarmament is the only realistic way to achieve disarmament in present world order. Besides, Gandhi proposed renouncement of war by every nation to establish world peace. If any problem arises among nations, then confidence-building measures can be adopted as a means to solve international dispute and maintain peace. Gandhi advocated the settlement of dispute through direct "negotiation between the nations, meditation and arbitration."<sup>xi</sup>

## **REALITY OR UTOPIA**

The Gandhian world order model seems to be very effective, progressive, and productive to bring the desirable change in the existing world order. A number of critics highlighted the gap between theory and application of Gandhian ideas. As it is being charged by some critics that Gandhian perception of individual is too idealistic and unrealistic. Establishing religious harmony and pluralistic society on earth was the great dream of Mahatma Gandhi. But today Religion is becoming a source of conflict and contention among the communities. On a world government, the functioning and the structure of the perceived world federation are not clear as compared to United Nations. Besides, it will be difficult to operate this federation on the sole

basis of nonviolence as guiding principle. It is very difficult to treat all the nations as equals, as differences exist among them on the basis of their economies, size and military power. Voluntary membership also seems to be very idealistic, because it is hard reality of international relations that nothing works on voluntary basis. All nations are governed by their self-interests and not on nonviolence. Similarly, ideas are also not feasible in the present world order, as nations lack faith among them. Boundary and other such disputes do not allow neighbour to adopt policy of unilateral disarmament.

On the basis of above some scholars consider Gandhi as a utopian thinker, because most of his ideas about world order are not pragmatic and imperceptible. They consider his views about individual, society and world are mere collection of impossible thoughts. But Gandhian concept of world order thus is a comprehensive plan of action to change the present world into a peaceful, egalitarian and just global order. Gandhi will continue to be remembered in future for the unparalleled path he has shown to the people all over the world towards the promotion of global peace and a just society. The real task before those who dream a peaceful and non-violence, Gandhi placed before humanity and contributes towards transformation of the existing society into a peaceful non-violent one. This task is a challenging one, but it is worth pursuing.

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<sup>iii</sup> Jonathan Wolff, “Karl Marx”, in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) **The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy**, at, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/marx/> , Accessed on 23/10/2013.

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