

TECHNOLOGY AND PEACE

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Abstract

Development of any society is always associated with its level of technological advancement. The meaning of the word technology is very broad. Technology is a Greek word meaning, the collection of techniques, skills, methods and processes used in the production of goods or services.



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Peace is a state of absence of any conflict, hostility and war. Peace is universally desired and wished by all societies and at all times. True development can be achieved only in a peace-loving society. Positively, peace is a state of tranquility and stillness. Peace in a negative sense means absence of any war or violence. Technology is not good or bad in itself. Technology is only a tool in the hands of the person who uses it. So, technology becomes good or bad depending on the intension and purpose for which it is used. It is only a medium which makes our work much simpler. Knife can be used to cut fruits; the same knife can also be used to kill someone. How technology is used and for what purpose, that makes a big difference, not technology in itself. So, if we want to achieve peace through technology, human brain should be trained, which is the real cause and source of all wars and conflicts. Key words: Technology, peace, development, scarcity, violence, self-sufficiency, defense, arms control, security

Development and prosperity can be achieved only if the environment is peaceful and stable. Peace is a necessary prerequisite to social and economic development. Many regions in the world, experiencing conflicts are cut off from developmental opportunities. We have been witness to the excellent development work by countries and international organizations being destroyed by conflict in a matter of weeks.

Development of any society is always associated with its level of technological advancement. Technology means science of craft. It is derived from the Greek word *technie* meaning, art or skill and Logia meaning science or skill. Technology has become indispensable in our lives over the past decades. The devices of technology are everywhere. They are omnipresent and omniscient in our lives. We depend on them for work, leisure, health, communications, entertainment, transportation, and virtually on all aspects of our living because technology enhances the quality of living, by making it work for us. Often, when we think of Technology, we think in terms of 'high-tech' computers. However, the array of technology includes much more than mechanical convenience in home to sophisticated devices used in health care to support system for space travel. There is a close relationship between technology and society. The interaction of technology and society is one of ends and means. The goals of society are fulfilled by making technology act as the means. Conversely, technology influences the selection of means in achieving the needs of society.

There are innumerable debates over the use of technology, with disagreements over whether technology improves the human condition or worsens it. In a less obvious way,

technologies are vital in creating or maintaining peace in the society. For example, ample provision of food and shelter involves many technologies for agriculture, construction, and transport. Technologies can also be used to support nonviolent action, as in the case of communication systems designed to thwart aggression or surveillance. The human species is distinctive for its tremendous use of tools and technologies. A few other species make limited use of tools, but for humans, living in a society without technology would seem impossible. Technology is used as tools in everything from sticks used for knocking fruit from trees to clothing, roads, and electricity. Probably from the earliest use of tools, humans have used them for inflicting violence, including rocks and pointed sticks to kill animals and, sometimes, to attack other humans. Quite simple tools can be used to inflict horrific violence, and even today some mass killings are carried out largely by clubs and spears. Technology has long been a driver of history. The compass and maritime navigation helped in Colonialism. Reformation may not have happened without the printing press. But, technological growth creates problems as well as solutions. It accelerates the emissions of green house gases and causes disasters in the environment. At the same time, it can help us produce alternative fuels to reduce them. Nuclear power can heat homes as well as destroy nations.

Ironically, the use of ICT to promote conflict has received far more attention than ICT used to promote peace. As noted above, the example of Radio-Television Libre des Mille Collines website has promoted the genocide in Rwanda is one of the best-known. More than just controlling public information, however, a great deal has been written about the use of ICT in modern warfare at every level, right from the use of smart weapons by the modern military to adoption of satellite communications by rebel groups in remote areas, ease of obtaining recipes for explosives on the internet, use of mobile phones as a means of triggering bombs. Militaries rely on communications technology to coordinate their forces, and on computers to control advanced weapons systems. Thus, ICT has been proved to be essential for all aspects of modern warfare. Technology has also created problems. Man power has been replaced by machines. Televisions and other entertainment devices have contributed to the sedentary use of Leisure time. Further, both commercials and regular programs often consist of meaningless or questionable content. Fast- food restaurants serve low nutritional value meals. Like the list of advantages, even its disadvantages have a long list. Technologies have long been used as tools for violence, from clubs and swords to cluster bombs and precision-guided missiles. A bare hand or foot can be used as a weapon, but today the most commonly used weapons are technologies, such as knives, rifles, and bombers. It is true that weapons can be used for nonviolent purposes. For example, a grenade can be used as a paperweight and a fuel-air explosive can be used as a piece of art. It is even possible to caress someone with the barrel of a rifle. But it is far more common to use these technologies to inflict violence; since that is what they were designed for. All technologies are social in the above sense. They are created by humans and used by humans in social contexts. Therefore, in order to understand technologies it is necessary to understand their social contexts, including violence, peace, and conflict.

With agriculture's greater surpluses came the possibility of attacking and subjugating another society in order to control the society and use its surpluses. This situation stimulated the production of weapons of attack and defense. On the other hand, technologies have repeatedly transformed the nature of warfare with the use of the machine gun, armored tank, jeeps, tanks, cannons, ground-launched missiles, battleships, submarines, sea-launched missiles, fighters, bombers and air-launched missiles. Not just these, but also nuclear, chemical, biological, and conventional weapons.

Well quoted by - Dwight Eisenhower in 1953

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, and the hopes of its children. The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 populations. It is two fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is some 50 miles of concrete highway. We pay for a single fighter plane with a half million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people.” (Justin's blog- The reality of war, 2014).

“It would cost about \$30 billion per year to end starvation and hunger around the world. That sounds like a lot of money to us. It would cost about \$11 billion per year to provide the world with clean water. Approximately \$50 billion per year is required to provide the world with both food and water. But we're spending that money on war, which is impoverishing us. The world spends around \$2 trillion every year on militarism, of which the United States spends about half, or \$1 trillion. The effects of war and other violence cost the world trillions more. A study published by the Institute for Economics and Peace found that violence cost the world \$9.46 trillion in 2012 alone. That's 11 percent of gross world product. By comparison, the cost of the financial crisis was just 0.5 percent of the 2009 global economy”.

Peace is more valuable than all kinds of justice. Peace has always been the highest priority of humanity because even the most disadvantageous and unjust peace is always better than, the most just war. Since, wars have always led to destruction; there can never be a good war and bad peace. Sophie Kerr once said, "If peace only had the music and pageantry of war, there'd be no wars." Peace is needed everywhere, and so are celebrations of peace. Sociologist Jane Addams, Nobel Laureate of Peace in 1931 observed that “peace is not merely an absence of war, but the nurture of human life.” Peace is a celebration of our co-existence, a necessity in our collective struggle to survive and flourish, and an acknowledgement of our inter-connections and mutual needs. Peace is recognizing within others the same things that are inside us. Peace is combining the efforts to increase our collective potential.

Peace may be viewed as an opposition to antagonistic conflict, violence, or war. Peace is also seen as a cord of harmony, tranquility and serenity, especially in the East. It is defined as a state of law or civil government, a state of justice or goodness and equilibrium of Powers. Peace is not just the opposite of war. Peace is our natural state, required by the core unit of the family to survive. War is a specific type of failure of human spirit and reason, an illness and a mistake. Though there is little consensus on, 'what is peace'. Pacifists, irenologists and students of international relations accepted peace as, 'an absence of dissension, violence, or war'. Peace is not created with a one-time act: the cease-fire, accord, or reconciliation is just a public point on a timeline between war and durable peace. True peace is built over time, with many different processes and approaches that transform conflict into everlasting peaceful relationships.

Technologies can't create peace. But they can certainly contribute to an environment where people can more easily communicate, understand the current situation, visualize the implications of their actions, understand and become sensitive towards people who are geographically or culturally distant. Thus technology can aid in the peace-building process lead us, towards a world of lasting peace. Some examples of technology aiding in peace- building measures are as follows: (Brian Martin- Technology, Peace and Violence, 1999)

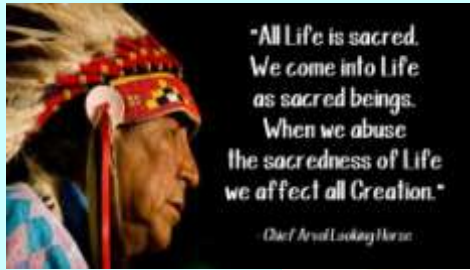
After the Indonesian invasion of East Timor in 1975, the occupying forces tried to prevent any communication with the rest of the world. The Australian government aided this effort by shutting down a radio transmitter in the Northern Territory that was a link to the East Timorese resistance (which included both nonviolent and armed guerrilla components). In 1991, a journalist was able to film some of the brutal actions of the Indonesian military and smuggle a video out of the country. The subsequent worldwide publicity greatly helped the East Timorese cause.

After the Chinese government crushed the prodemocracy movement in Beijing in 1989, it publicized a phone line for citizens to inform on those who were involved in the movement. Prodemocracy supporters were able to communicate with supporters outside China using fax machines, which were not controlled centrally. Numerous callers around the world called the phone line in order to block its use by the Chinese government.

It is widely agreed that preventive action before a conflict is less costly than intervention during or after a conflict, successful prevention remains elusive. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has established a Crisis Prevention and Peace Building area ICTs are also critical tools in peacekeeping operations, including in logistics. Moreover, ICTs can help address the root causes of violent conflict. By promoting access to knowledge, they can promote mutual understanding, an essential factor in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconciliation. ICTs offers ways to reveal human rights abuses, promote transparent governance, gives access to uncensored information and an outlet to air people's grievances and appeal for help. It also helps in creating online portals like Swiss-supported Program on Humanitarian

Policy, and Conflict Research (HPCR) runs a Portal Development Unit, related to conflict issues supported by HPCR is the International Humanitarian Law Research Initiative (IHLRI).

These portals allow access to news articles and resources on the topic of international humanitarian law relevant to situations in ongoing conflicts. Some organizations offer online training in various fields, notably conflict mediation and resolution. A few examples would include: the Geneva Humanitarian Forum, the Network University and the Geneva-based UN University of Peace Institute for Media, Peace and Security which offer online courses, early



Warning and Conflict Prevention.

The technology by itself is no panacea or magic formula. While every technology can be used for good or evil, and no technology is a magic remedy for human problems, understanding the potential and proper use of technologies can allow us to work more effectively and in ways that would not otherwise be possible. There are many different theories of technology. To treat technologies as inherently good or bad is not helpful, since technologies have multiple uses. A more common view is that technologies are neutral. It is true that many technologies can be used for both good and bad purposes, and for different purposes.

Napoleon Bonaparte once noted that "those who have changed the universe have never done it by changing officials, but always by inspiring the people." We should understand that, it is we and not our tools, who are the captains on this living planet. We are a part of Creation, and by breaking the Laws of Creation, we destroy ourselves. We should realize that human life is sacred and by abusing the sacredness of Life we affect all Creation. We are the People of the same Earth united under the same Law of Creator. Concern for all by awakening spiritually is needed. We must work in unity to help Mother Earth heal and bring back balance and harmony for all her children. We should try seeing the universe as a single living of which we are a part.

If we see Our Earth from space, we will discover that, it is the aggregate of all our joy, suffering, religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, creators as well as destroyer of civilization, politician, saints and sinners, in the history of our species have lived on this very EARTH. From space all national boundaries vanish, the conflicts that divide us become less important, and the need to create a planetary society with the united will to protect this humanity reigns supreme. Through the Internet, we can experience The Overview Effect, helping us to create a global awareness, by reminding us that we are all interconnected. We are all astronauts in cyberspace.

According to The Overview Effect: cosmic consciousness and the big picture by Justin - 21st Dec , 2013, The creation of a "global village" through satellite TV and the Internet is still struggling to connect the world into one community in reality. At this critical moment, our greatest need is for a global vision of planetary unity and purpose for humanity as a whole."

Indeed, the only way to solve problems on a global scale in such an interconnected world is through cooperation and shared purpose, while being conscious of our actions and their effects. We should recognize our umbilical connection to Mother Earth and understand that she is the source of life, not a resource to be exploited. If we do not heed to the warnings from Nature, it will lead us towards the path of self-destruction like the Fukushima nuclear crisis, Gulf oil spill, tar sands devastation, pipeline failures, impacts of carbon dioxide emissions, and the destruction of ground water through hydraulic fracking. In addition, these activities and development continue to cause the deterioration and destruction of pure drinking water vital for Life. Allen wrote, "Thus, the value of any technology is only partially determined by the security, comfort, and convenience it confers. We need also to know if it draws us closer to the land, to each other, and to the cosmos. These relational, political, and spiritual/ethical dimensions are always present in our inventions and are part of their inherent pull."

Our concern should be with the growing devastation that is being brought by the actions of human beings around the world. It includes excessive resource extraction, genetically modified organisms, moral failures, pollution, etc. that are threatening the future of global humanity. The accumulation of wrong decisions and their corresponding actions are extremely short-sighted. They do not consider the future generations and they neglect the Creator's Natural Law.

By relying on tools instead of improving our understanding, we are travelling on a path to destruction and separation.

Wisdom is found in the users of tools, not in the technology itself. So, here Education should be given importance which trains the human mind and thinking. Emphasis should be laid on Value education which helps us to see the soul and not the body. It educates our soul and heart to see and move beyond the body consciousness cutting across all physical, political, and all boundaries of race, color creed and castes. It unites us, as part of one world, humanity and one goal of life i.e. 'LOVE ALL AND SERVE ALL' and 'SERVICE TO MAN IS SERVICE TO GOD'.

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