

The Roots of War and Political Struggle: A Call for Universal Peace

Despite incredible advancements in science, technology, and human rights, war and political strife continue to devastate nations and communities. From ancient battles waged for conquest to modern conflicts driven by economic and ideological motives, violence has remained an ever-present force in human history. Yet, we must ask: Why has war persisted, and how can we dismantle the structures that sustain it?

This is not just a theoretical discussion—it is a moral and existential imperative. The 21st Century has brought unparalleled opportunities for global collaboration, yet it has also exposed deep-rooted inequalities, rising authoritarianism, and ongoing military escalations. The time has come for a fundamental shift in how we approach governance, security, and human coexistence.

This article seeks to examine the enduring roots of war, the economic and political structures that fuel it, and the essential steps required to build a more just and peaceful world.

The Legacy of Conflict: Power, Oppression, and Human Suffering

Throughout history, power has been one of the most intoxicating and destructive forces in human civilisation. The quest for dominance over land, resources, and people has led to countless wars, revolutions, and acts of oppression. The motivations may have evolved, but the consequences remain the same: suffering, displacement, and the erosion of human dignity.

- Ancient conquests saw empires rise and fall through bloodshed, often justifying war as divine destiny or cultural superiority.
- Colonialism and imperialism exploited entire nations, leaving legacies of economic disparity and intergenerational trauma.
- World Wars and Cold War tensions shaped modern geopolitics, entrenching militarism as a primary tool of statecraft.
- Contemporary conflicts continue to erupt over economic interests, ideological divisions, and resource control.

Even in regions with a rich history of nonviolence, such as India, war has shaped national identity. The subcontinent has endured centuries of foreign invasions, the brutality of colonial rule, and conflicts over territorial disputes. Despite this, India's history also showcases the power of peaceful resistance, as seen in Mahatma Gandhi's nonviolent struggle for independence. Yet, despite overwhelming evidence of war's devastation, leaders continue to justify violence through nationalism, religious fervour, and the rhetoric of security. The result? The same cycle of destruction and exploitation that has persisted for centuries.

Why Does War Persist?

Despite global institutions, peace treaties, and international outcries, war continues to define our world. The reasons are complex but can be traced to several deeply ingrained systems.

The War Economy: Conflict as a Business Model

War is no longer simply a means to an end—it has become an industry in itself. The global arms trade, military-industrial complex, and defence contracts generate billions in profit, incentivising political leaders and corporations to maintain militarisation.

The global arms trade is one of the most lucrative industries. Countries allocate trillions to military budgets, enriching weapons manufacturers.

Defence contractors and political elites benefit financially. Politicians often receive funding from arms manufacturers, creating a system where war remains a profitable endeavour rather than a last resort.

1. Militarisation sustains economies. Many regions rely on military spending for employment, making war economically embedded in national policies.

For those in power, peace is not profitable—war keeps industries alive, justifies authoritarian policies, and distracts from social justice movements.

Manufactured Division: The Politics of ‘Us vs Them’

Humanity has long been conditioned to view the world through division—whether by race, nationality, religion, gender, or ideology. These artificial constructs fuel distrust, hatred, and violence.

1. Religious conflicts have shaped history, from the Crusades to present-day sectarian violence.
2. Nationalism has led to wars of expansion, ethnic cleansing, and border disputes.
3. Ideological battles, such as the Cold War, fuelled proxy wars that devastated nations.

India, a country with deep religious and cultural diversity, has also faced communal violence and politically driven divisions. The Partition of India in 1947, which led to one of the largest forced migrations in human history, is a stark reminder of how political ambitions exploit divisions. Even today, religious and ethnic polarisation threatens social harmony and stability. Rather than recognising our shared humanity, political and corporate interests exploit these divisions to maintain control.

The Ethical Deficit: Technological Advancement without Moral Growth

While we have achieved unprecedented advancements in technology, medicine, and communication, our moral and ethical progress has stagnated.

1. The same primal instincts that fuelled wars centuries ago still dictate modern geopolitics.
2. Leaders continue to use violence and oppression to maintain power, mirroring ancient empires.
3. Weapons of mass destruction, drones, and cyber warfare now make war even more impersonal and devastating.

We have sent humans to the moon, cured diseases, and connected the world digitally—yet we still kill each other over ideologies, resources, and political power.

Is a Peaceful World Possible?

A world without war is not a utopian fantasy—it is a possibility that requires radical change at every level of society. For peace to be sustainable, humanity must undergo a fundamental transformation of consciousness, moving from a mindset of conquest to one of cooperation.

Key Steps Toward a Just and Peaceful Future

Dismantling the War Economy

1. Reallocate military budgets toward education, healthcare, and sustainable development.
2. Strengthen global disarmament efforts and regulate the arms trade.
3. Reduce the influence of defence contractors in political decision-making.

Reinforcing Global Institutions

- Empower international organisations like the United Nations to hold aggressors accountable.
- Replace military intervention with diplomatic solutions and restorative justice mechanisms.
- Promote diverse and inclusive leadership in global decision-making.

Building a Culture of Global Solidarity

1. Shift media narratives away from glorifying war and toward peace-building efforts.
2. Emphasise cooperation in education, teaching young people about diplomacy and conflict resolution.
3. Encourage cross-cultural exchanges to foster understanding and dismantle stereotypes.

Prioritising Human Rights and Social Justice

1. Address systemic inequalities that fuel violence, including racial injustice, economic disparity, and political oppression.
2. Ensure accountability for war crimes, genocide, and human rights abuses.
3. Protect refugees and displaced populations, treating them with dignity rather than hostility.

Environmental Justice and Resource Equity

1. Many conflicts are driven by resource scarcity—oil, water, land.
2. Climate change is a growing driver of war and displacement, making environmental sustainability a key factor in peace-building.
3. Invest in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, and fair resource distribution to prevent future conflicts.

India, as a country prone to water disputes, deforestation, and pollution, must lead the way in eco-diplomacy. Managing Indo-Pak water conflicts, climate migration, and deforestation in the Himalayas can set an example for sustainable conflict resolution.

The Choice Before Us: War or Wisdom?

War has persisted throughout history because human civilisation has continually prioritised power over peace. Yet, history also shows moments of profound unity, resilience, and compassion. While achieving a world free from war may seem idealistic, every effort toward justice, understanding, and diplomacy moves us closer to that reality. The real question is not whether peace is possible, but whether humanity is willing to choose it. Will we continue down the path of destruction, allowing greed, division, and militarisation to dictate our future? Or will we finally awaken to the reality that peace is not just an abstract goal—it is a collective responsibility?

Final Call to Action: Peace is a Collective Choice

War is not inevitable—it is a product of human decisions, policies, and systemic structures. By working together to dismantle militarism, address injustices, and build cross-cultural solidarity, we can reshape the future. Let us refuse to accept war as the status quo. Let us demand justice, fight for peace, and advocate for a world where all people can live with dignity and security, because peace is not a passive dream—it is an active, urgent demand.

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