

What Does Peace Inspire?

TPRF Founder Prem Rawat made the keynote address at the [“Peace and Well-being”](#) conference hosted in Brussels by the European Parliament on November 28, 2011. TPRF guest-blogger Helen Caton attended the event and the following is an account of her experience at the conference.

I was honored to attend the *Peace and Well-being* event in Brussels earlier this week and volunteered to help out a bit, as many people do. I feel fortunate to be in a position to support TPRF’s humanitarian activities and I really like the motto, “Dignity, Peace and Prosperity.” It was also nice to meet people who had travelled from across Europe and as far afield as New York, Washington and even Australia, to help out and learn more.

I see myself as a practical person; I coach leaders on building their businesses, so in the run-up to the event, I asked myself: What does a message of peace inspire? What difference will an event like this make?

During the pre-event reception, I had the chance to meet people from different countries and asked them what this event was inspiring them to do.

One of the founding signatories of the *Pledge to Peace*, Jeremy Gilley, is committed to making next year’s UN Peace Day (September 21) a global day of truce where no armies attack one another. Last year he managed to arrange for 1.4 million children in Afghanistan to receive polio vaccinations thanks to the day of peace. Jeremy travels tirelessly in pursuit of his mission, yet he was so willing to stop and chat with many people who came up to him after the event.

Another person from Russia was talking, through an interpreter, about a school he wants to establish with the topic of peace as part of the curriculum. The event chairperson, Dr. Anthony Seldon, the Master of Wellington College in England, has established something similar in his school. Education seemed to be a theme for many event participants. They expressed a desire for children to learn more than the foundational subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic. They were interested in offering them a chance to explore what happiness and peace could mean in their lives.

I met one of the young people who had travelled from Norway to ask keynote speaker Prem Rawat a question. This young man was so articulate in expressing the need for young people to explore the topic of peace more, and he was determined to invite Prem Rawat to come to Norway to talk to his fellow students in person.

Another person I met was Baroness Scotland: a British lawyer, Shadow (opposition) Attorney General, and Member of the House of Lords. Her inspiration has led her to be Patron for the Corporate Alliance against Domestic Violence, with the vision to eradicate domestic violence

globally, by encouraging employers to instigate positive change in the workplace.

Mr. Seemanto Roy, another founding signatory, talked about the one million people his family's business employs in India and his sense of how each one of those employees is like a member of his family.

I discovered that a message of peace inspires and encourages the reduction of conflict, one day at a time. It encourages better education so our children can find other ways to resolve their differences, and it supports reduced violence in the home, as well as better workplace relationships.



It's easy to be cynical these days about fine words, but the *Pledge to Peace* has become one way to measure efforts towards peace annually. I look forward to hearing how this inspiration transforms into practical outcomes. Most importantly for me, it shows that my little effort in supporting a European-hosted event has wider implications around the world.

It also felt that my personal experience of peace was allowed to shine. I was able to see clearly how fortunate I am in my home and work life through my own experience of peace. Mr. Gianni Pittella, the 1st Vice-President of the European Union, came up to me at the end of the event and shook my hand. I managed to say "grazie" (thank you) to him for hosting such a landmark event.

To Prem Rawat I also say a sincere "Thank you" for being a source of inspiration.