

"Offer a soul to the world" - Link Up Conference Call 28th September 2024

Chiara addressed the aim the young people have of building a united world. She emphasized that unity is not a far-fetched utopia but a tangible reality, evidenced by the global movement toward collaboration in religious, political, and social spheres. She underscored the necessity of love as the true force behind achieving global unity, calling for a "revolution of love" that transcends mere charitable actions. For Chiara, love must be deeply embodied in daily interactions, from personal relationships to global institutions, enabling the foundation for a more unified world.

She drew inspiration from various world organizations striving for unity and from recent Popes, such as John Paul II, who highlighted the importance of solidarity rooted in love. Chiara believed that while practical activities are important, the decisive element in achieving global unity lies in offering "a soul to the world," and that soul is love. Her message resounds as a call to action, urging us all to be pioneers in spreading this love and unity in every sphere of life, making it a guiding principle for creating lasting change.

Full text follows:

Mariapolis Araceli (São Paulo), April 26, 1998

Dear Youth for a United World,

I know that you wished to receive a message from me that would contribute towards the success of the United World Week.

What subject do I wish to speak of? There couldn't be a better one than your very own goal of achieving a united world.

Can we truly speak of a united world? Is it possible to envision a united world?

Can we hope that the attention we give and the effort we put into it can truly contribute to reaching such an objective? Or is it a utopia, something unattainable and fantastical, as some might think?

We live in times when many signs show that the world is indeed heading towards this goal.

First of all, there is the conviction that unity is a sign of the times. This means that those who are particularly adept and competent in discerning the times we live in confirm that the world is moving towards unity. Some of you may remember that I too have spoken of this many times, examining the religious aspect in particular. Today's thrust towards unity, however, does not involve only the religious field,

but also the political world. Apart from the United Nations in which almost all the states of the world are represented, there is in Africa, for example, the Organization of African Unity, an association of all African states. In Asia there are various associations of states like the Islamic Conference Organization which includes 53 Muslim countries; the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization and others.

In America there is the Organization of American States (of North, Central and South America), and the Latin American Integration Association. In Europe we have the Organization for European Economic Cooperation which also includes the countries of Eastern Europe, and the European Union.

In addition, many wise people from different cultures in the world have expressed their thoughts on this subject. I would have liked to quote them but here in Brazil, from where I am sending this message, I don't have access to them. I found some thoughts by the most recent Popes, who are holy people as well as being authoritative. What they say can be of interest to everyone in the world.

Popes Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI have similar thoughts.

In *Populorum Progressio*, Pope Paul VI says: "Who cannot see the need to reach by degrees, the establishment of a worldwide authority that can act effectively on the juridical and political levels?"

The present Pope expressed himself in these terms at our Genfest 1990: "Truly, this seems to be the perspective which emerges from the multiple signs of our times: the perspective of a united world. This is the great expectation of people today, their hope and at the same time, the great challenge for the future. We are aware that progress towards unity is happening at an ever great rate."

My dear young people, you strive and work for a united world.

What are you doing to reach this goal?

You are involved in activities that might appear to be small and, although meaningful, out of proportion with your proposed objective. When you are older, perhaps some of you will be more directly involved in the various organizations aimed at building a united world.

I believe that, although all that you do will be very helpful, it is not one activity or another that will play a decisive role towards this goal.

Instead, the deciding factor in this inevitable process towards unity is that of **offering a soul to the world**. And **this soul is love**. You must bring about a revolution of love around you, in all the countries you are living in. Today charity and welfare programs are not enough, even though they help us to give to others out of love.

Today we must "**be love**", we must feel what the other person is feeling, live the other, the others, and aim at achieving unity in accordance with our spirituality which, like a fire, has already been enkindled here and there, thanks to you too, all over the globe.

At the Genfest 1990, Pope John Paul II said: "Know that the path towards a united world ... is founded on building relationships of solidarity, and solidarity has its roots in charity" (in love).

Therefore we must build relationships of unity, which are rooted in love. You must live out this love first of all among yourselves, so as to reach the point of living it with many, many others, wherever you go; when you meet ordinary people for example and with those who govern their future or those in public institutions and in the smaller or bigger organizations of the world... everywhere. Only then will they

fulfill the purpose for which they were established and truly work for a united world.

Take courage, Youth for a United World. You are following the most fascinating and splendid ideal on earth.

And you are not alone!

You, who are proud to be called Christians, know that by acting in this way, Christ is among you.

Each and every one of you, of every belief and creed, knows that unity is strength.

Go ahead then. Start off or keep going with your characteristic enthusiasm and your great determination.

I, all of us, are with you... for the final victory, whenever God wants it.
But who will gather if no one sows? This is your task now at this time in history.
All things considered, there are promising signs that the goal you are living for is not far-off.
Chiara Lubich