

MINISTRY FOR PEACE

A Proposal for a New Government Ministry

Overview

This proposal calls on governments to establish a dedicated Ministry of Peace, with a seat at the table alongside all Ministers of State responsible for domestic and foreign policy. The Minister for Peace would champion practical alternatives to war, oppose support for conflict-initiating nations, and work to end the international arms trade.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY FOR PEACE

International Affairs

The Ministry for Peace will:

1. Apply arbitration to resolve disputes between nations and organisations
2. Develop creative responses to regional security challenges
3. Communicate and cooperate with other Ministries and Departments
4. Support the conversion of arms factories into facilities for constructive use
5. Develop conciliation and reconciliation practices
6. Initiate and promote peace efforts at home and abroad
7. Train armed forces personnel in conflict resolution and community development
8. End arms sales between governments and to non-state organisations
9. End international arms dealing by private traders
10. End the exploitation of other nations' natural resources
11. End bribery and corruption used to gain access to foreign natural resources
12. End the provision of arms export licences
13. Make extensive use of diplomacy
14. Engage in international dialogue with nations, organisations, and communities
15. Lead peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts
16. Ensure conflict resolution is central to international affairs
17. Export equipment, tools, and resources to impoverished countries
18. Expand the powers of international charities to rebuild communities

19. Substantially increase international aid
20. Make full use of United Nations mechanisms to facilitate peace
21. Mediate in international disputes
22. Negotiate peaceful settlements
23. Offer an alternative to military service, enabling citizens to support communities at home and abroad
24. Provide major financial support to rebuild nations and communities devastated by war
25. Offer compassionate support to refugees, asylum seekers, and those trapped in conflict zones
26. Participate in international conferences on arms control and disarmament
27. Present to Cabinet, Parliament, and the public practical alternatives to military action
28. Actively promote disarmament
29. Raise substantial financial support from the public, businesses, corporations, and wealthy individuals to assist poor nations
30. Train civil servants, community leaders, and Members of Parliament in domestic and international conflict resolution

The Ministry for Peace will examine the root causes and conditions behind all forms of violence, terrorism, and warfare. It will:

- Pursue the resolution of acts that deliberately inflict suffering on others
- Address the suffering and pain experienced in homes, schools, streets, and workplaces
- Foster mutual understanding between ethnic groups, nations, and organisations
- Apply a wide range of constructive approaches to resolve conflict at every level
- Provide meaningful support for those who have suffered as a result of violence

The Case for a Ministry for Peace

The persistence of violence in civilised society reflects humanity at its lowest. Rather than responding to political, social, and environmental discord with creative and courageous initiatives, nations continue to inflict suffering, pain, and death on one another. The Ministry for Peace would take active responsibility for resolving conflict, drawing on a wide network of human, financial, and environmental resources.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.** In the third millennium, it must be a priority of government to pursue a civilised approach to conflict — rather than repeat the catastrophic history of the last century, in which more than 100 million people were killed through war. Governments, organisations, and citizens must acknowledge the mistakes of the past, pursue fresh initiatives in the present, and chart a course toward the genuine welfare of the global community.
- 2.** The Ministry for Peace would recruit a new kind of force: facilitators, psychologists, psychotherapists, counsellors, diplomats, peace workers, NGO representatives, and committed individuals from the public and private sectors. This force would be dedicated to conflict resolution, mediation, and dialogue at home and abroad. Existing armed forces would also receive extensive training in peaceful resolution. The creative power of words would replace the destructive power of weapons.
- 3.** Establishing a new ministry is not without precedent. In recent decades, the British Government has created the Ministry for Children, the Ministry for the Environment, and the Ministry for Overseas Development. A Ministry for Peace is no less necessary. Crucially, it must be independent — not absorbed piecemeal into existing departments.
- 4.** The Ministry for Peace would occupy a unique role in government, addressing violence in all its forms — domestic and international — as it affects adults, children, animals, and the environment. Mental, verbal, and physical abuse cast a shadow over the lives of young and old, at home and abroad.
- 5.** It would provide the Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary, and Defence Secretary with a broad range of alternatives to any proposed act of war, offering options beyond those presented by the heads of the Armed Forces.
- 6.** The Ministry for Peace would ensure that all statements of foreign and domestic policy were accurate, honest in their detail, free from spin, and free from the manipulation of media and public opinion.
- 7.** It would act as an adviser to all other departments and play a meaningful role in shaping party policy, helping to rebuild public trust in government.
- 8.** It would send skilled teams, at the invitation of affected countries, to support the emotional, mental, physical, and environmental recovery of those suffering as a result of

conflict. Training would be offered to police forces, social workers, and community leaders in conflict zones. These teams would work alongside local people and institutions to build a culture of active and engaged citizenship.

9. The Ministry for Peace would cooperate with all parties at home and abroad to establish agreements, treaties, and the implementation of UN resolutions, building shared understanding about a constructive path forward in areas of dispute. It would actively support UN Peacekeeping Forces.

10. It would examine both short- and long-term strategies for peacekeeping, with a commitment to civilised and sustainable approaches. History demonstrates that the victims of war often harbour lasting resentment, and that victims can in time become perpetrators. Worldwide terrorist organisations have grown tenfold since 9/11. The authorisation of war by governments, or of terror by organisations, escalates alike into obscene violence against men, women, children, and the natural world — regardless of the motivations cited.

11. The Ministry for Peace would make public all lists of arms sales to foreign nations, including the sums of money involved.

12. It would advocate for rigorous analysis of the underlying causes of violence and war.

13. The Ministry for Peace would examine both the psychological and geopolitical drivers behind armed conflict, asking whether those in power are motivated by:

- Obsession with power and control
- Religious, political, personal, or historical ideology
- Over-identification with an ethnic group or nation
- Acts of retaliation
- Discrimination and prejudice, overt or subtle
- Territorial claims
- The pursuit of profit
- Exploitation of natural resources (e.g. oil)
- A desire to unite a population behind a leader
- An unquestioning belief in one's own righteousness and in the evil of the other

14. The Ministry for Peace would monitor and publish details of all overseas aid, ensuring it is deployed wisely and with clear accountability.

15. It would substantially increase aid funding and expand support for NGO-led initiatives.

DOMESTIC RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Ministry for Peace would ensure that education, from primary school through to university, includes practical programmes in conscious living, the development of communication skills, and methods for resolving disputes constructively. These would become core elements of the national curriculum.

2. It would serve as a bridge between government and citizens, helping to restore public trust and confidence in democratic institutions.

3. The Ministry for Peace would work to reduce public anger and cynicism toward governments that deceive their citizens or take decisions that profoundly concern thoughtful people — from making war and selling arms, to the mistreatment of asylum seekers, the abuse of the judiciary, or the refusal to permit public inquiries.

4. It would act as the conscience of the nation, working to rebuild trust across the fault lines of society: between government and people, the public and private sectors, ethnic groups, rich and poor, police and public, employers and unions, and between neighbours and generations. Fear, mistrust, and anger deepen these divisions. Mediation would be given far greater prominence in national life.

5. The Ministry for Peace would draw on the spiritual, religious, creative, and intellectual resources of society to address violence and conflict, both locally and internationally. Britain faces a crisis of values and integrity. Television, radio, and the broader media would be encouraged to highlight the vital work of those active in peace and reconciliation, and to explore how ethics and shared values might be strengthened in daily life.

6. It would promote and expand initiatives enabling local communities to build stronger relationships through meetings, the arts, entertainment, and mutual cooperation.

7. The Ministry for Peace would champion diversity and foster a culture of meaningful interaction across all aspects of daily life.

8. It would significantly expand existing government programmes for conflict resolution, offering widespread training in facilitation skills. Leading practitioners in the field would serve as advisers.

9. The Ministry for Peace would establish a National Network of Facilitators — a frontline body deploying their skills to meet the challenges of today, including sexual violence, pub violence, road rage, and abusive behaviour at football matches or in the

home. The role of alcohol and drug abuse in driving violence would receive increased scrutiny.

10. It would develop new programmes to address school violence, gang and gun culture, racial and ethnic violence, violence against LGBTQ+ people, and the relationship between police and communities. The Network of Facilitators would work alongside community leaders and trusted local figures to help defuse tension.

11. The Ministry for Peace would establish major new programmes in prisons. Facilitators would mediate between management and inmates; psychotherapists, counsellors, and trained motivators would be widely deployed. Both staff and prisoners would have access to programmes that reduce aggression through stress management, meditation, and yoga. Changes in diet, engagement with the arts, and the development of a culture oriented toward inner change would be actively pursued. Inmates would be trained as facilitators themselves.

12. It would explore alternatives to the prevailing cultural belief that the primary purpose of human life is production, consumption, status, and influence. There would be a commitment to ending the violence inflicted on land, water, and air in the service of an acquisitive and self-absorbed society.

13. This transformation would require the full engagement of philosophers, social scientists, theologians, peace workers, and individuals of moral authority, working together to build a safe, secure, and sustainable world. Every dimension of life — entertainment, television, cinema, advertising, and the culture of status — would be open to public debate about its relationship to violence.

14. In the longer term, the government would commit to building a Unarmed Force equal in size to the Armed Forces. For every military academy, there would be a non-military equivalent. For every scientist working in arms research, there would be a counterpart working on peaceful technologies, infrastructure development, and constructive communications.

15. The Ministry for Peace would foster constructive engagement with the world in place of the current reliance on the export of sophisticated weapons. The Prime Minister and Cabinet would be presented equally with non-military solutions to international conflict, with full consideration given to the risk to lives and to cost-effectiveness.

16. In conjunction with the UN, the Ministry for Peace would take responsibility for the inspection and dismantling of weapons of mass destruction — nuclear, biological, and chemical — both at home and abroad.

17. The Ministry for Peace would actively convert the armaments industry toward peaceful purposes. The defence budget would decrease systematically, year on year, with a corresponding increase in funding for the Ministry for Peace.

18. The transition away from war and violence, domestically and internationally, will require extensive consultation between nations, communities, and cultures. It will demand the building of bridges — a deeper understanding of the differences between nations, religions, and peoples, and a genuine engagement with the challenges faced by the poor, the marginalised, refugees, economic migrants, and the disenfranchised.

19. The costs of the Ministry for Peace would be drawn directly from the existing defence budget.

20. The nation would celebrate the lives and legacies of great peacemakers and facilitators.

Conclusion

A Ministry for Peace would make a profound contribution to civilised society's ability to address personal, social, and global conflict. It would demonstrate, in the most practical terms, that government is capable of rising to the challenges of the new millennium — with wisdom, courage, and humanity.