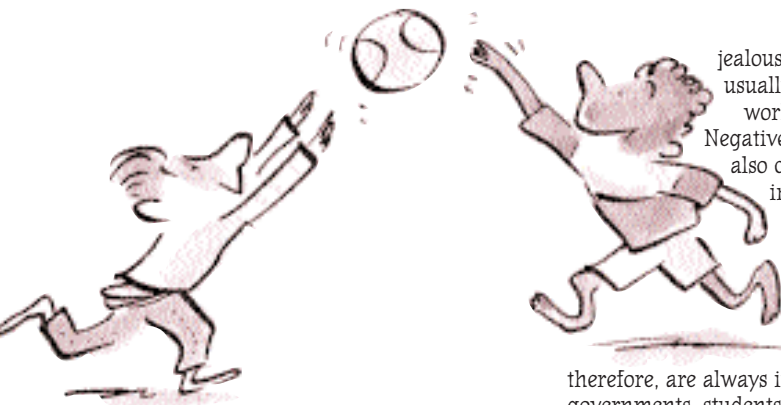




African Festival in Zimbabwe



We the children from eight Southern African countries are committed to the ideals of peace and tolerance as declared in the Constitution of UNESCO.



jealousy. Lazy students usually hate hard-working ones... Negative peer influence also causes students to indulge in violent strikes and demonstrations. We have also observed that teachers are underpaid and,

therefore, are always in conflict with governments, students and parents.

than violent strikes and demonstrations to air their grievances.

Government - teacher conflicts :

- we would like the various governments to pay our teachers adequately and improve their working conditions.

Crime :

We suggest that the crime rate be reduced through :

- increased patrols by police and volunteers ;
- encouraging the public to assist victims ;
- restricting the availability of guns ;
- limiting the production and circulation of dangerous drugs ;
- censorship of violent and sexually explicit films/videos.

Political, religious and ethnic conflicts :

Ethnic Conflicts :

- People should be free to practice their cultural beliefs as long as they do not offend others and undermine human rights ;
- school and traditional leaders ought to teach tribal and religious tolerance.

Religious Conflicts :

- theocratic governments should be done away with ;
- freedom of worship should be encouraged.

The environment

The natural environment is an integral part of the eco-system.

It is important that the balance of nature be maintained through the conservation of soil, water, flora and fauna. We need to reserve the current trend of heat waves, drought, floods and the destruction of the ozone layer.

We should all devise strategies of checking poaching, soil erosion, river situation and the wanton destruction of trees. Let us not destroy our indigenous trees.

Conserve our natural resources. Preserve our heritage.

Harare, Zimbabwe,
August 1995

Peace

Peace in our countries is threatened by many factors.

Conflicts and violence can be in the family, school or community. We also find conflicts between countries.

In this paper, we are going to examine causes of conflicts and violence in various spheres of life.

The family

Very little peace is experienced in most families.

The common source of conflict is money... Where parents are not educated and the children are, conflict usually arises when children bring new ideas. Polygamy also contributes to family friction due to favouritism and unfair distribution of resources.

The community

The community at large is also responsible for turning a blind eye to cases of child abuse. When children are not properly fed and clothed, they tend to become thieves, bullies and even street kids... Violent and sexually explicit television and video programmes help fuel a culture of violence. Drug addiction is condemned and it culminates in thefts and murders just in order to get money to buy drugs. Because nobody cares about security in the streets, people live in perpetual fear of criminals.

Schools

Children from wealthy and poor backgrounds indulge in conflicts due to

Human rights

In order for the world to have a bright future, the older people have to respect children's rights. We recommend that Human Rights be included in school curricula and taught in society through speeches, drama, poetry, music as well as radio and television programmes.

Non-violent resolution of conflicts

We recommend the following solutions to conflicts :

Domestic conflicts :

- Wife beating and child abuse :
- campaigns to reduce alcohol intake should be launched ;
 - the amount of alcohol in beverages should be reduced ;
 - abolishing lobola and polygamy as well as discouraging homosexuality and prostitution ;
 - print and electronic media should be used to teach people budgeting skills.

Educational conflicts :

- Misunderstandings between pupils and teachers :
- pupils should obey and respect their teachers ;
- teachers should not smoke and drink on school premises ;
- we would like teachers to stop practising corporal punishment ;
- teachers should pay equal attention to all children ;
- children should use dialogue rather

