

The 10th Anniversary of the Declaration of Peace & Cessation of War: The Path to Institutionalizing Peace Amid Conflict

Washington, D.C, District of Columbia Mar 23, 2026 (IssueWire.com) - The Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War (DPCW) achieved the 10th anniversary of its proclamation on March 14, drawing renewed attention to efforts to strengthen international norms aimed at preventing war and resolving disputes through law and cooperation. The milestone comes at a time when conflicts and geopolitical tensions are intensifying across several regions of the world, underscoring the growing need for international frameworks that prioritize prevention, dialogue, and collective responsibility for peace.

First proclaimed in 2016, the DPCW was introduced as a proposal to strengthen international standards designed to prevent armed conflict and promote peaceful dispute resolution. The initiative emerged from the recognition that armed conflicts continue to claim the lives of countless people, particularly young individuals, and that the international community must move beyond responding to violence after it erupts toward building durable structures capable of preventing conflict before it begins.

The declaration was developed through the efforts of Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL), an international peace NGO dedicated to promoting sustainable peace and protecting lives affected by war. HWPL was founded by Chairman Man-hee Lee, whose experience as a student soldier during the Korean War shaped his commitment to advancing a world in which future generations no longer face the devastation of armed conflict.

The origins of the DPCW trace back to the September 18 HWPL World Peace Summit held in Seoul in 2014, where 1,933 participants from 152 countries gathered, including current and former heads of state, government officials, religious leaders, international law experts, and representatives of civil society. Participants emphasized the need for stronger international frameworks that prioritize preventing conflict rather than responding only after violence has already begun.

In 2015, HWPL established the HWPL International Law Peace Committee (ILPC), composed of international law experts from around the world. Following consultation and legal review, the committee drafted the DPCW, consisting of 10 articles and 38 clauses outlining principles aimed at strengthening peace through international law, including standards on the use of force, procedures for peaceful dispute resolution, international cooperation and collective security, protection of religious freedom, and greater participation by civil society in peacebuilding.

Over the past decade, support for the DPCW has expanded among governments and civil society organizations. Regional parliamentary bodies including the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), the Central American Parliament (PARLACEN), and the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (Parlatino) have adopted resolutions supporting the initiative. National legislatures including the Chamber of Deputies of Paraguay, the Senate of the Dominican Republic, and the National Legislature of South Sudan have also endorsed the declaration, while more than 900,000 citizens across 178 countries have expressed support.

Advocates say the DPCW seeks to complement existing international legal frameworks by strengthening mechanisms that prevent disputes from escalating into war. As the declaration enters its second decade, supporters emphasize that growing global instability makes sustained international cooperation and proactive peacebuilding more critical than ever.

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