

Nature's Challenges To Conflict Resolution And Peace

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Abstract

Humanity aspires for a world without conflict and war but the planet Earth has its natural challenges to conflict resolution and peace. This article, therefore, reviews and analyzes the historical and contemporary evidence of natural challenges to peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution, and suggests some technological policy responses that should be considered for adoption internationally to minimize conflicts and to ensure sustainable peace.

Competitive behaviours of organisms for scarce natural resources leading to conflicts, violent attacks, and wars among living things have existed since the start of life. Individuals have always been in competition with others over limited resources. Human societies, in particular, have throughout the existence of life, been fraught with conflicts and wars over shortages, inadequacies, or absence of their fundamental needs (Bible, 2015), which include “physiological”, “safety” and “security”, “belonging” and “love”, “esteem”, “self-actualization”, and “self-transcendence” requirements (Maslow, 1943). Biblical narratives are full of a world of scarce resources and violent competition for them (Schwartz, 1997 and Bible, 2015). The situation is worsened by the geometrically growing global population which is outstripping the arithmetically increasing resources (Malthus, 1798). Since nature operates on the theory of “the survival of the fittest” (Darwin, 1859) and since the resources for survival are limited on the planet earth, competitions are bound to persist with consequences of conflicts, violence, and wars. Based on Darwin’s (1871) theory of “survival of the fittest”, the most aggressive competitors will continue to survive while the weak will be progressively subjugated and eventually eliminated as long as there is earthly existence amidst scarcity.

Competitions and conflicts between nonhuman biological organisms are inevitable and should be left to natural forces including human interventions to create sustainable balance. Humans, on the other hand, have at least made efforts to address immediate and some root causes of conflicts among themselves (Bondurant, 1988). They have developed nearly 250 methods of conflict resolution that were recently enumerated by the Gandhian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (Gangal, 1988). For the existence of a peaceful or conflict-free society, it is imperative to meet the basic human needs and include among the techniques for resolving conflict (a) reciprocal defence strategy (Maynard, 1982) to overcome general insecurity and threats of conflict, (b) agricultural intensification (Abdulkadir, Orach-Meza and Edaku, 2017) to alleviate nutritional insecurity, and (c) adaptive technology (Boserup, 1965; 1981; Orach-Meza, 2011; Barredo, 2013; Botkin et.al, 2013; Ipate et al., 2015) to promote sustainable environmental and socio-economic development.

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