Peace, progress, human rights - these three goals are insolvably linked to one another: it is impossible to achieve one of these goals if the other two are ignored.

A. Sakharov, Nobel lecture.

I am convinced that international confidence, mutual understanding, disarmament and international security are inconceivable without an open society with freedom of information, freedom of conscience, the right to publish, and the right to travel and choose the country in which one wishes to live. I am likewise convinced that freedom of conscience, together with the other civil rights, provides the basis for scientific progress and constitutes a guarantee that scientific advances will not be used to despoil mankind, providing the basis for economic and social progress, which in turn is a political guarantee for the possibility of an effective defence of social rights. At the same time I should like to defend the thesis of the original and decisive significance of civil and political rights in moulding the destiny of mankind.

A. Sakharov, Nobel lecture.

Sakharov had an extremely rare talent: the ability to empathise with human suffering and blunder into science. His work focused on the liberation of atomic energy, which he brought to the public's attention, starting to develop atomic energy agencies. He signed a petition to the President of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, against the death penalty and in favour of amnesty for political prisoners. Autumn 1972.

Sakharov initiates two collective appeals to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to object to the nuclear tests and toorm forward the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free world. 1973.

Sakharov is enlisted in the special group set up to create a soviet hydrogen bomb. 1958.

Sakharov is awarded the Nobel peace prize. He is refused permission to travel to Oslo to receive the Nobel prize because he is considered a threat against justice everywhere. 1975.


Sakharov is refused entry to the United States. 1975.

Sakharov sends the Secretary General of the United Nations and the heads of minorities and the poor. 1975.

Sakharov is imprisoned. 1976.

Sakharov survives a mass hunger strike. 1977.

Sakharov is released from exile in Gorky. 1981.


Sakharov is elected a full member of the USSR Academy of Sciences and awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour for special services rendered. He was to receive this award posthumously. 12 August 1989.

Sakharov's first hunger strike to attract attention to the situation in the USSR. 1980.


SAKHAROV AGAINST THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR AND NUCLEAR ARMS TESTING

While nuclear weapons exist it is also necessary to have strategic parity of nuclear forces, preventing one or other side from opting for limited or regional nuclear warfare. True security is possible only when based on the stabilisation of international relations, a repudiation of expansionist policies, the strengthening of international trust, openness and pluralisation in the socialist societies, the observance of human rights throughout the world, ... and worldwide coordinated efforts to solve global problems.

A. Sakharov. The danger of thermonuclear war

The cessation of tests will lead directly to the saving of hundreds of thousands of lives and will have the more important indirect result of helping to reduce international tension and the danger of nuclear war, the fundamental danger of our age.

A. Sakharov. Radioactive Carbon from Nuclear Explosions and Non-threshold biological effects
LIKE ANY OTHER MEMBER OF THE RUSSIAN INTELLIGENTSIA, ANDREI SAKHAROV HATED HATRED. AND AS A SOCIAL THINKER HE PERFECTLY WELL UNDERSTOOD THAT HATRED FLARING UP BETWEEN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES—WHETHER ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL, RACIAL OR POLITICAL—WAS ONE OF THE MAIN CAUSES OF HUMAN DISUNITY. AS A COMMITTED INTERNATIONALIST, HE FOUND RELIGIOUS ENMITY AND NATIONAL OR RACIAL PREJUDICES ABHORRENT; AS A COMMITTED RATIONALIST, HE FOUND THEM INCOMPREHENSIBLE. HE WAS PARTICULARLY UNFORGIVING TOWARDS STATE INCITEMENT TO HATRED—PROPAGANDA INCITING HATRED OF "OTHERS", DEPICTING OTHERS AS ENEMIES—AND ALSO STATE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF HATRED AND THE VARIOUS FORMS OF VIOLENCE THIS GENERATED, DISCRIMINATION, APARTHEID, TERROR, NOT TO MENTION VARIOUS TYPES OF GENOCIDE. HE BELIEVED THAT THE INSTIGATORS OF HATRED WERE SMALL-MINDED, SELF-SERVING PEOPLE MOTIVATED BY SELFISH OR NARROWLY INTERPRETED FLEETING GROUP INTERESTS. HE COULD NOT ENTERTAIN THE IDEA OF A CLEVER, COMMITTED, SELFLESS AND HIGHLY EDUCATED INTELLIGENT PERSON PREACHING HATRED OF OTHERS.

BUT SAKHAROV HAD NO HATRED OF THOSE AFFLICTED WITH THE DISEASE OF HATRED. HE SAW THEM AS VICTIMS OF MALEVOLENT PROPAGANDA AND A MEAGER EDUCATION. AND, TO HIS MIND, THE MOST EFFECTIVE REMEDY FOR THIS SERIOUS ILLNESS WAS A CALL TO REASON, TO THE HUMANITY IN THE HUMAN BEING.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.
Martin Luther King (quoted by Sakharov as an epigraph to the foreword of the collection Alarm and Hope)

Mankind can develop painlessly only if it looks upon itself in a demographic sense as a whole, a single family without divisions into nations other than in matters of history and traditions.
A. Sakharov. Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom
SAKHAROV AGAINST WAR AND LOCAL CONFLICTS

Even if it avoids large-scale war, humankind can still perish, by exhausting itself in "small wars", in inter-ethnic and inter-state conflicts.

A. Sakharov. The world in a half-century

Regional conflicts must be settled on the basis of compromise and restoration of stability wherever it has been disrupted. Support for destabilising and extremist forces and all terrorist groups should be ended, along with attempts to expand the sphere of influence of one side at the expense of the other.

A. Sakharov. Address at the Moscow "Forum for a nuclear-free world and the survival of mankind"

Even if it avoids large-scale war, humankind can still perish, by exhausting itself in "small wars", in inter-ethnic and inter-state conflicts.

A. Sakharov. Address at the Moscow "Forum for a nuclear-free world and the survival of mankind"
SAKHAROV AGAINST DICTATORIAL AND TOTALITARIAN REGIMES

The struggle for human rights is also a real everyday struggle for peace and the future of humanity.

A. Sakharov. The world is a half-century

An extreme reflection of the dangers confronting modern social development is the growth of racism, nationalism and militarism and, in particular, the rise of demagogic, hypocritical and monstrously cruel dictatorial regimes. Foremost are the regimes of Stalin, Hitler and Mao Tse-tung, and a number of extremely reactionary regimes in smaller countries [...]. These tragic developments have always derived from the struggle of egotistical group interests, the struggle for unlimited power, suppression of intellectual freedom, and the spread of emotive and intellectually simplified narrow-minded mass myths.

A. Sakharov. Reflections on Progress. Peaceful Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom

SAKHAROV’S DOCTRINE HINGES ON THREE ARGUMENTS. FIRSTLY, IF A STATE REPRESENTS A THREAT TO ITS CITIZENS, IT WILL ALSO REPRESENT A THREAT TO ITS NEIGHBOURS. Secondly, respect for human rights is a guarantee of democratic supervision of a country’s foreign policy and its military expenditure; and society will not allow the militarisation of the economy in peacetime. SAKHAROV’S THIRD ARGUMENT WAS THAT OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS GUARANTEES THE FREE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND IDEAS BETWEEN PEOPLES, ENABLES THEM TO DRAW CLOSER, LOWERS THE LEVEL OF MUTUAL DISTRUST AND THEREFORE LOWERS THE PROBABILITY OF CONFLICT AND THE POSSIBILITY OF HOSTILE INTENTIONS BEING SECRETLY NURTURED.

A. Sakharov. Reflections on Progress. Peaceful Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom
The problem of geohygiene is highly complex and closely tied to economic and social problems. This problem cannot therefore be solved on a national and especially not on a local basis. The salvation of our environment requires that we overcome our divisions and the pressure of temporary, local interests.

It is vitally important to regulate the scale of and as far as possible cease environmentally harmful plant operations and constructions, replacing them where necessary with environmentally safe and perhaps even more expensive facilities, replacing dangerous agricultural technologies with technologies that are less harmful for people and nature and implementing wide-ranging global measures to restore landscape and natural balance, particularly by preserving and restoring woodland.

A. Sakharov. Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom

SAKHAROV IN FAVOUR OF PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

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A. Sakharov. Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom


HOWEVER, SAKHAROV'S DECISIVE CONTRIBUTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WAS HIS ESSAY REFLECTIONS ON PROGRESS, PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM, PART OF WHICH FOCUSED ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS. SAKHAROV USED THE TERM "GEOHYGIENE". HIS SUBSEQUENT WORK ALSO TOUCHED ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES. AT THE SAME TIME ANDREI SAKHAROV REMAINED OPPOSED TO ENVIRONMENTAL EXTREMISM UP TILL THE END OF HIS LIFE. HE WAS DUBIOUS AS REGARDS IDEAS OF DEURBANISATION, WAS AGAINST TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS BEING ARTIFICIALLY HELD BACK, CONSIDERED THE CREATION OF SAFE THERMONUCLEAR ENERGY (HAVING BEEN ONE OF ITS PIONEERS IN THE 1950S) AS KEY TO RESOLVING MANY PROBLEMS OF HUMANKIND AND DISTINCTLY PREFERRED IT TO OTHER ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES.

A. Sakharov. Reactors Underground

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A. Sakharov. Reactors Underground
SAKHAROV AGAINST HUNGER AND INEQUALITY

The most decisive and important role in the issues of the modern world is played by the global political polarisation of humankind, which is divided into the so-called first world (conventionally called the Western world), the second world (socialist) and the third world (the developing countries).

A. Sakharov. Nobel lecture

"Nowadays [...] hunger and premature death are an imminent threat to most of humankind. For that reason the primary task of genuinely human progress is now to counter those dangers."

A. Sakharov. The world in a half-century

The problem of relations with the "third world", where half of humankind is concentrated, is particularly important. Multilateral aid for developing technology and training officials, food aid and other material aid are none being widely implemented but still on an insufficient scale. These efforts must be expanded [...] But on the other hand the developing countries themselves must reconstruct their national psyche and take substantial responsibility for their fate and the fate of humankind as a whole.

A. Sakharov. My Country and the World

SAKHAROV AGAINST HUNGER AND INEQUALITY

In Sakharov's eyes the problem of the gap between the poor "South" and the rich "North" was more than just one of the biggest global challenges of the era. He saw it as a potential area for capitalist and socialist countries to work together, casting aside unsubstantiated ideological and political differences and form a united front against the real threat of the economic collapse of the "South". Fortunately, the worst-case scenarios did not happen. But for many regions of the world, such as the countries of the Horn of Africa, Sakharov's warnings remain relevant today. But that is not all. Nowadays, in the heated discussion revolving around globalisation and economic integration, Sakharov's ideas are taking on a new dimension, not so much in terms of specific recipes for development but more as a template for contemporary political thinking, global and altruistic at the same time.
UNDERLYING THE NEW SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY PUT FORWARD BY SAKHAROV IS THE IDEA OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HE UNFAILINGLY EARMARKS AS FUNDAMENTAL THE CIVIL RIGHTS WHICH TOGETHER FORM THE CONCEPT OF "INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM", WHICH HE CONSIDERS NOT AS AN INDIVIDUAL HUMAN VALUE BUT AS A STATE OF SOCIETY.

Sakharov attached fundamental significance to intellectual freedom for several reasons. Firstly, this freedom is dear to his heart as an academic; secondly, Sakharov believed that intellectual freedom was the most powerful instrument for seeking solutions to the global challenges facing mankind in the second half of the 20th century and for guaranteeing progress in the third millennium.

The third, most important and deeply rooted reason is that intellectual freedom enables that society to give priority to reason, which is the fundamental distinguishing characteristic of the species of human beings.

These are the challenges laid down for us by Sakharov's social philosophy.

Freedom of conscience, the existence of an informed public opinion, a pluralist system of education, freedom of the press and access to other sources of information [...], these conditions are a vital necessity, not only if all abuse of progress, writing or unwriting, is to be avoided, but also if we wish to strengthen that progress.

It is particularly important that an effective system of education, a creative sense of heredity from one generation to another are only possible in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom.

A. Sakharov, Nobel lecture
ANDREI DMITRIEVICH SAKHAROV: 1921-1989 AND AFTER

My fate was, in a way, an exceptional one …. Not from a false sense of modesty but from a desire to give an accurate assessment, I would say that my fate has proved to be bigger than me. I only tried to be on a par with my own fate.

A. Sakharov. Interview with the newspaper Mladost (youth of Estonia)

I am no professional politician - which is perhaps why I am constantly obsessed by the question as to the purpose and end-result of the work I have done. I am inclined to believe that only moral criteria, coupled with objective thought, can serve as a sort of compass in the cross-currents of these complex problems … I will refrain from making any concrete prognoses … yet, both wise and evermore, I will hang on to my belief in the strength of the human mind and spirit.

A. Sakharov. Autobiography

The exhibition was prepared by:

Andrei Sakharov Foundation/Public Commission for the Preservation of the Legacy of Academician A.D.Sakharov

The International Historical, Educational, Human Rights and Charitable Society “Memorial”

With the support of The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

Exhibition prepared with financial support from the Council of Europe, Education Program, OSF Alumni Foundations and Zennström Philanthropies

Photo: Sakharov Archives, ITAR-TASS, RIA NOVOSTI. Artwork: Leonid Ozernikov, Maxim Ozernikov

2009

ANDREI DMITRIEVICH SAKHAROV was a champion of reason. Indeed, that was the driving force behind his democratic conviction in public life. Democracy has been the one and only attempt in history to build a society founded on reason. The name of Sakharov lends itself to all kinds of comparisons. Some have mentioned him in the same breath as Mahatma Gandhi, Lev Tolstoy and other advocates of non-violent change. Others tend to compare him with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Lech Walesa as distinguished warriors against tyranny. All these comparisons have a reason. Personally, I would rather see Sakharov the physicist alongside Vernadsky the geochemist who put forward the concept of the “noosphere” - the reasoning that became an element of the geological structure of our planet. The biologist, Russian chemist Vladimir Vernadsky - the philosopher, Charles Darwin - the engineer and other creators of a new, holistic philosophy of knowledge in which the development of mankind becomes a factor of cosmic significance. I think that Andrei Dmitrievich would find such a comparison an appealing one.

Sergey Kovalev.

Andrei Sakharov: responsibility to reason

Sakharov became a symbol of the epoch but there are few people who, while having enormous respect for the person and his humanitarian activities, see him also as a kind of Don Quixote. I think that this is wrong. We were contemporaries of a man who was constantly engaged in a “resolution of conscience” for more than thirty years, who created his conceptual system, trying to transform not only people’s conscience but even reality itself. Twice and twice again it was the standard scenario: they misunderstood him, they got upset and then they agreed with him.

Boris Abraham.

Andrei Sakharov: facets of a life

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