



## WHAT YOUTH ARE SAYING ABOUT . . . .

### THE WTC/PENTAGON ATTACKS AND THE BOMBING OF AFGHANISTAN

The Voices of Youth Project has been monitoring what young people are saying about the terrorist attacks against the US and the subsequent bombing of Afghanistan. The site [www.unicef.org/voy/](http://www.unicef.org/voy/) has received over 50 unsolicited messages on these issues. The majority of the messages may be found on the Young People and Social Change discussion board linked from the VOY homepage. A few messages are under Meeting Place/Children and War/Discuss . A summary of the main trends of the discussion is found below.

- Messages show a desire to forsake wholesale revenge and seek to punish those who are responsible for the attacks. A few messages advocate strong measures but none-the-less focus their anger on those particular people who are responsible.
- Many messages show that youth understand quite well the complexity of the situation resulting from the attacks on America and the bombing of Afghanistan. The youth call for sensitivity toward the Afghan people and for a better knowledge of the plight of people in economically downtrodden countries. One message expresses concern for future generations and makes an appeal for a wise and measured response to this crisis. Another message talks about the need for generosity everyday, not just when bad things happen to rich countries. Some think that the UN is an important player in helping to sort out this crisis while another expresses the view that international organizations are no longer influential and cannot bring about change.
- The ability to cope with these events was also a topic of conversation. Seeing the images over and over did not help youth to realize that this really happened. The World Trade Center attack seemed unreal on many levels.
- Since the bombing of Afghanistan began, youth have expressed a range of opinions from solidarity with the Afghan people to outrage at American military action and policies. What is striking about a number of messages is, that youth want to make a connection with or a contribution to youth in Afghanistan. They want to help.

The messages and discussion threads on Voices of Youth illustrate that young people possess diversity in opinion, a high level of sophistication and the ability to understand a complex political situation. Their comments are insightful and from the heart. Please find below excerpts from the discussion.

Aside from the recent attacks on our country I believe that one helpful way is to encourage kids around the world to help other kids! That's what I want to do. I want to "Save the Children". Please help me find a way to help others, notify me of what I can do!

Young boy, 15, USA

Hello people everywhere. I am shocked by what I heard on the radio yesterday evening. I don't get it, why does the USA attack innocent men, women and children. They didn't do anything. They should show their so called evidence to Afghanistan and show them the turning in of Osama Bin Laden is necessary, and then they would turn him and other members of the Taliban in. What they do wrong is attack innocent. I hate this. I always think it is hard to write such things.

Young girl, 13, Netherlands

Well, patriotism is strong in the US, it almost sickens me because at this point in time, it stands for vengeance no matter what. That's what most Americans are interested in and will follow along the government in every step of the way. It's all due to fear.

Young boy, 16, USA

Je souhaiterais aider les enfants Afghans en recueillant des vêtements, des couvertures et pleins d'autres choses pour aider les enfants Afgans à passer l'hiver. Comment est-ce que je peut m'y prendre? Merci d'avance pour votre réponse.

Young girl, 19, France

Why does the whole UN rally with USA when ever it comes up with agenda to wage war on other ethnicities, races, regions? Is it not the right time to review and accept the failure of the policies of America and the other developed nations. It may be difficult for America and the people of America to accept failure of their policies and governance, but its life and death issue for rest of the world. War cannot be solution to any issue. Where is the juridical process and legal issues to identify the criminals? Where is the evidence? If this can be justified just by arms by America, Can India ask America to produce Chairman of Union Carbide a man behind the Bopal deaths? We need justice and equal opportunities for all as global citizen, not the "American Justice = War"!

Young boy, 21, India

I would just like to express my deepest sympathy for the attack on the Unicef building in Pakistan. As an American, bombarded with such strong amounts of hatred and injustice in the past month, I feel that a violent act toward SUCH A COMPASSIONATE CAUSE is totally unacceptable. I sympathize with all those affected.

Young girl, 13, USA

Let us all help our Afghan brothers and sister. Let's pray for world peace. In this time of fear and confusion, let us all make a step in breaking down barriers. Let us not make our differences in religion a reason for war. Instead, let us make our faith an instrument for world peace. For this is not a war between Muslims and Christians . This is a battle of humanity against terrorism.

Young girl, 14, Philippines

PEOPLE OF THE WORLD! understand one another! See that we are all the same, we are made of flesh and blood, and we consume the same air. Why fight for it? we should share. For to give is better than to receive. And finally, God should NEVER be used as a reason why this is all happening, for God is almighty, it is the err of man that causes destruction and hatred. Peace to all. My brothers and sisters, regardless of skin colour, age, gender, and religion.

Young boy, 21, Malaysia

I believe in peace and I love nothing more but to live in world where there is but I have realised that won't be possibly any more. I am all for an attack on whoever has done this disgraceful act. But I have live in Australia my whole life with I not had any real conflict. But my main concern is for my generation and how we will have to take the consequences of the what the world leaders of today have done and we the children of the world when it is our turn as heads of government we all hope that what has happened in the last week is rectified.

Young boy, 15, Australia

Tuesday`s tragedy was indeed a modern day holocaust. Over 6000 people are missing... The average American`s jingoistic sentiments are unleashed... The people want revenge... Some one must die for this they say. Here in India, we see young Americans on the TV, all charged up and wanting revenge. Where will all this go I wonder ? Is this the start of another war? I shudder to even think of it. The only people who can help prevent it would be the youth of America.

Young girl, 19, India

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