

And you know what? They don't even know us. We've grown up thinking that our world cannot be humane. Now, we're witnessing that it can only be violent.

But our hearts believe that even if the elite ignore us, belittling us doesn't take away our worth. We have hope that suffering has a value which overcomes defeat and that even if we are mistakenly hurt in perpetual wars that recognize no brothers or sisters, love has a value which overcomes even death.

As we stay this night in Bamiyan Peace Park, on a cold Afghan autumn night, we attempt to do something beyond us, to do a little something for the warmth of other Men.

As we await acknowledgement of our appeal for a Reconciliation of Civil Hearts, from the Nobel Peace Prize Winner far away, we know that we're not alone. We're waiting historically with the rest of the world.

Spread the word: <http://OurJourneyToSmile.com>

- Please send your letter of support and a photo for their photo-collage illustrating the hundreds of people behind them to: youthpeacevolunteers@gmail.com.
- Post your support as a FAN to their Facebook pages:
 - [Our Journey To Smile](#)
 - [Youth Peace Volunteers](#)
- Start a 2nd Cup of Tea Vigil where you usually eat lunch.
- Write to President Obama, Ambassador Eikenberry, your elected representatives in Congress.

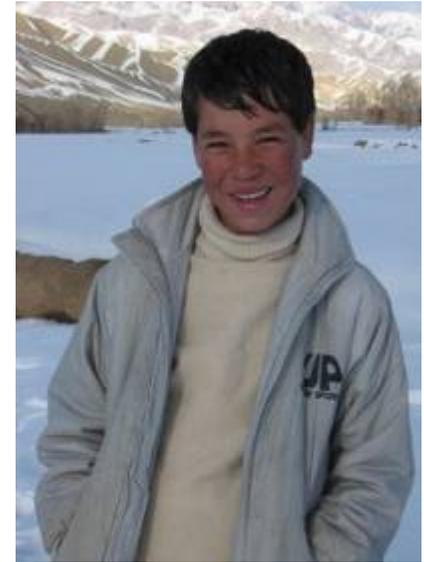
Is this our Afghan moment of peace?

13 year old Afghan boy will keep peace vigil with other youth.

Ten Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers began a peace vigil at 2:00 pm on October 22, 2009. This is their appeal for the Reconciliation of Civil Hearts. Almost a week later, US Ambassador to Afghanistan, Karl Eikenberry, visited the youths at their vigil site in Bamiyan Peace Park and committed to taking their message to US President Barack Obama.

The youths start a second vigil: "2nd Cup of Tea Peace Vigil, a 2nd mile for love" on the heels of Ambassador Eikenberry's request of President Obama that no additional troops be sent at this time.

They invite everyone to vigil with them over the lunch hour as they await a response from the recent Nobel Peace Prize recipient. The following story of their first vigil is told at their website: ourjourneytosmile.com



Abdulai, one of the young leaders of the Youth Peace Volunteers of Afghanistan

Every now and then, a chance comes for people to do a little something for other people.

We stand before giants at a time when Afghanistan's heart is withering, along with the hopes of human civilization.

For us who live in war, we have a heightened awareness that the end comes to all of us eventually but we wonder if, in the short meantime, we can find compassion and truth.

We're convinced that neither compassion nor truth can be found in war, so we've decided to sound our voice, for we have to cope somehow with the disappointment we carry, an anger at ourselves and at life. Our voice of

peace is frail and shaking but it is not fearful. And today, we wish to deliberately take it back from the noise of war.

Our only worry is that we would not be heard by those too rich, powerful and hardened to empathize. The elite of Afghanistan, America and the world, through their determined actions, are teaching us to crave for power through violence, to pursue money through selfishness, to rule through lies and to dominate through pride. And while suffocating in this moral decline, to be seen as saints.

With all due respect, we shall not learn these grievous vices, which make us so detestable we begin to hate even ourselves.

And we ask that these elite leaders do not make it impossible for us to aspire after the finer human qualities which all of Mankind dreams of: kindness, hard work, dignity and peace.

We have had 30 years of war and grieve that our families and friends have been killed so that our elite and your elite may thrive. We are tired. It's a fatigue of our souls. We do not wish to live like this anymore, like inconsistent beasts.

We have agonized through many nights wondering what happened to us and to human-kind, why we've come to fear darkness as if there was no light, why a corrupted in-humanity is the best we can wish of any power.

Each time we think of anyone as being 'without conscience', we get cynical that Man is capable of such heartless-ness and we lose our grip on the hope we're clinging to, that Man can change.

Sometimes we cry, but is there any purpose left to silent tears that don't bring reform?

We try to keep busy, studying without intention, surviving without joys, living without life. But we cannot ignore the insult that daily, those who are abusive, wealthy and deceitful triumph and those who aren't Afghans or who don't live here make costly decisions for us and our country, largely for the sake of themselves.

We ordinary Afghans didn't 'terrorize' New York, in fact, even the worst of us didn't, so please don't demonize us with the fears that plague the world. We can ultimately only 'terrorize' ourselves.

We are not demons. We are humans, as terrible and virtuous as anyone can be.

Some of us have become so distrustful and so sad with hate, over those games that neither we nor the religious people of the world have any answers for, that we would rather perish struggling against our own cruel people than at the hands of strange foreigners, however kind. Internationals need not have to be hurt for what is our conflict and our journey to take.

We want freedom so instinctively that we want freedom from other sovereign nations too, from their distant, cold analyses dictated by their need to sleep safely at the end of each day, their profit, and their powerful, sacred lives.

It pains us to know that their charity is shaped by war. Their charity may help us out of our 2nd lowest Human Development Index ranking in the world but the war which they choose to hallucinate over only gives them false security and leaves us true madness.

Come live here if your imaginations ever lead you to think that violence makes everyone safer. It does not make any of us, our families, our children, our women or our future any safer. As war has been throughout time, it diminishes us, destroys us and finally, it 'disappears' us.

We grieve for the rest of the world too, for unfortunately, those who admire, emulate and advise the ways of militarism are the ones who will come against every brute force with at least an equal and opposite reaction, a Newtonian principle confirmed in the world of human relations; hate increasing hate, revenge fuelling revenge and a silly sense of retaliatory justice going in vicious circles, all of which we, the ordinary people of Afghanistan and ordinary people of the world, no longer want any part of.