

PLEASE HOLD THESE EVENTS IN THE LIGHT

AUGUST 2002

International Days and major international conferences form a natural rhythm for those who work in meditation and prayer to invoke the lighted, loving energies of divinity and to see those energies inspiring and nourishing all that is being done in the world to create right human relations.

A meditation outline for international Days is available on the web at: www.UNmeditation.org

**August 9
Friday**

International Day of the World's Indigenous People

[http:// www.unhchr.ch/indigenous/](http://www.unhchr.ch/indigenous/)

<http://www.unmeditation.org>

In an increasingly globalised world there is growing concern for the rights and welfare of indigenous communities. This is reflected in this International Day as well as the UN *Decade of the World's Indigenous People* (1994 – 2004). As indigenous communities find their voices in the modern world, they are, in many cases, speaking of an ancient wisdom tradition that offers a spirituality and a connectedness to the Earth. As such the indigenous have a wealth of insight and learning to contribute in the process of building the new civilisation.

The world's indigenous people are remarkably diverse - as groups and as individuals. But there are strong bonds of solidarity and historical grievance. Many also have a deep and abiding reverence for the natural world. And many place great emphasis on spiritual practices. Among the traditions I find particularly powerful is the respect given to elders as carriers of wisdom, to women as carriers of language and culture, and to children as carriers of the identity that is transmitted to future generations...

Kofi Annan

**August 12
Monday**

International Youth Day

www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/news/iyd2002.htm

www.unmeditation.org

A day to focus on the needs of young people and on the vital contribution they make in the creation of a better world.

This year's theme, **Now and for the Future: Youth Action for Sustainable Development**, focuses on the World Summit for Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg later this month.

"Youth are one of nine major groups that participated in the multi-stakeholder dialogue in the preparatory committees leading up to the Johannesburg Summit. The involvement of youth in environment and development decision-making as well as in the implementation of programmes is critical to the long-term success of Agenda 21, a landmark achievement in integrating environmental, economic and social concerns into a single policy framework."

All who have meditated on the act of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of the world depends on the education of youth.

Aristotle

**August 23
Friday** **International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition**
<http://www.antislavery.org>
<http://www.UNmeditation.org>

A Day to celebrate humanity's achievement in abolishing the slave trade.

In deciding to proclaim the 23rd of August of every year International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition, UNESCO wished to inscribe in the memory of all peoples a tragedy that has been forgotten and little known and pay tribute to the slaves' relentless struggle for freedom. The uprising that took place in the island of Santo Domingo (present day Haiti and Dominican Republic) on the night of the 22nd to the 23rd of August 1791 shook the foundations of slavery to the core and marked the start of the process that led to the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

The Day of the 23rd of August is an occasion to recall a tragedy long overlooked and to restore it in its rightful place in the history of humanity bearing in mind its universal nature. The UNESCO "Slave Route" project aims to create a space for collective reflection and analysis about the root causes of the slave trade, how it operated and its consequences, notably the interactions to which it has given rise between Africa, Europe, the Americas and the Caribbean.

Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director-General

August 26 – September 4 **World Summit On Sustainable Development — Johannesburg**
Monday – Wednesday <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org>

A major gathering for governments and concerned people from all areas of life to plan the best way forward in restructuring the relationship between human society and the natural environment. Thousands of people will gather from all over the world in Johannesburg for the event. With our prayers and meditations we can play our part in building an environment of mind and heart at the Summit that will be conducive to wise decisions – we can visualize the event being overshadowed with lighted, loving energies.

A sacred site is to be constructed for the use of the 65,000 people expected to attend the Summit in its various forms. “Surrounded by an open space for sacred ceremonies and rituals, South Africa’s traditional communities will create a tribal link of indigenous dwellings to be used for quiet reflection, meditation, prayer and other appropriate programmes. Spiritual and religious leaders and indigenous people will be especially encouraged to utilize this space to create sacred and transformative experiences that would build unity, community and commitments among the participants.”

World leaders ... gathered at the United Nations almost two years ago for the Millennium Summit. They decided that the first 15 years of this century should be used for a major onslaught on global poverty, and set a number of targets – the Millennium Development Goals – for doing so. But they also resolved to free future generations “from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities”. The Johannesburg Summit aims to find practical ways for humanity to respond to both these challenges – to better the lives of all human beings, while protecting the environment. The Summit also aims to move from commitments – of which we have had plenty, 30 years ago and 10 years ago – to action.

UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan

IN 2002 THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS OBSERVING TWO THEMES OF DEEP SIGNIFICANCE TO ALL – BUT OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THOSE WHO VALUE SUBJECTIVE WORK:

**International Year of Mountains
International Year of Ecotourism**

2002 is also being observed as United Nations Year for Cultural Heritage

Remember these important International Decades:

1993-2003 Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination

1994-2004 International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People

1995-2006 UN Decade for Human Rights Education

1997-2006 UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty

2001-2010 International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World

2003-2012 United Nations Literacy Decade: Education for All

Suggested Meditations in support of UN Days and UN International Years are available on the web at: www.UNmeditation.org

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