

World Harmony Run 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony –Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, NY

Transcript continued.....

- **First organizer of Peace Run, Shambhu Vineberg**, Salutes the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- **NYC Councilman James Gennaro**, a long-time supporter of the World Harmony Run, offered a closing message.
- Special mention of **Larry Matthew, chorus director and Carmen, choir coordinator** for New York City Housing Authority Youth Chorus!
- Appreciation for **Friends of Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza and Sherrill Kazan**
- **A story of two songs**: How the Peace Run and World Harmony Songs were composed to represent this torch relay. Arrangement of two songs, **directed by Prachar Stegemann**

Diplomatic representatives leave the stage and receive roses and World Harmony Run chocolates from Shambhu Vineberg

Salil Wilson , Executive Director, World Harmony Run, The person who gave out the roses and chocolates played a very important role in the early years of this Peace Run. Sri Chinmoy asked him to create the Peace Run, and I am sure he said, “My goodness, how do I do that!” He is a dear friend of mine. We have worked together, and he has taught me an enormous amount. A dear friend, a dear brother – please give a warm welcome to Shambhu!

**Shambhu Vineberg**: Thank you! So, twenty-five years – wow! I remember in 1987, we had put the first Run together in only six months. It was only September of '86 when Sri Chinmoy just said, “Do the Peace Run.” It was something he had been thinking about, wanting us to stage a very, very soulful and meaningful global event that would not spread the *idea* of peace, but would spread the *feeling* of peace from the heart. And “from the heart” is really the essence of what we are doing.

For everybody who is involved with the Run as an organiser, as a runner, as an observer, there is definitely this feeling of the heart that comes through when you are running, when you are carrying the torch. Because at the moment when you are taking the action of sharing this event or conveying the event, you are carrying the spirit. You are the Harmony Run, you are the Peace Run, you are the cause, you are the expression, you are the advocate, you are the peace. And that is the great honour that we all have, to participate in this event and to help carry it forward.

And whether you are the guy asked to put it together, like myself, or whether you are a person who is running or observing, we are all the same, because in the end, **it is not the role that we play; it is the fact that we play the role.** Not the role that we play, but the fact that we take the action and that we put our life and we put our heart and soul into that action.

So, I just want to say that this ceremony will end in a few minutes, but it is really another beginning of another beautiful event, and it will involve millions of people in over a hundred countries this time. And this Run will go on forever. And so I want to thank everyone who has come out, and thank Salil and the great team that keeps this Run going on. I feel so honoured to be able to be here each time.

I just want to end with a quote from Sri Chinmoy: “May the peace I feel in my imagination become a reality in my life. May the peace I feel in my imagination become a reality in my life.” Through this Run and through this day and in this moment, that is happening, because we are making peace, we are making harmony a reality simply by committing ourselves to it. So, thank you all for coming out, thank you to all the runners. I feel very grateful to be here, and blessings to all.

See also: [\*History of development and expansion of Sri Chinmoy Oneness Home Peace and World Harmony Runs.\*](#) From the the [\*Preface\*](#) "I ... had some of the greatest moments of my life leading this event...It began in May 1986 when Sri Chinmoy asked, while we were walking through the hallowed halls of the United Nations, if I could organize a global Peace Run. The United Nations had proclaimed 1986 the International Year of Peace, and Sri Chinmoy wanted to offer a heartfelt and sincere expression of peace on a global scale."

Salil Wilson: Now, just before we send our runners off, and before we have the Youth Chorus come up again, I would like to invite again another dear friend and a real brother, City Councilman of District 24. Please give a warm welcome to Councilman James Gennaro.

**Councilman James Gennaro**: Thank you, Salil. Thank you, Shambhu, for your great years of service in putting this run together. I am not a runner; I thought I would just try to appear as one today! I am a swimmer, but I don't see any water! Thank you, thank you. I wrote down a few remarks; I do not normally do this, but I thought I would walk through them and thank you.

It is a great honour to be among all these wonderful dignitaries who are here today. Let us give them all a round of applause for coming out and supporting us! It is a great honour to be in the shadow of the UN, to be among my dear brothers and sisters and among the lovers of Sri Chinmoy's vision.

**I am honoured to represent the City of New York** in this beautiful, beautiful event. Sri Chinmoy was not only **a great world ambassador of peace and harmony, but by far the leading peace advocate in our great city**, which I am so happy he made his home 48 years ago tomorrow. I believe he **saw New York City as a very, very special place, not only because of the presence of the UN, which he so dearly loved and served, but because it is the most diverse city in the world** – with so many different people, so many different languages, so many different systems of belief. It is indeed the world capital of differences and divisions, it really is. But these differences, if they are able to be harmonised, if they are used to inspire and unite instead of divide, are this city's greatest strength.

I believe Sri Chinmoy saw this in New York City and really embraced our city, and we delighted in his loving embrace, in his peaceful embrace, and we were very much enriched by his really sublime presence. And we were proud that **his presence here in New York City made our city, by extension, the world harmony capital of the world**, which it certainly did. *[Applause]* Yes, you can certainly applaud for that! New York City is really divinely proud that **lovers of his great vision embark today** on this really terrific and really wonderful world mission of harmony. This honours and fulfils Sri Chinmoy and honours our good city.

I think that Sri Chinmoy today is very, very proud, and I wish you all Godspeed. Thank you so much for having me today, and God bless the World Harmony Run.

Salil Wilson: So, we have two more musical pieces: the Youth Chorus, joined by Belinda Munro, and also the World Harmony Run Choir will be performing both the Peace Run and World Harmony Run songs in a miraculous arrangement!

Please welcome back to the stage the New York City Housing Authority Youth Chorus.

**New York City Housing Authority Youth Chorus sings with Belinda Munro  
“Put a Little Love in Your Heart”**

Salil Wilson: I would like to make a **special mention of Larry Matthew**, who is the chorus director. [*Applause*] Absolutely the nicest gentleman you could ever hope to meet. If ever you are feeling sad or unhappy, call Larry! Or **Carmen, choir coordinator** – hiding!

At this stage I would like to make a special mention of the *custodians of this wonderful park* – **the Friends of Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza**. If we could give a round of applause to Sherrill. If you could kindly stand up, Sherrill Kazan – who tirelessly volunteers her time to enable this beautiful park to continue to thrive.

And here we have actually arrived at the end of the ceremony, if the World Harmony Run Choir could kindly come up. While they are coming up, I will just share with you a short anecdote.

**A story of two songs**: We started off with the Peace Run, and Sri Chinmoy had composed a Peace Run song. The night before the World Harmony Run was about to launch, I reminded Sri Chinmoy that he had not yet composed a World Harmony Run song. He then said, “Well, can you not just change the words to the existing song?” And I said, “Well, no, we cannot; the words will not fit.” So then

he composed the World Harmony Run song, and now we have two wonderful songs to represent this torch relay.

World Harmony Run Choir sings arrangement of two songs, directed by Prachar Stegemann

Salil Wilson: And I think now would be the time to declare the **2012 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Harmony Run officially started**. Please give these runners here a big round of applause – and you can run off! Bye! *[Applause]*

**Please follow us online – worldharmonyrun.org**. Thank you so much. And we are finishing back here in August, so keep your ears to the ground and we will make sure that you get an invitation. Thank you again so much for coming.

Full Text of the 25th anniversary video message "***Toward a Oneness-World***". and link to 25 language informal Translations: <http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/25>