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| **Preamble to the Manifesto**. Peace Lines was born in the summer of 1993, from the international convoy Mir Sada (Peace Now) trying to interrupt the war in Bosnia. 2,000 in Split (Poles, Americans, Italians, Greeks, French and Dutch people, Spaniards, Swedes, Buddhist monks...), we were only a thousand left at the Prozor lake (120 vehicles), and around sixty to make it, from Gornji-Vakuf to starving Sarajevo, cut off from the world for fifteen months then. How to accept the famine in Sarajevo besieged by the Serbs, in Novi-Travnik, besieged by the Muslims, in Mostar besieged by the Croats ? A few of us, from countries where, on the surface, everything runs, decided to cross the front lines to convey food, books, medicine, blankets, and to do everything that was in our power to stem the madness of this generalized « ethnical » cutting-up. Later on, we found famine and prostration again on our way, under other latitudes, less than a mile from renowned seaside resorts, on the African coast. This made no headlines. From then on, we who, here, had a rather easy life, with all our systems of distribution, resolved to ply as much as we would have to, at our own rhythm, to re-set a balance between those who have everything close to hand, and those who have nothing at all. On the way, we had to establish the fact that here too, another sort of misery and distress was growing all around, fast. And review the principles which could guide our steps, reassert them :1. **The principle of freedom**. Because the freedom to think and act is threatened everywhere, and not only in the countries known as tyrannies, but down to the ordinary making of our daily habits and servitudes, be they social and professional or intimate, we set our need for freedom at the first rank of the conditions which enable us to think and act according to our convictions. Peace Lines is a non-confessional and non-partisan, borderless movement, open to all free and good-willed beings, as it is written from the very start, in our statutes. Freedom implying the respect of human dignity, free circulation and going about, without hindrance, and free access to knowledge and experience, that forge this dignity.2. **The refusal of hatred and resentment**. We are no 'bleating pacifists'. We do not agree to anything to get peace.We are well aware that, often enough, a conflict has to be faced, debated, and led, to its resolution, in as much as our freedom, our dignity, our peace even, are at stake, and jeopardised. What we refuse is the hateful, venomous, pathological aspect of a mechanical struggle, a vengeance. Disagreement does not necessarily lead to discord, trickery and wrangling.3. **The principle of equality**. Because all people are equal, absolutely, we cannot accept any ruling discrimination, be it ordinary or exceptional, statutory or provisory. Thus, to let people starve, or stagnate in their distress, under whichever pretext of fatality or resignation, means the very beginning of the systems of collective extermination and segregation. We accept no form of separatism, apartheid, whatever its logics may be.4. **The principle of unity, and equivalence of sufferings**. What is happening far from us does not necessarily prevail over what is happening within our walls. Here too, like there, daily horror, the creeping fires of hate and exclusion, of misknown and ignored miseries, command our continuous vigilance, and our prompt solidarity. We cannot forget the warning : « It is the infinite sum of our breaches, however little they may be, that makes great catastrophes possible ». The envenomed conflicts around us weaken us too much to be suffered any longer. One single day is too much.Within us, and around us, the Balkans too, and Sahel : wildness and want.5. **The principle of defence of minorities, of the oppressed**. Because the equivalence of sufferings does not mean the equivalence of responsibilities, we cannot accept speeches of amalgam. Oppression exists, under multiple masks and features, and we have to fight it wherever it triggers its too familiar train of hates, personal boycotts, denials of dialogue. Inasmuch, our fight remains non-violent : we do not resort to weapons, to the oppressors' means, be they civilians, in the private sphere, or uniformed persons, in the public domain.6. **The principle of non-judgement**. Because any morals, soon enough, coops us up into an attitude of superiority, of a sentence with no remedy, implying confinement and estrangement, we prefer the defendant's role to the accuser's. To have done with judgement : one of our daily absolute priorities, in all our relations, poisoned by centuries of oppression, fear and phobias, multiple violences, systems of instauration of terror. Do not close the door...7. **The emancipation from, and rooting out of opinions**. Because we live in a world saturated with partial news, and disinformation, and because we have no wish whatsoever of deceiving or being deceived, we consider it our intimate and methodical priority to emancipate ourselves from ready-made opinions, and root out any system of creeds that may generate exclusive particularisms, and violences.8. **The refusal to carry and use arms, our opposition to the death penalty**. They are linked. Because we consider everything that lives to be holy, we refuse to fight with weapons what we can fight through the spirit and the vigilant determination to live peacefully and safely. The choice of non-violence is the rock bottom of all our acts, be they private or public.9. **The awareness of our limits**. Because we cannot interfere with everything, all the time, we have to stay lucid concerning what is our concern, what is within our control, and what is not. Within the frame of our terrestrial interventions, through roads and borders, vans and combis are our vehicles, and a mere driving licence must be enough. Likewise, we refuse to go beyond given geographical limits, relatively to our real logistical means and range of action. On the other hand, what we do, where we go, we do regularly, and will not give up until we have reached our objectives : the silence of arms, the meeting of fundamental needs, and the development of constructive relations, of trust and cooperation, between people, cities, and populations.10. **The principle of gratuity**. Because a life has no commercial value, and nothing is worth a life, because we refuse any form of slavery, we lay free acts, voluntary deeds, at the very foundation of our practice. What we do to live in peace has no price, and can never be priced.. The freedom and gratuity of our acts are the very condition to have done with the system of general suspicion and of corrupting intentions hereto prevailing. The principle of gratuity, little by little, restores the highest degree of equality between us, known as fraternity. |   |