

Pujya Acharya Chandanaji, Sadhvijis, White House Officials, Brothers and Sisters,

It gives me an immense pleasure to stand before you today and represent 150000 of members of the Jain community of North America. Jain community is founded on the basic tenets of Non-Violence and World Peace. Jain Community has been an integral part of the American social fabric and has contributed to the nation's social and economic development. Our members have always been known for our peace loving ways.

Today, as the world faces turbulent times, Jain principle of "Live and Help Live" can potentially provide the solution we all seek to violence in this world. Founded thousands of years ago by Lord Rishabh Dev our first Tirthankar, our religion found further global acclaim under the guidance Bhagwan Mahavir, our 24th Tirthankar, 2500 years ago. I trust that you will appreciate that 2500 years ago most of the world, as we know today, did not even exist. Our belief in the core guiding principles of world peace and non-violence is a reason why, across the centuries and across the world, you have never heard of any form of violence perpetuated or propagated by members of Jain community.

The United States of America has reached unprecedented heights under the leadership of President Obama whether it is in the field of social change, public healthcare, economic growth or global peace. No new wars were started by USA in last 8 years. His extra-ordinary efforts over the past 8 years have been instrumental in further establishing America as a multi-cultural and inclusive nation where people of every race, religion, ethnicity, nationality and personal preference gets an equal opportunity. We would like to congratulate President Obama for all the steps he has personally taken to strengthen the ties America shares with India. The world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy share similar values on which both the nations were founded.

On behalf of JAINA, it's 67 member organizations and its 150,000 members, I reach out to each one present here today to imbibe and embrace the values of World Peace and Non-violence. JAINA's two major initiatives called the Young Jains of America and Young Jain Professionals have ensured that the younger members of the community are engaged in socially constructive activities. The community always engages it's younger members to ensure their holistic growth since they represent the most vulnerable demographics. Our biennial JAINA convention hosts leading thinkers, scholars and leading members of the civil society to share their wisdom with other members and guide them on various issues. Over 4000 attendees learned about World Peace through Non Violence at JAINA Convention held in Atlanta in July, 2015.

As I conclude, I am reminded of what Mahatma Gandhi had said "An eye for an eye will make the world blind". We believe and will always continue to strive towards such principals since this is the only way ahead for all of us and to leave behind a safe and secure world for our future generations. I as JAINA Chairman appeal from this platform that all my fellow brothers and sisters of America come together and make this world peaceful through Non Violence. Thank You

We have miles and miles to go but come lets walk few miles together and show this word that we citizens of America do believe in World Peace through Non Violence.