DRUMS FOR PEACE
MARCH 19TH, 2027



PRESENTATION INTENDED FOR PRIMARY OR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE

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I. PRESENTATION

A. Who are we?

The « Pôle Créatif Liégeois » (in English: Liège Creative Hub) is a de facto Belgian association whose primary objective is creativity, enabled by providing support for leaders of their own projects and initiatives which aim to protect our planet and the inclusion of people in society.

B. The Drums for Peace project

1. History of Drums for Peace

In 1976, the Belgian poet and resistance fighter Arthur Haulot and his wife Moussia launched « World Poetry-Childhood Day » in Belgium, an event which takes place every year on March 21st. « Drums for Peace » was created as part of this day to raise awareness among primary school children about Peace in the world.

From 2001 to 2010, this action became international when UNESCO invited the « World Poetry-Childhood Day » to participate in the « United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World ». 120 countries and 800,000 children around the world took part in Drums for Peace. After the death of Arthur Haulot (2013) and his wife (2018), no one took over the organizing the event, however the festivities still continued in some municipalities in Wallonia and around the world.

In 2023, the Pôle Créatif Liégeois relaunched and coordinated this initiative through the Wallonia/Brussels Federation, in Belgium, and the event took place on March 21st, 2024. Building on this success, the Pôle chose to internationalize the movement for the March 21, 2025 edition. After the celebration on Friday, March 20, 2026, the event will be held next year on Friday, March 19, 2027, March 21 falling this time on a weekend.

2. What are Drums for Peace?

During this event which takes place every year on March 21st, children gather in a public square or in the courtyard of their school equipped with percussion instruments made with recycled materials. They perform little rhythms, sing songs of peace or recite short poems they have written for the occasion. They also wear a dove-shaped craft attached to their jacket, made in class during the preparation for the event.

3. Details of the organization of Drums for Peace

a) *When?*

March 19th, 2027

b) *Where?*

In primary schools in every country in the world that wish to join the event.

A choice:

- In a public community space (town square, park, community center, etc.)
- In the school yard

c) *How?*

By bringing students together and organizing a demonstration in favor of Peace.

4. Drums for Peace Values

This project calls on children to come together to build a world of harmony, peace, understanding of others and fraternity. This is an initiative that brings hope and awareness to problems in our society. By beating Drums, the children make their call for a less cruel world, for Peace, and for the fight against racism and anti-Semitism, to civil society as a whole.

5. Why this project in your country, city, town?

With the help of their teachers, it is important that children can show their solidarity with the citizens of many countries where armed conflicts are still ongoing.

6. Sustainability of the project

We want to offer this event every year, not just on March 19th, 2027, because raising awareness about World Peace is a long-term project. It is important to worlk consistently towards this goal.

II. OBJECTIVES AND PHILOSOPHY

A. Main objectives of Drums for Peace

1. Festive

Create a festive event around this theme to allow a greater number of children to get involved in this mission of Ambassadors of Peace.

2. Educational

Educate and raise awareness among children about Peace within the school, in particular by introducing them to methods such as NVC, Nonviolent Communication. This also helps prevent school harassment.

3. Create Empathy

Teach school children about the difficulties faced by other children in regions of the world affected by war or conflict.

4. Mobilization

Move the world through the impact of this action if it is followed in many countries and relayed by the media.

5. Continuity

Carry on the experience of the « International Decade of Promotion of a Culture of Peace and non-violence for the benefit of children of the world » where 120 countries and 800,000 children around the world participated in Drums for Peace.

B. Multiple philosophy of the project

- **Believe that Peace is not a utopia**
- **Show that inner Peace is the necessary prerequisite for any Collective and universal peace**
- **Put pacifism at the heart of young people's concerns**
- **Provide an alternative to ambient pessimism**
- **Promote values of tolerance, respect, kindness and educate about Universal Love**

III. CONTEXT

A. The theme

The theme of Drums for Peace has been proposed by the International Day of Children's Poetry since the year 2000. It is also the international day against racism and anti-Semitism.

This project was born in 1998 from the meeting between the general director of UNESCO, Federico Mayor, and the President of the International House of Poetry, Arthur Haulot. On this occasion, Mr. Mayor invited the « Journée Mondiale Poésie-Enfance » to participate in the: « International decade for the promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the children of the world ». Resolution 53/25 of the Assembly of the United Nations.

The Haulot couple responded to Federico Mayor's call by launching the theme « The Drums of Peace » throughout the world. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the Haulot couple and UNESCO wanted to reaffirm that their action does not celebrate Peace but that it calls for children of the world to unite to build it. The theme of « Drums of Peace » then transformed into « Drums for Peace ».

Every year, since 2000, a theme has been chosen. Thus, there was notably:

- The existence of child soldiers
- The violence that is close to us
- A search for the words of Peace and War through the media

Since 2024, the **Pôle Créatif Liégeois** has been leading this citizen initiative, infusing it with an inspiring theme each year:

- **2024:** « Children as Poets, Artisans of Peace »
- **2025:** « Children Rekindle the Flame of Hope »
- **2026:** « Let's Dance for Peace, Our Hearts in Unison »

A commitment that continues with our new theme.

- **2027: Please, Draw Me Your Peace?**

The Genesis of the Theme: An Encounter with The Little Prince

It all begins with a nod to the famous phrase by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: **« Please… draw me a sheep! ».** By choosing this reference, we immediately place ourselves at a child's level. It's a simple, innocent request that uses drawing as a universal language to speak of **Peace**. The goal is to create a link between the innocence of childhood, creativity, and a universal commitment to **Peace**.

The Heart of the Message: Why « YOUR » Peace?

This is the central element: instead of asking them to draw "Peace" ing general (which is often abstract, like a dove or a universal symbol), we ask the child to draw THEIR Peace.

- **It's personal:** We invite the child to look for what, in their heart or their daily life, makes them peaceful. The child then expresses their own reality.
- **It's concrete:** For one child, it might be silence in their room; for another, a hug or a game with a friend.
- **It's about sharing:** We're not giving them a lesson; we're asking them to show us their own vision of **Peace**.

The Finishing Touch: The Question Mark

Unlike the original sentence, which is somewhat of a demand with its exclamation mark, we preferred the question mark.

- This transforms the sentence into a very gentle invitation, an interaction, a dialogue.
- We don't give an order; we ask a question. It's an outstretched hand awaiting a creative response.

In Summary

This 2027 theme is a true conversation. It's as if we were asking each child:

- "Would you be willing to show me what **your Peace** looks like?"
- "And for you, what does being at **Peace** mean?"

It is by understanding each person's Peace that we build Peace for all.

B. The action

The event takes place in three stages:

- The approach to the theme
- Preparing for the event
- Gatherings

All three steps do not necessarily have to be completed. The children can think about the theme, prepare crafts, a song and/or poems without necessarily organizing a gathering.

Conversely, they can organize a gathering of Drummers without going through the reflection phase and preparation (poems, singing and/or crafts).

Experiencing the three stages obviously leaves more impact in the children's experience and gives more meaning to their approach. Everyone is free to organize this event according to their own desires and situation.

C. Anthem

In order to bring together as many countries around the same song of Peace, an anthem in French was chosen. The song proposed to all countries French speakers for the 2027 edition is:

- **We write on the walls, performed by Demis Roussos**

For English-speaking, Spanish-speaking and other countries, schools will be free to choose their anthem.

IV. LOGISTICS

A. Procedures and autonomy

One of the major objectives of this project is that children are placed in the center of the action. They can decide how big they want the event to be (within the classroom, with other classes, with the whole school, with other schools, with the whole city, with other cities, with sister cities, etc.)

Children can:

- Carry out the steps themselves to propose to other classes, schools, cities to achieve a partnership and joint actions
- Propose informational meetings
- Locate the ideal location on a map, public place or other, to carry out the event
- Write to the local authorities to obtain the permits needed to play drums in the chosen public place associated with the project
- Invite community organizations to participate in the organization of the event, each bringing its own specificity:
    - Musical groups
    - Music and Fine Arts Academies (instrument makers, banner, etc.)
    - Volunteer associations that could distribute posters
    - Cultural centers (facilitators)
    - Unarmed soldiers

- Record a filmed report if a member of a student's family (great-grandfather) experienced the war and can testify to it
- Contact the local press

B. Choice of location

Ideally, the gathering that the children organize should take place in a location open to all so that the process involves the public and that the surrounding world is made aware of the action led by the children. The sound of their “Drums for Peace” must appeal to as many people as possible. However, it is not in a schoolyard that passers-by will hear them. But it is not always possible to bring together a school in a public space. It will be best to choose the liveliest place possible or, as a last resort, the schoolyard!

C. Date and duration

As this project was initially dedicated to poetry, it was March 21st that was chosen symbolically. Indeed, UNESCO proclaimed March 21st « World Poetry Day » during its 30th session for education, science and culture, in Paris, in October and November 1999. March 21st is, with September 21st, an emblematic date for UNESCO. September 21st, six months to the day after March 21st, is « International Day of Peace ». It was decided under Resolution A/RES/36/67 of the United Nations General Assembly, 1981.

The duration of Drums for Peace is variable and depends on each school participant. We offer a one-hour activity, from 11 a.m. to noon.

However, everyone is free to organize their event as they wish.

D. Scenario

10:20 a.m.: Gathering in the schoolyard

10:30 a.m.: Departure towards the public place, beating drums

10:45 a.m.: Arrival at the public place

11:00 a.m.: Start of the event. Speech by the presenter who will announce the different actions and coordinate the drumming:

- Drum beats
- Word from the presenter
- Word from the Mayor/local leader
- Drum beats
- Children read poems
- Drum beats
- Visual presentation
- Drum beats
- Song sung by the children
- Drum beats
- Flash mob ➔ proposal for this year in connection with the theme of the 2026 edition: “Let’s dance for Peace, our hearts in unison”
- Drum beats and finale

12:05 p.m.: Back to school

As a reminder, this is just a suggestion and can be adapted.

E. Construction of a percussion instrument

We recommend that children make their own percussion instruments. A plastic bottle, an old carton of detergent, or an empty tin can are enough to make small instruments which will be used for your gathering. This approach is very lively and wins great success with schools. It helps to both awaken children to sounds and educate them about environmental issues. However, it is interesting that one child in twenty has a real percussion instrument or musical toy. They sound better than wooden spoons on a yogurt container.

F. Rhythms

Here is a fun, clever and very easy to apply little method to achieve a beautiful effect during your Drum gathering for Peace:

1. **With the children, go over the first words of the four well-known children's songs below:**
   - *a) Brother Jack*
   - *b) Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*
   - *c) Itsy Bitsy Spider*
   - *d) Row, Row, Row Your Boat*
2. **Remove the melody and say the sentence, scrupulously respecting the rhythm and the initial tempo.**
3. **With your hands, beat this rhythm along with the words: one beat per syllable.**
4. **Beat the rhythm without the words.**
5. **Repeat the rhythm in a loop by knocking, striking or shaking the instrument you have built.**
6. **When you master these few sentences, you can already achieve polyrhythmic orchestration. Ex.: Brother Jack - Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star - Itsy Bitsy Spider - Row, Row, Row Your Boat. The four proposed sentences were chosen from a panoply of traditional binary songs whose rhythm is easy to carry out by a beginner. Other proposals exist in the resource that we offer on the Pôle Créatif Liégeois website (in french).**

G. Organization and coordination

During gatherings, we recommend designating different leaders for:

- Supervision of children for the route from school to the gathering place, arranging groups in the meeting location, coordinating banners or other signs to showcase each school if several schools participate, ...
- Road safety: signs, markers, police assistance, etc.
- The rhythm of the Drums
- Contact with the local authorities
- The schedule of the event
- Traffic around the podium: backstage, ...
- Technical aspects (sound system, etc.)
- The presenter on the podium who will highlight connections between the different important moments
- The marketing and promotion of the event

H. Material

For the biggest impact of your gathering, particularly if there are many participants, you can plan to have:

- A podium, ideally covered in case of rain so that the speakers are clearly visible
- Two microphones and a sound system
- Banners and/or visual symbols created in class
- Barricades to secure your gathering place.

To obtain this type of material, contact the local authorities.

V. OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

Beating the Drums for Peace can be an opportunity to connect with local associations and/or groups in order to build relationships and receive help.

Here are some ideas for partnerships:

- The local authorities for distribution in schools, permits to occupy the public place, the safety of children (barriers), borrowing the podium and the sound system, etc.
- Theater academies for an emcee/presenter or participant to read poems, although it is important to give children the opportunity to read their writing
- Veterans' associations to share their experiences and help children to become aware of the theme: « Children rekindle the flame of hope »
- All people who have direct or indirect experience with working to create world Peace or an experience of war. For example: members from an NGO, UNICEF, Handicap International, Amnesty, or even a deminer, a career soldier, etc.
- Artists from different disciplines for their brilliant ideas, for example Djembe players to give a common rhythm

VI. VISIBILITY

To ensure the success of the event, it will be important to inform the greatest number of people possible by:

- Creating leaflets, written by the children, which invite residents to come beat Drums with students. The city government could provide printing assistance and/or take care of its distribution
- The information could be disseminated via the local city bulletin
- Placing posters in stores to announce the event
- Notifying the local press. By doing this, radio broadcasts and television channels will share the event and articles will appear in the written press

VII. APPENDICES - PRESS KIT

Testimonials from the March 20, 2026 event can be found on the Pôle Créatif Liégeois web page dedicated to Tambours 2026:

https://www.polecreatifliegeois.be/tambours/tambours-2026/photos-et-videos-2026

Those from March 21, 2025 can be found on the Pôle Créatif Liégeois web page dedicated to Tambours 2025:

https://www.polecreatifliegeois.be/tambours/tambours-2025/photos-et-videos-2025

For previous editions, here is an overview of events in Belgium and abroad:

A. In Belgium

1. Brussels-Capital Region

- Molenbeek - 2022: https://youtu.be/HBh2pTwG3bU?si=_LF0MmibMRASWtig

2. Walloon region

a) Province of Walloon Brabant

- Waterloo - 2011: https://www.dhnet.be/regions/brabant/2011/03/22/les-tambours-ont-vibre-pour-la-paix-ZS2SGDMUM5CHXCGFYAMC32S55U/

b) Province af Hainaut

- Farciennes - 2019: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=639514616499162
- Farciennes - 2021: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=152913490029228
- Farciennes - 2023:
  - https://youtu.be/VhaWsHDQngU?si=q87qKYuyq1fAJqL3
  - https://www.sudinfo.be/id633889/article/2023-03-14/pres-de-500-enfants-battront-les-tambours-pour-la-paix-ce-21-mars-2023
  - https://www.telesambre.be/emissions/les-tambours-de-la-paix-ont-retenti-farciennes/56026

- Farciennes - 2024: https://www.dhnet.be/regions/charleroi/2024/03/16/faites-du-bruit-pour-la-paix-450-ecoliers-vont-battre-tambours-pour-la-paix-ce-21-mars-a-farciennes-O4SUFY6NI5HNJFCG43RWHW2T3M/

c) *Province of Liège*

- Huy - 2014: https://www.rtc.be/video/info/tambours-de-la-paix_1479573_325.html
- Angleur - 2016: https://www.rtc.be/video/info/tambours-de-la-paix-a-angleur_1473027_325.html
- Sclessin - 2022: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=298798185553040
- Hôpital CHC Liège - 2022: https://www.chc.be/Actualite/Tambours-pour-la-paix-2022
- Hôpital CHC Liège - 2023: https://www.chc.be/Actualite/tambours-pour-la-paix-2023
- Hannut - 2024: https://www.rtc.be/article/info/enseignement/les-eleves-de-hannut-ont-battu-les-tambours-pour-la-paix_1518484_325.html
- Seraing, at the « Ecole de la Jeunesse » - 2024: https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=365307729832224&id=100090589998471
- Seraing, at the « Ecole des Bouleaux » - 2024: https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=376091328581072&id=100085406232633

d) *Province of Luxembourg*

- Bertrix - 2017: https://www.tvlux.be/video/info/jeunesse/battez-tambours-pour-la-paix_25469.html
- Marche-en-Famenne, Chiny and Florenville - 2018: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1883793881645073
- Etalle - 2022: https://www.tvlux.be/video/info/jeunesse/journee-des-tambours-de-la-paix-l-ecole-communale-d-etalle-attendait-ca-depuis-2-ans_39819.html
- Province of Luxembourg - 2023: https://www.sudinfo.be/id634334/article/2023-03-16/les-tambours-pour-la-paix-cest-ce-21-mars-en-province-de-luxembourg
- Arlon - 2024: https://www.lavenir.net/regions/luxembourg/2024/03/21/les-petits-arlonais-tambourinent-aussi-pour-la-paix-VDNLDHDZSREVRK2ZNN2NA4VGAY/
- Neufchâteau - 2024: https://www.lavenir.net/regions/luxembourg/neufchateau/2024/03/21/un-millier-deleves-tambourinent-pour-la-paix-pour-la-premiere-fois-a-neufchateau-video-6NPFQY6AOVH2BBV7ZULZO7TK4A/
- Neufchâteau and Marche-en-Famenne - 2024: https://www.rtbf.be/article/les-tambours-pour-la-paix-reunissent-1000-enfants-sur-la-place-de-lhotel-de-ville-de-neufchateau-11348122

B. Other countries

- France: Saint-Brieuc with the French Drum School ;
- New Caledonia: Noumea ;
- Luxembourg: with the Scuola materna cattolica internazionale ;
- Democratic Republic of Congo: at Collège Dr Cécile Mboyo ;
- South Africa: with the « Constitution Hill Human Rights Festival » ;
- Italy: Fiumicino, Rome, Naples, Campobasso, … with EIP Italia Scuola Instrumento di Pace.

Grab your colored pencils, Peace awaits you...