



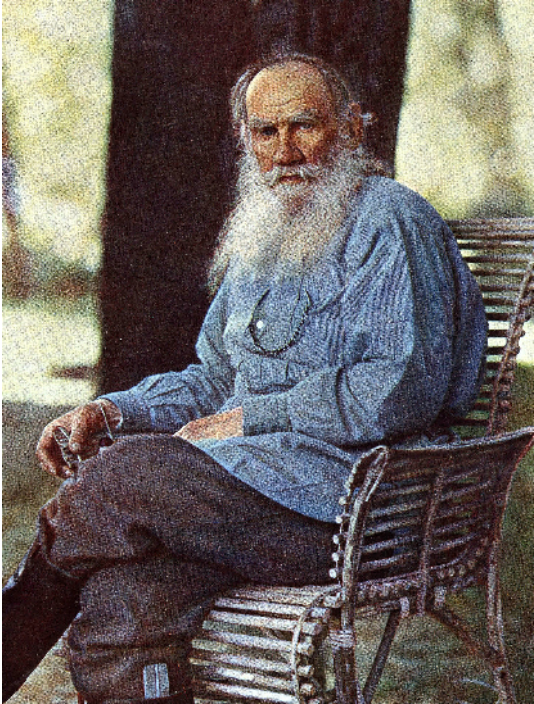
Pedalling for Peace

Journeys Across Borders and Cultures

Bike for Peace · 50 years of people-to-people diplomacy

Jawaharlal Nehru University · Centre for Russian and Central Asian Studies
New Delhi, 9 September 2026

One line of non-violence



Leo Tolstoy

1828–1910



Mahatma Gandhi

1869–1948



Martin Luther King Jr.

1929–1968



Tore Nærland

Bryne, Norway

Tolstoy wrote it. Gandhi made it a political method. King carried it on.
Nærland put it on wheels.

Dialogue is the answer to conflict — people to people.

What is Bike for Peace?

- A humanitarian peace organisation founded in Norway in **1976** by Tore Nærland.
- Represents **no government** and takes **no side** in any conflict.
- Hundreds of peace tours in **more than 125 countries** since the first international ride in Northern Ireland in 1978.
- **The method:** cycle into the places where the conflict is, meet the people on both sides, and lift up those already working for peace.
- **The tool:** the tandem bicycle. Two riders, one bicycle, one direction.



The tandem — where it all began 1976



Tore on the family farm on Jæren, Norway



After his sight failed

Tore Nærland grew up on a farm and lost most of his sight to a hereditary disease of the optic nerve. In 1976 he sat on a tandem bicycle for the first time — and found the image his whole philosophy rests on:

the one in front sees the road, the one behind provides the power. Neither gets anywhere alone.

Coast to Coast across the USA 1977



Tore in the Daily News after the ride

A visually impaired farm boy from Norway crosses the United States on a tandem, and the American press takes notice.

The lesson: **if a bicycle ride can attract attention, it can also carry a message.** And there is no greater message than peace.

It begins in Northern Ireland 1978



*Mairead Corrigan, Belfast — Nobel Peace Prize 1976,
co-founder of the Peace People*

The first international ride goes straight into “the Troubles” in Belfast.

Here the **Bike for Peace method** is born:

- go where the conflict is, not to a safe capital
- take no side — meet the people on both sides
- seek out those already working for peace, and lift up their work

Diplomats negotiate between states. Bike for Peace creates contact between people.

Around the world — Rome and Cairo 1979



Audience with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican



Tore and his friend Marit with Egypt's first lady, Jehan Sadat, in Cairo

1979: from Rome in the west to Hiroshima in the east.

Tore came with no demands and no programme, only an outstretched hand — and precisely for that reason it was taken.

Egypt signed its peace treaty with Israel that same year.

India — Bombay to Calcutta by tandem 1979



Tore and Marit on the tandem through the crowds

In Gandhi's own country, Tore and Marit rode the tandem across India from Bombay to Calcutta, through crowds that gathered every time they stopped.

At the school for the blind in Bombay the boys tried the bicycle themselves, with Marit at the handlebars.

For Tore, himself visually impaired, this was never charity from above but **a meeting of equals.**

Received by Prime Minister Morarji Desai 1979



Meeting India's Prime Minister — a conversation in the spirit of Gandhi

The Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy took the time to meet a peace cyclist from Norway.

Desai was himself a devoted follower of Gandhi's non-violence: here sat a man who had lived his whole life in the tradition Tore had made his own — the line from Tolstoy through Gandhi to King, now drawn onward on two wheels.

India has been part of the Bike for Peace story from the very first world journey.

Hiroshima — a letter that changed everything 1979



The Peace Park in Hiroshima

In a Hiroshima hospital Tore met **Kameno Fujiwara**, who survived the bomb of 6 August 1945 and woke six weeks later, blind and paralysed.

After he returned to Norway, a letter arrived from her: it was good that they cycled for the rights of the disabled — **but why on earth did they not cycle against nuclear weapons?**

The question never let go. The struggle against nuclear weapons became the thread running through Bike for Peace's entire work.

The 1983 Peace Ride — Moscow to Washington 1983



The route: Moscow – Oslo – New York – Washington DC



Christopher Senie (USA) and Vladimir Semenets (Soviet Union) on one tandem

At the height of the Cold War, with the Soviet Peace Committee as co-organiser, Americans and Soviet citizens pedalled the same tandems from Moscow to Washington DC.

Two riders who must trust each other for the bicycle to move at all — **the Cold War answered with a tandem.**

From Moscow to the Wall 1987–1989



With nuclear physicist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Andrei Sakharov, Moscow, 1987



Tore tears loose pieces of the Berlin Wall, 1989

Sakharov had helped build the Soviet bomb and then became its most famous opponent. Two years later the Wall that divided Europe came down.

Bike for Peace kept cycling across the borders in between — because walls are torn down by people who have already met each other.

Into the closed nuclear cities — and into the UN 1991–1993



*Top: Russia's Deputy Defence Minister Vitaly Shlykov in Bryne, 1991.
Bottom: Mayor Valery Takoyev in the nuclear city Arzamas-16*



Meeting UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, New York, 1992

After the Cold War Bike for Peace visited Russia's closed nuclear cities and met the minister of atomic energy — and carried the appeal for disarmament to the United Nations.

Track two diplomacy: the conversation between people that keeps the connection alive when states cannot meet.

The 1999 World Ride — Beijing to Bergen 18 March – 29 June 1999



Beijing – Almaty – Moscow – Bergen, across two continents

From China's capital across the steppes of Central Asia, through Kazakhstan and the vast Russian land, home to the west coast of Norway.

"A line that knows no blocs and no alliances, only roads and people."

Where Gandhi's Salt March went on foot, this one went on two wheels: the message carried through the landscape at a pace that makes it possible to stop and talk.

Central Asia and Russia, one village at a time 1999



Bread of peace — the hospitality in Kazakhstan made a deep impression



Kjetil Ragde (Norway) and Ada Kosynkina (St. Petersburg) on one tandem across the Ural Mountains

Schools, peace committees, Olympic champions and village elders along the road.
A Norwegian and a Russian on the same tandem across the Urals: **people-to-people diplomacy is not a slogan, it is a seating arrangement.**

Kazakhstan — proof that it can be done 2011–2015



Tore, Secretary of State Kanat Saudabayev, Norway's ambassador Dag Halvorsen and Frank Tomlinson, presidential palace, Astana, 2011



Start in front of the US Capitol with the Kazakh artist Karipbek Kuyukov, 2015

At Semipalatinsk the Soviet Union tested atomic bombs for more than forty years. Independent Kazakhstan inherited the world's fourth-largest nuclear arsenal — and **gave it all up** and closed the test site.

Karipbek Kuyukov, born without arms because of the tests, paints with his mouth and toes and rides with Bike for Peace. **What Kazakhstan did alone, the world can do together.**

Around the world in 72 days 2014



Tore and Anita Valen meet Pope Francis in St Peter's Square



Bike for Peace meeting UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, New York

From the Vatican to the United Nations: the same simple method that worked in Belfast in 1978 still opens doors.

Go there, reach out your hand, talk together.

Back in India — friends in Delhi 2015



Bike for Peace has returned to India again and again since 1979.

In 2015 and again in 2019, the Delhi peace organisation **Shanti Sahyog** and Dr Suman Khanna Aggarwal received Bike for Peace — bonds that have lasted since.

In 2026 the anniversary journey around the world **starts here, in Delhi.**

Frank Tomlinson, Suman Khanna Aggarwal, Tore and Maria Bilyk at Shanti Sahyog, Delhi

Norway–Russia peace dialogue

March 2026



On the staircase of the State Duma after meeting the committee on international affairs, Moscow, 24 March 2026



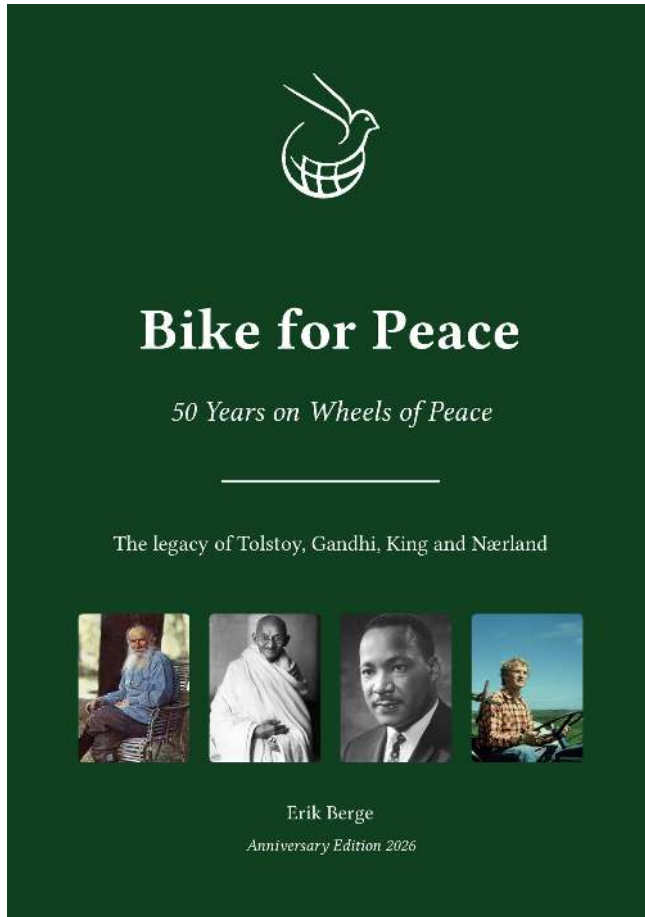
Tore and the delegation with students at MGIMO University, 25 March 2026

Murmansk Arctic University, the Federation Council, the State Duma, the Foreign Ministry and MGIMO — at a time when official contact between Norway and Russia is largely closed.

At MGIMO five students, all named Maria, asked their questions in Norwegian, Swedish and Danish.

"Boycotting young people solves nothing. It only builds the walls higher." — Tore Nærland

The anniversary book 2026



Published for the 50th anniversary, in Norwegian and English, and carried with the delegation around the world.

Part one tells the story on these slides in full — from the tandem on Jæren to the Norway–Russia dialogue of 2026.

Part two looks ahead: how to reach a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2045, what peace could look like in Ukraine, the Middle East and Sudan — and what each of us can do.

"Bike for Peace — 50 Years on Wheels of Peace", by Erik Berge

Around the World 2026

1 September – 31 October 2026

Finland	Helsinki	1–5 September
India	Delhi	6–9 September
Malaysia	Kuala Lumpur	10–14 September
Indonesia	Denpasar, Bali	14–18 September
Australia	Brisbane	19–24 September
Fiji	Suva	24–29 September
USA	Honolulu	29 September – 5 October
USA	Phoenix	6–10 October
Mexico	Mexico City	10–17 October
USA	Oklahoma City	17–21 October
USA	Atlanta	21–26 October
USA	New York	26–30 October

Fifty years after the first tandem, Bike for Peace travels around the world: **two months, nine countries, four continents.**

In every city: politicians, universities, schools, faith communities and peace organisations.

The message we carry: peace in Ukraine, Russia, Europe and the Middle East — and a world without nuclear weapons by 2045.

The journey ends at the UN in New York, where the appeal for a nuclear-weapon-free world is handed over.

A nuclear-weapon-free world by 2045

100 years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki

- Nuclear-weapon-free zones already cover most of the southern hemisphere — Latin America, Africa, the Pacific, South-East Asia and Central Asia.
- Kazakhstan gave up the world's fourth-largest arsenal. The closure of its test site is now the UN International Day against Nuclear Tests.
- Emperor Ashoka laid down the sword after Kalinga. The voluntary renunciation of the powerful is history's strongest language of peace.

What Kazakhstan did alone, the world can do together.

What can you do? young people and people-to-people diplomacy

- **Refuse to reduce a whole people to an enemy.** Seek out the one human being you can build a bridge to.
- **Build friendships across borders** — through travel, study, letters and the internet. You have a reach no generation before you had.
- **Listen** to people from countries in conflict with each other. The vast majority, whatever their flag, would rather live in peace.
- **Support disarmament** and humanitarian work — and keep the conversation open when it is most unpopular. That is when it matters most.

"The enemy is an idea before he becomes an enemy — and the idea can be refused."

"A tandem goes nowhere if only one rider pedals. The bridge is built from both sides, one stone at a time. Your stone counts."

Tolstoy wrote to the young Gandhi across every border. Gandhi refused to see a beast in the British soldier. King held that the adversary too has a conscience.

Two things you can do today

- 1 Sign the appeal** for a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2045.
Every signature is handed to the United Nations in New York in October.
- 2 Read the book** — the whole story behind these slides, free to read online.
"Bike for Peace — 50 Years on Wheels of Peace"

2045.bikeforpeace.no/jnu

Scan the code or type the address. Both take one minute.



2045.bikeforpeace.no/jnu



Dialogue is the answer to conflict

People to people

Thank you — dhanyavaad — takk

Bike for Peace · bikeforpeace.no · tore@bikeforpeace.no
Sign the appeal and read the book: 2045.bikeforpeace.no/jnu