

International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF)

32nd World Congress

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Declaration on Peace

Our world today is full of violence and conflict as people's capacities to tolerate differences – cultural, social, and religious - have been shackled by greed, poverty, anger, despair, delusion, and denial of the suffering of the majority of humanity. Our tragedy is that we continue to "use war to stop war." War does not stop war; it only brings more violence and pain into the world. In this violent and troubled new century, in which war and violence continue, the dream of forging a lasting peace in the world has grown even more urgent.

As global citizens, we understand profoundly that all beings affect each other and the planet we share. We must work together as a family to survive. Respect, tolerance and compassion will ultimately lead us to world peace and harmony; but it will take endurance, great love, and courage to turn from a will to war to a will to peace.

Religion can no longer be an accomplice to war, to terrorism, or to any other forms of violence, organized or spontaneous, against any member of the human family.

We, as members of the International Association for Religious Freedom — an organization committed to religious freedom through communication and cooperation for peace among the world's religions — have an obligation to actively promote a new vision of society, one in which war has no place in resolving disputes between and among states, organizations, and religions.

We, therefore, call upon members of IARF and the human family to

- Recognize that all human beings are created equal.
- Believe in the sanctity and integrity of all life and life forms.
- Show more concern towards preserving the Earth, nature, and humanity from disaster.
- Affirm freedom of religion and belief.
- Move from tolerance for to appreciation of those who are different from us

recognizing that we are bound together by our common humanity despite our differences.

- Rejoice in our rich diversity of expression, our brilliant tapestry of experience, insight, and creativity.
- Strive to accept each and every religion and spiritual tradition for the path to peace it offers.
- Reflect on our actions and motives in order to make a conscious effort to transform our own potential for anger and hostility into compassion for all.
- Affirm the principles of peace and nonviolence in governing human behavior towards one another and all life.
- Seek diligently to resolve conflicts and adversities through peaceful means.
- Advocate equality, peace, and harmony for all humanity.
- Provide better access to education for generations to come and provide opportunities for new experiences.
- Show more concern and care for the innocent, teaching the young that no killing is benevolent, no stealing is righteous, no sexual misconduct is acceptable behavior, and no lying is trust.
- Embrace the ideals of equality and respect whenever we encounter difference.

We proclaim for our time and the ages to come a mutual tolerance, acceptance, and respect among all religions and spiritual traditions of the world. When we are truly able to imagine that the conditions of others are our own, and that all of us are truly equal, then a lasting peace will slowly but surely find its way into this world.

`May we dwell together in peace, seek the truth in love, and help one another to create a world more fair, just, and peaceful.'

