



THE FIRST UN
WORLD INTERFAITH
HARMONY WEEK



SUMMARY - 2011

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THE OFFICIAL UN
WORLD INTERFAITH
HARMONY WEEK



First Week of February

www.WorldInterfaithHarmonyWeek.com

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INTRODUCTION

In September 2010, His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan proposed a World Interfaith Harmony Week at the Plenary session of the 65th United Nations General Assembly in New York. One in a long list of His Majesty's pioneering initiatives to bring peace and harmony between the peoples of the world, the Draft Resolution for the World Interfaith Harmony Week was later presented by HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, Special Advisor to and Personal Envoy of His Majesty King Abdullah II before the United Nations General Assembly where it was unanimously adopted on October 20th, 2010.

United Nations Resolution A/65/PV.34; the World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) as it is called, recognises the first week of February of every year as a time when people of all faiths, and those of no faith, work together to promote and celebrate religious and cultural understanding and cooperation, to address each

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other in favorable terms drawn from their own traditions and to accept and respect ‘the other’ based on the foundations of ‘Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour’, or ‘Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbour’. Remarkably the World Interfaith Harmony Week excludes no one and includes and unites everyone.

Events

With little over three months between the adoption of the Resolution and the first week of February 2011, much determination and drive were needed to see the Resolution come to fruition. The world was quick to respond through lectures, seminars, workshops and interfaith breakfasts. Schools all over the world shared their vision for interfaith harmony through artistic and academic expression. In Indonesia a stadium filled with 10,000 people gave voice to interfaith harmony and a religious conference was hosted in China. In all, more than 200 events honoring the World Interfaith Harmony Week took place in over 40 countries. The

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first week of February 2011 truly was a week in which peace and harmony were honored.

Endorsements

Endorsements of the Resolution came from all sectors of the international community and from heads of religious organizations the world over. Political leaders were also quick to endorse the WIHW and the European People's Party (EPP) released a declaration of support; (see page 40). Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon, called the WIHW “a unique, historical and unprecedented potential to promote the healing of interfaith tensions in the world”; (see page 37).

Letters of Support

Religious leaders of different faiths stressed the importance of the timing of the Resolution. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, Secretary General of the World Council of Churches said:

This is vital in times when there are many who seek to divide people of

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faith instead of finding ways to enhance our lives together through the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination. (see page 93).

The General Secretary of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu said:

Observance of the World Interfaith Harmony Week will serve peoples of all faiths and beliefs to coexist in peace, harmony and goodwill. (See page 95).

Origins

With so much praise and excitement generated by the Resolution, it is natural to ask how it came about. What was the background to this momentous event? It is important to know that it was the culmination of years of hard work, and the logical conclusion to previous peace initiatives which can now all be viewed

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in a single framework of three ever-widening circles of love.

The Amman Message

www.ammanmessage.com

The first circle was intra-Islam and began in 2005 with the declaration of 'The Amman Message'. This declaration defined:

1. Who is Muslim?
2. Who can and cannot be declared an apostate [takfir]?
3. Who has the right to issue a fatwa?

Over a period of a year from July 2005 to July 2006, these three points were unanimously adopted by numerous international Islamic scholarly assemblies including the International Islamic Conference in Amman (July 2005), the Organization of the Islamic Conference Summit at Mecca (December 2005) and the International Islamic Fiqh Academy of Jeddah, (July 2006). In total, over 500 leading Muslim scholars worldwide unanimously endorsed the Amman Message

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and its three points. These points aimed at building a consensus among the Islamic community on what “Islam is and what it is not, and what actions represent it and what actions do not ... to clarify to the modern world the true nature of Islam and the nature of true Islam”.

This is good news not only for Muslims, for whom it provides a basis for unity and a solution to infighting, but also for non-Muslims. This consensus means inherently preserving traditional Islam’s internal ‘checks and balances’. It thus assures balanced Islamic solutions for essential issues like human rights; women’s rights; freedom of religion; legitimate jihad; good citizenship of Muslims in non-Muslim countries, and just and democratic government. It also exposes the illegitimate opinions of radical fundamentalists and terrorists from the point of view of true Islam.

With this initiative, which addressed putting contemporary Islam’s house in order, firmly established, it was now logical to address the issues that Islam, the

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second largest religion in the world, had with the largest religion in the world, Christianity.

A Common Word

www.acommonword.com

The second circle of love was inter-religious. The *A Common Word* Initiative was launched on October 13, 2007 as an open letter signed by 138 leading Muslim scholars and intellectuals (including such figures as the Grand Muftis of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Oman, Bosnia, Russia, Chad and Istanbul) to the leaders of the Christian Churches and denominations all over the world.

In essence, it proposed, based on verses from the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Bible, that Islam and Christianity share at their core, the twin "golden" commandments of the paramount importance of loving God and loving the neighbour. These two commandments are the very foundational principles of both faiths. Based on this joint common ground, *A Common Word* called for

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peace and harmony between Christians and Muslims worldwide.

Since the launch of *A Common Word* over 60 leading Christian figures have responded to it in one form or another, including HH Pope Benedict XVI, HB Orthodox Patriarch Alexi II of Russia, the Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams, and the Presiding Bishop of the Lutheran World Federation, Bishop Mark Hanson. In November 2007, over 300 leading U.S. Evangelical leaders responded to *A Common Word* in an open letter in the New York Times. In the meantime, the Muslim Scholars signing the initiative increased to around 300, with over 460 Islamic organizations and associations endorsing it.

Finding common ground between Muslims and Christians is not simply a matter for polite ecumenical dialogue between selected religious leaders. Christianity and Islam are the largest and second largest religions in the world and in history. Christians and Muslims reportedly make up over a third and over a

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fifth of humanity respectively; together they are more than 55% of humanity, making the relationship between these two religious communities the most important factor in meaningful peace around the world. Without peace and justice between Muslims and Christians, there can be no meaningful peace in the world.

The outcomes of *A Common Word* have been immense and as diverse as conferences, seminars, books and exchanges between religious leaders. As with the Amman Message, the aim was to focus on getting the leaders to agree, and then on helping them spread the message through their respective networks. This latter part is clearly an on-going process.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week

www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com

The final circle of love is addressed to all of humanity. In September 2010, HM King Abdullah II addressed the 65th UN General Assembly and proposed the idea for a 'World Interfaith Harmony Week' to further

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broaden his goals of faith-driven world harmony by extending his call beyond the Muslim and Christian community to include people of all beliefs, and those with no set religious beliefs. A few weeks later, HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad presented the proposal to the UN General Assembly, where it was adopted unanimously as a UN annual Observance Event for the first week of February.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week seeks to spread the message of harmony and tolerance. The foundational principles used in *A Common Word* of ‘Love of God and Love of the neighbour’, are extended to **‘Love of God and Love of the neighbour’** or **‘Love of the Good and Love of the neighbour’**.

This is not a call to water down one's faith, but rather is a call to respect our differences and unite around the basic principles that people of all beliefs agree upon and to understand that harmony can only come if we build upon a solid foundation of dialogue that has “Love of God and Love of the neighbour” or, “Love of the

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Good and Love of the neighbour” as its core principle for engagement.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week provides a platform—one week a year—when all interfaith groups and other groups of goodwill can show the world what a powerful force they can be. The thousands of events organized by these groups often go unnoticed not only by the general public, but also by other interfaith groups. This week will allow these groups to become aware of each other and build ties and to avoid duplicating each others’ efforts.

With over 300 Letters of Support, and 200 registered events in over 40 countries, all organized in little over 3 months, the first World Interfaith Harmony Week (February, 2011) was a success.

It is hoped that this initiative will provide a focal point from which all people of goodwill can recognize that the common values they hold far outweigh the differences they have, and thus be a foundation stone

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on which to build a more peaceful and harmonious world.

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1. The World Interfaith Harmony Week Resolution UNGA Resolution A/65/PV.34

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 53/243 of 13 September 1999 on the declaration and programme of action relating to a culture of peace, 57/6 of 4 November 2002 concerning the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, 58/128 of 19 December 2003 on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation, 60/4 of 20 October 2005 on a global agenda for dialogue among civilizations, 64/14 of 10 November 2009 on the Alliance of Civilizations, 64/81 of 7 December 2009 on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace and 64/164 of 18 December 2009 on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief,

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Recognizing the imperative need for dialogue among different faiths and religions in enhancing mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people,

Recalling with appreciation various global, regional and subregional initiatives on mutual understanding and interfaith harmony including the Tripartite Forum on Interfaith Cooperation for Peace, and the initiative "A Common Word",

Recognizing that the moral imperatives of all religions, convictions and beliefs call for peace, tolerance and mutual understanding,

1. Reaffirms that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace;
2. Proclaims the first week of February of every year the World Interfaith Harmony Week between all religions, faiths and beliefs;

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3. Encourages all States to support, on a voluntary basis, the spread of the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world's churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other places of worship during that week, based on love of God and love of one's neighbour or on love of the good and love of one's neighbour, each according to their own religious traditions or convictions;
4. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the General Assembly informed of the implementation of the present resolution.

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2. His Majesty King Abdullah's address at the Plenary Session of the 65th General Assembly of the United Nations in New York on Thursday September 26, 2010, in which he proposed the World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim

President Deiss, Mr Secretary General, Your Excellencies, More than ever before, our world is confronting multiple global crises, which cannot be effectively addressed, without a coordinated, multilateral action. No country can face these crises and provide for its future in isolation. The threats are global, and so are the solutions. A strong, central role for the United Nations is essential. It is also essential to resist forces of division that spread misunderstanding and mistrust, especially among peoples of different religions. The fact is, humanity everywhere is bound together, not only by mutual interests, but by shared commandments, to love God and neighbour; to love the good and neighbour. This

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week, my delegation, with the support of our friends on every continent, will introduce a draft resolution for an annual World Interfaith Harmony Week. What we are proposing is a special week, during which the world's people, in their own places of worship, could express the teachings of their own faith about tolerance, respect for the other and peace. I hope this resolution will have your support. My friends, Another critical area for UN leadership is peace, and one peace hangs in the balance today. With direct negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis, a door opens to a final, two-state settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the establishment of an independent, viable and sovereign Palestinian state, living side by side with Israel, will pave the way for a comprehensive regional peace. An end to this conflict is long overdue. No regional crisis has had a longer or broader impact on global security and stability. No such crisis has been longer on the UN agenda or has frustrated peacemakers more. Every resource spent in this conflict is a resource lost for investing in progress and prosperity. Every day spent is a day lost to forces of

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violence and extremism that threaten all of us in the region and beyond. People are wary of disappointment, and spoilers are doing everything they can to make us fail. We cannot underestimate the importance of success, or the painful cost of failure. All of us need to support swift action, hard choices and real results. The alternative is more suffering deeper frustrations with spreading, more vicious warfare. Such a catastrophic scenario will continue to drag in the whole world, threatening security and stability far beyond the borders of the Middle East. To prevent that, the talks must be approached with commitment, sincerity and courage. There should be no provocative or unilateral actions that can derail the negotiations. Instead, the parties must work hard to produce results, and quickly. That means addressing all final-status issues, with a view to ending the occupation and reaching the two-state solution, the only solution that can work, as soon as possible. The status quo is simply unacceptable, Enough injustice, enough bloodshed. Jordan and the rest of the Arab and Muslim worlds are committed. In the Arab Peace Initiative, we reach out

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to Israel with an unprecedented opportunity for a comprehensive settlement, A settlement that will enable Israel to have normal relations with 57 Arab and Muslim states, one-third of the United Nations. Now, we reach out to you, our fellow members of this United Nations. All stand to lose if the talks fail; all gain when peace is achieved. Our global and collective influence is key. Together, we must tip the balance towards peace. Thank you.

3. H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, Personal Envoy of and Special Advisor to H.M. King Abdullah II, delivers H.M. King Abdullah II's World Interfaith Harmony Week proposal at UN on Oct.20, 2010

Bism Illah Al-Rahman Al-Raheem

Mr. President, I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the 29 other co-sponsors Albania, Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Bangladesh; Costa Rica; the Dominican Republic; Egypt; El Salvador; Georgia; Guatemala; Guyana; Honduras; Kazakhstan; Kuwait; Liberia; Libya; Mauritius; Morocco; Oman; Paraguay; Qatar; the Russian Federation; Saudi Arabia; Tanzania; Tunisia; Turkey; the United Arab Emirates; Uruguay and Yemen, the draft resolution A/65/L5 entitled the 'World Interfaith Harmony Week'.

Allow me to explain in brief the reasoning behind this resolution which was launched by H.M. King

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Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein before the United Nations General Assembly on September 23rd 2010.

As this august assembly is well aware, our world is rife with religious tension and, sadly, mistrust, dislike and hatred. These religious tensions can easily erupt into communal violence. They also facilitate the demonizing of the other which in turn predisposes public opinion to support war against peoples of other religions. Thus, for example, according to the results of the 2008 Gallup Poll one of the largest international religious surveys in history 53% of Westerners have 'unfavorable' or 'very unfavorable' opinions of Muslims and 30% of Muslims polled worldwide hold negative views of Christians.

The misuse or abuse of religions can thus be a cause of world strife, whereas religions should be a great foundation for facilitating world peace. The remedy for this problem can only come from the world's religions themselves. Religions must be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Much good work has already been

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done towards this starting really with the Second Vatican Council from 1962-1965 by hundreds of intra-faith and interfaith groups all over the world and of all religions. Yet the forces inciting inter-religious tensions (notable among them being religious fundamentalisms of various kinds) are better organized, more experienced, better coordinated, more motivated and more ruthless. They have more stratagems, more institutes, more money, more power and garner more publicity such that they by far outweigh all the positive work done by the various interfaith initiatives. The sad proof of this is that religious tensions are on the rise, not on the decline.

Mr. President, Turning now to the text itself, allow me to explain some of its most essential terminology and concepts: 1) In the very title of the resolution and in the second operative paragraph and elsewhere, the word 'harmony' is used in the Chinese sense of the term. We add it to the term 'tolerance' (which we have also used) because 'tolerance' can suggest that the other is so negative they have to be 'tolerated'; we cannot use 'acceptance' because it implies that religions accept each

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other's doctrines rather than their right to those doctrines and this is not the case; we cannot use the term 'peace' alone because it suggests merely the absence of war, and not necessarily the absence of hatred. Only the Confucian concept of 'harmony' can rescue us here because it suggests not merely 'peace', but also 'beautiful and dynamic interaction between different elements within a whole'.

2) In the third operative paragraph, there is mention of 'Love of God and Love of the Neighbor, or Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbor'. Why is this religious reference necessary in a UN resolution? In answer to this question, it will be noted first that this draft resolution is unique because it is specifically about peace between religions and not about anything else, therefore some religious references in this particular case is only natural. To rigidly maintain the contrary would be to disregard the feelings of 85% of the world's population which belongs to one or another faith.

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Second and more importantly perhaps we include these references because whilst we all agree that it is clearly not the business of the UN to engage in theology, it is nevertheless the primary goal of the UN to make and safeguard peace, and without the specific mention of God and of the Two Commandments of Love [see: Matthew 22:34-40 and Mark 12:28-31] many if not most devout Muslims, Christians and Jews will consider a secular call for an interfaith harmony week a feckless platitude that they cannot fully or sincerely support. For in the Holy Bible Jesus Christ u (echoing the words of Deuteronomy) said: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God [Luke 4:4 and Matthew 4:4, see also: Deuteronomy 8:2-3] and also that: Hallowed be Thy Name [Matthew, 6:9], and similar meanings are to be found in the Holy Qur'an wherein it is stated that no act is rewarded Save for seeking the Countenance of .[the] Lord, the Most High [Al-Layl, 92:19-20] and that: Verily the Remembrance of God is of all things the greatest [from: Al-Ankabut, 29:45]. In other words, for many Muslims, Christians and Jews who together make up

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perhaps 55% of the world's population and (I regret to say) are involved in most of the world's conflicts it is necessary to mention the Substance of their faiths. Otherwise, hoping to foster peace between religions by foisting upon them an external and purely secular and bureaucratic language is simply a house divided against itself which shall not stand [Matthew, 12:25]. Third, it will be noted that this language excludes no one, of any religion or of no faith at all: every person of good will, with or without faith can and should commit to Love of the Neighbour and Love of God or Love of the Neighbour and Love of the Good. Loving the neighbour and the good is after all the essence of good will. And referring to 'the Good' obviously does not necessarily imply belief in God or in a particular religion, even though for many believers 'the Good' is God precisely: Jesus Christ u said: 'No one is Good but God Alone' [Mark, 10:18; Luke 18:19, and Matthew 19:17], and 'the Good' ('Al-Barr') is one of God's Names in the Holy Qur'an [Al-Tur, 52:28]. Thus speaking of 'the Good' is a theologically-correct but inclusive formula in so far as it goes that unites all

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humanity and leaves out no one. Fourth, there is another reason why it is specifically necessary to mention love of the neighbour: it sets an invaluable practical standard based upon which people can ask themselves and each other if their actions stem from caritas (love) towards the neighbour or not. Indeed, as the Prophet Muhammad r said: "None of you has faith [in God] until you love for your neighbour what you love for yourself." [Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, Vol. p.67, Hadith no.45].

3) Also in the third operative paragraph, the phrase 'on a voluntary basis' is used because the entire proposal must be purely voluntary. No place of worship should be forced to observe the World Interfaith Harmony Week; for whilst we hope to encourage interfaith harmony, the last thing we want is for anyone at all to feel that anything is being imposed on his or her faith, beliefs or convictions. Nevertheless, one can conceive of positive incentives to encourage and help support and monitor the implementation of this resolution.

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4) Finally, also in the third operative paragraph, the phrase 'each according to their own religious traditions or convictions' is vital because the different religions do not necessarily interpret 'Love of God and the Neighbour' in exactly the same way, and do not all want it said that they do. This phrase thus avoids the dangers of syncretism or reductionism and allows for religious differences within the same goal of working towards inter-religious peace and harmony.

In summary, then, I very humbly ask the member states of the United Nations General Assembly to adopt the proposed draft resolution for the World Interfaith Harmony Week, noting that it excludes no individual, compromises no one, commits no one, forces no one, harms no one, costs nothing, and on the contrary includes everyone, celebrates everyone, benefits everyone, unites everyone and has the potential to bring much needed Peace and Harmony to the entire world in sha Allah. Thank-you Mr. President.

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Draft Resolution A/65/L5 Sixty-fifth Session World Interfaith Harmony Week The General Assembly, Recalling its resolutions 53/243 of 6 October 1999 on the declaration and program of action relating to a culture of peace; 57/6 of November 2002 concerning the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence; 58/128 of 19 December 2003 on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation; 64/164 of 18 December 2009 on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief; 64/81 of 7 December 2009 on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, and 64/14 of 10 November 2009 on the Alliance of Civilizations; Recognizing the imperative need for dialogue among different faiths and religions in enhancing mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people; Recalling with appreciation various global, regional and sub-regional initiatives on mutual understanding and interfaith harmony including, inter alia, the Tripartite Forum for Interfaith Cooperation for Peace, and the 'A Common

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Word', Recognizing that the moral imperatives of all religions, convictions, and beliefs call for peace, tolerance, and mutual understanding; 1. Reaffirms that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace; 2. Proclaims the first week of February of every year the World Interfaith Harmony Week between all religions, faiths and beliefs; 3. Encourages all States to support, on a voluntary basis, the spread of the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world's Churches, Mosques, Synagogues, Temples and other places of Worship during that week based on Love of God and Love of the Neighbor, or based on Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbor, each according to their own religious traditions or convictions; 4. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the General Assembly informed of the implementation of the present resolution.

SELECTED ENDORSEMENTS

1. Ban Ki Moon: Secretary General UN
2. EPP - European People's Party
3. The Council of Heads of Churches in Jordan
 - His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilus III – Patriarch of the Holy City, Palestine and Jordan
 - His Eminence Archbishop Marsoirios Malki Murad – Syrian Orthodox Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem and Jordan
 - His Eminence Bishop Munib Yunan - Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and President of World Federation of Evangelical Lutheran churches

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- His Eminence Archbishop Suhail Dwani - Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East
- His Eminence Bishop Anba Abraham – Coptic Orthodox Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem and the Near East

4. Chrysostomos II Archbishop of Cyprus

5. Rev.Dr & Canon Trond Bakkevig Convener
Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land

6. Bishop Richard Chartres, Bishop of London UK

7. Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin
Chairman of IRC-Indonesia

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1. Ban Ki Moon: Secretary General UN



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Excellencies and Friends,

I wish to draw your attention to a decision taken recently by the General Assembly, which I believe has a unique, historical and unprecedented potential to promote the healing of interfaith tensions in the world. These tensions themselves constitute one of the world's greatest challenges.

On 20 October 2010, the General Assembly adopted by consensus resolution A/65/5 entitled "World Interfaith Harmony Week". The initiative is based on the inclusive yet spiritually essential foundation of "Love of God and the Neighbour and Love of Good and the Neighbour".

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At a time when the world is faced with many simultaneous problems – security, environmental, humanitarian and economic – enhanced tolerance and understanding are fundamental for a resilient and vibrant international society. There is an imperative need, therefore, to further reaffirm and develop harmonious cooperation between the world's different faiths and religions.

The resolution "encourages all States to support, on a voluntary basis, the spread of the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world's churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other places of worship during the first week of February" - proclaimed the World Interfaith Harmony Week - "based on Love of God and Love of Neighbour or on Love of the Good and Love of one's Neighbour, each according to their own traditions and convictions".

I lend my full support to this call and we, at the United Nations, are proud to be the platform for its launch. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and His Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al-Hussein are owed a great debt

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of gratitude and thanks for their continuing efforts to advance and sustain the promotion of interreligious harmony and world peace.

Finally, while recognising the call of the General Assembly to be entirely voluntary, my hope is that it will, nonetheless, find the broadest possible observance among Member States of the United Nations.

Yours sincerely,



BAN/Ki-moon

BAN Ki-moon

2. EPP - European People's Party



Declaration on Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue

Noting that approximately 55% of the world's population is either Christian or Muslim; and that perhaps 80% of the world's population is either Christian, Muslim, Jew, Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist or Confucian;

Concerned about the ever-renewed tensions between adherents of different religions and in particular between Christians, Muslims and Jews;

Realizing the impossibility of true peace and harmony in the world without harmonious relations and understanding between adherents of the world's religions;

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Mindful of the possibility of misusing, 'cherry-picking' and citing out of context selected quotations from any Scripture to increase religious tension, hatred and violence;

Appreciating the efforts of H.M. King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein of Jordan in launching the historic Amman Message in November 2004 and in particular the unanimous international Islamic Consensus on its 'Three Points' which proved and re-established the fallacy of illegitimate and unqualified fatwas calling for hostility and aggression in Islam and, in the words of the late Grand Imam and Sheikh Al-Azhar Professor Dr. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, constitute:

'The best resource for all those who wish to travel along the straight path in their words and in their actions, and in their spiritual and religious life' .

Acknowledging that despite the many irresolvable and unbridgeable theological and religious differences and disagreements between Judaism, Christianity and

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Islam, there is nevertheless a central and essential common ground of faith, hope and love between these three monotheistic and Abrahamic religions - as proposed by the historic A Common Word Open Letter of October 13th 2007 _ in the greatest Two Commandments of Love of God and Love of the Neighbour (Matthew 22:34-40 and Mark 12:29-31), however differently they be understood;

Echoing the words of H.H. Pope Benedict at the King Al-Hussein bin Talal Mosque in Amman, Jordan on Saturday, 9 May 2009, when His Holiness said:

'Of great merit too are the numerous initiatives of inter-religious dialogue supported by the Royal Family [of Jordan] ... and the more recent Common Word letter which echoed a theme consonant with my first encyclical: the unbreakable bond between love of God and love of neighbor, and the fundamental contradiction of resorting to violence or exclusion in the name of God (cf. *Deus Caritas Est*, 16)!'.

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And likewise the words of His Grace Dr. Rowan Williams, The Archbishop of Canterbury in 2010:

'The appearance of the A Common Word [Open Letter] of 2007 was a landmark in Muslim-Christian relations, and it has a unique role in stimulating a discussion at the deepest level across the world.'

Believing, moreover, that all the peoples of the world are bound together not only by their common humanity and their common planet earth, but also by either Love of God and Love of the Neighbour or Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbour;

Supporting United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/65/PV.34 of October 20, 2010 establishing a voluntary World Interfaith Harmony Week as proposed by H.M. King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein of Jordan on September 23, 2010 at the United Nations General Assembly, and calling for.

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'the world's people, in their own places of worship, to express the teachings of their own faiths about tolerance, respect for the other, and peace.'

Hoping that observance of the World Interfaith Harmony Week will prove to be, in the words of His Grace Bishop Munib Yunan, President of World Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches and the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilus III:

'An integrated international renaissance of spirit and intellect to save the world from the scourge of sectarian tensions, consequent communal violence and hatred.'

Call upon all governments, peoples and religions of the world to _ in the words of the A Common Word Open Letter:

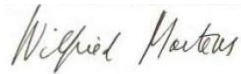
'let our differences not cause hatred and strife between us. Let us vie with each other in righteousness and good works. Let us respect each other, be fair, just and

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kind to one another and live in sincere peace, harmony and mutual goodwill.'

16 December 2010
European People's Party Summit
Castle of Bouchout
Meise
Belgium

EPP President Wilfried Martens, on behalf of the
European People's Party Presidency



In the presence of **H.M. King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein** of Jordan



3. The Council of Heads of Churches in Jordan

November 1st 2010

The Council of Heads of Churches in Jordan congratulates His Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al-Hussein for the successful passing of his initiative "The world week of harmony between religions" at the United Nations.

The UN- adopted Global Week of Harmony between Religions will be celebrated in the first week of February each year.

The Council expresses its full support to the initiative of His Majesty King Abdullah II and stresses churches' vested interest in the initiative's ultimate goal in spreading the message of harmony among different religions and beliefs. The Council praises the United Nations' reference to a previous Jordanian initiative "Kalamat Sawa' " which aims to focus on respect for the other, in its resolution adopting the initiative of His

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Majesty.

The Council recognizes that the status of higher-discretion enjoyed by his Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al-Hussein on the Global level had a crucial role in the process of rallying international support for this initiative.

The Council believes that His Majesty had employed his international status and Jordan's religious, historical, geographical position to fulfill a historic responsibility of finding ways to bring world peace.

The Council's members are looking forward to what the U.N resolution may carry in terms of dialogue programs between different faiths and activities to reinforce the fundamental role of religions in bringing harmony to the people.

The Council pledged to exert all efforts towards an integrated international renaissance of spirit and intellect to save the world from the scourge of sectarian tensions, consequent communal violence and hatred.

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The Council assured that the misuse of religion had led to wars and conflicts and its is the time for religious leaders to face these abusive practices.

The Council sees an opportunity to do that through assuming an active role in the manifestations of the initiative of his Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al-Hussein since it opens prospects for mutual cooperation and solidarity.

SIGNED

His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilus III – Patriarch of the Holy City, Palestine and Jordan

His Eminence Archbishop Marsoirios Malki Murad – Syrian Orthodox Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem and Jordan

His Eminence Bishop Munib Yunan - Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and President of World Federation of Evangelical Lutheran churches

SELECTED ENDORSEMENTS

His Eminence Archbishop Suhail Dwani – Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East

His Eminence Bishop Anba Abraham – Coptic Orthodox Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem and the Near East

4. Chrysostomos II Archbishop of Cyprus

MESSAGE OF HIS BEATITUDE
THE ARCHBISHOP OF CYPRUS
CHRYSOSTOMOS II
FOR THE WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY
WEEK

At a time when the whole humanity is called to find answers and solutions to the many considerable and major problems that face the world, religion can play a key role and reveal the way, of love and respect, for the right of each person, to believe, to dream, to hope for something that is unique to each one of us.

Unfortunately, we often witness, terrible acts of violence and religious intolerance and discrimination around the world. Under these circumstances, we can't move forward to the future and we can't reserve the right for the next generations, to live in a better, and more secure and peaceful world. Thus, we have to reaffirm our common values of love, mutual respect and understanding and we have to foster interfaith

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dialogue within the spirit of the Holy Scripture: “*Let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves, is born of God and knows God. He, who doesn’t love, doesn’t know God, for God is love*” (1 John: 4, 7).

The Church of Cyprus, remains true to the beliefs and ideas of love, peace and of mutual understanding. It is our commitment to promote dialogue between different religions globally, regionally and locally, not only in theory but also in practice. For the Church of Cyprus dialogue with Turkish Cypriots, in our own country is of existential importance, because of the fact that the northern part of our island is enslaved and under Turkish military occupation since 1974. Since then, basic Human Rights are violated daily and religious freedom is not respected. We have no right to worship in or protect and preserve our centuries old churches and monasteries. The Church of Cyprus knows that only through sincere and open dialogue with Turkish Cypriot Muslims, we will be able to overcome our differences and build trust with one another. Besides Cyprus problem has never been a religious problem, as Muslims Turkish Cypriots and

SELECTED ENDORSEMENTS

Christians Greek Cypriots, used to live together in peace and harmony. In this respect, we have been promoting and personally involved in dialogue with the Turkish Cypriot religious leadership and we will continue to do so, for the sake of understanding, justice and peace.

With these thoughts, we would like to congratulate His Majesty King Abdullah II King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for this excellent initiative of the World Interfaith Harmony Week announced at the United Nations General Assembly. We would also like to acknowledge His Highness Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad for his continuous efforts, his strong commitment to establish the annual World Interfaith Harmony Week. Moreover, we would like to express our appreciation to the Jordanian Interfaith Coexistence Research Center for organizing this special ceremony.

Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude for all those religious leaders, governments and for all those people, men and women of all ages, recognized or

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anonymous, who work hard in practice, to ensure a better world for all people, regardless of faith and religious beliefs by following the instructions of the Bible: “*My children, let’s not love in words only, neither with the tongue only, but in deed and truth*” (1 John: 3, 18).

†CHRYSOSTOMOS II ARCHBISHOP OF CYPRUS

Holy Archbishopric of Cyprus,
2 February, 2011

5. Rev. Trond Bakkevig Convener Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land

His Majesty, King Abdullah II of Jordan

The "Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land" welcomes your efforts, which lead to the resolution of the UN General Assembly to recognize an annual week of World Interfaith Harmony.

One of the goals of the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, – where the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, the Meeting of Heads of Local Churches in Jerusalem, the Palestinian Ministry of Religious Affairs (Waqf) and the Palestinian Sharia Courts come together – , is to engage with our respective communities in the Holy Land in order to promote peace and justice. Your initiative that was unanimously accepted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, is particularly welcomed in a time when religious diversity is often used to exacerbate social and political tensions and even to deepen

SELECTED ENDORSEMENTS

religious divides. It is a valuable opportunity for people of all faiths world-wide to express their commitment for peace and harmony, which is based on the love of God and the love of the neighbor. This is in accordance with one of the goals of the Council, to foster, on grassroots and national levels, an environment of mutual acceptance and respect.

It is especially urgent in the current situation in the Holy Land, to constantly remind all religious leaders and communities of the importance of what is said in the first paragraph of the resolution, which "reaffirms that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace"

We pledge to make the annual World Interfaith Harmony Week an integral element in our efforts to promote peace and justice in the Holy Land.

Respectfully,

Rev. Trond Bakkevig

Convener, Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land

6. Bishop of London, Richard Chartres

I very much welcome the UN Declaration, instituting a week every February for reflection and creative enterprise in the interests of World Harmony. The religious traditions of the world are accessible to one another in an unprecedented way and this initiative [which like so many other constructive ideas has its origins in the Kingdom of Jordan] is very timely.

Harmony is a stronger concept than tolerance and opens the door to a symphony in which religions can give of their best to one another and transcend the present situation in which so many people of faith live parallel lives. It is a situation which can very easily incubate unjust suspicions of the other.

Wisdom is integral to the various religious traditions in the world but those who are studying to be wise must confess to their relative failure to establish a global conversation and web of relationships strong enough to overcome the lethal challenges to global peace. Scientists have established such a global conversation

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and it behoves religious people to be properly humble about their own lack of progress in this regard. Indeed some have responded to the challenge of globalisation by retreating into a sectarian religiosity which is far from the teaching and witness of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace for all people. Two signs have been given to the generations who have lived after the end of the Second World War. The Mushroom Cloud and the Globe point respectively to the peril and the promise of the century in which we have been called to work as servants of God.

The Mushroom Cloud stands for the destructive capacities of the knowledge we have acquired and the great question of our century is whether we shall have the wisdom to use our knowledge to build a just world in which there is peace and plenty for all or whether our knowledge will destroy us. The Globe was photographed for the first time from space on Christmas Eve 1968. Our planet was revealed as sapphire blue and beautiful in a haunting picture which conveys the preciousness and fragility of the earth we inhabit. The Globe thus seen beckons us to a future full of promise.

SELECTED ENDORSEMENTS

It is in this context that the UN Declaration has been issued by the authority of the General Assembly and I pray that it may make a contribution to a revitalising of spiritual energy in our world.

7. Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin Chairman of IRC-Indonesia

Your Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan

The Inter Religious Council-Indonesia (IRC)- a consultative forum of all leaders of different faiths in Indonesia gives high appreciation and congratulation to His Majesty King Abdullah II for his wisdom and peace vision for the UN- endorsed World Interfaith Harmony Week.

The initiative is timely and quite relevant to the current situation of the world civilization which has shown accumulative global damage. The World Interfaith Harmony Week may well symbolize a starting point for our long-march to a peaceful, harmonious and just new world order. IRC Indonesia, while expecting the World Interfaith Harmony Week to be successful, it plans the week celebration in first week of February 2011 in Jakarta.

SELECTED ENDORSEMENTS

Sincerely

Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin
Chairman of IRC-Indonesia

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Religious Leaders

1. Kwak Joon, President, Theravada Buddhism Korea Meditation Center, Seoul, South Korea
2. Rabbi Reuben Livingston, Rabbi, Bnai Avraham, UK
3. Rajan Zed, President, Universal Society of Hinduism, USA.
4. Ven. Dr. Jinwol Y. H. Lee
Representative of World Fellowship of Buddhists and Jogye Order to UN related affairs, South Korea.
5. Rev Fr John-Brian Paprock, Director, Inroads Ministry, USA.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

6. Shaikh Ahmad Bin Hamad Al Khalili,
Grand Mufti of Oman.
7. Reverend Father Traore Moussa Serge,
Catholic Church, Burkina Faso.
8. Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin,
President, Muhammadiyah, Indonesia.
9. Jamal S Munib, Chairman, United Muslim
Council for Peace and Development,
Philippines.
10. Dr.Hissein Massar Hissein, the Supreme
Council of Islamic Affairs, Chad.
11. Ayatollah Shaykh Muhammad Ali Al-Tashkiri,
Director-General, World Forum for Proximity
of Islamic Schools of Thought, Iran.
12. Dr. Nedzad Grabus. Mufti of Ljubljana,
Slovenia.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

13. Sh.Ahmad bin Sa'ud al-Siyabi, Secretary-General, Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, Oman.
14. Prof.Ted Durr, Presbyterian Church, University of Baltimore, USA.
15. Abdulkarim Gheewala, President Islamic Education Trust, Leicester, UK.
16. Michael Chittum, Senior Minister, First Congregational Church, USA.
17. Ibrahim Long, Muslim Chaplain, USA.
18. Paul Z Carlson, Pastor, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, USA.
19. Rashid Patch, Imam, Oakland, California, USA.
20. Bent Melchior, retired Chief Rabbi of Denmark.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

21. Rev. Stewart Mills, Minsiter, United Church of Canada, Canada.
22. Jamed DuMond, Minister, Redeemer Lutheran Church, USA.
23. Rev Canon Dr John Hall, St Philip's Centre, Leicester, UK.
24. Syed Farid Idris, Vice President, Chishtiyamaharaj Foundation, Ajmer, India.

Interfaith Organisations

25. Stephen Shashoua, Director, Three Faiths Forum, UK.
26. Joyce Dubensky, Executive Vice President & CEO, Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding, USA.
27. Alex Krem, Director, International Academy for Interfaith Studies, Mexico.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

28. Harbans Lal, President, Sikhs for Interfaith Engagement, USA.
29. Anil Bhanot, OBE, Managing Trustee, Hindu Council, UK.
30. Aftab Raza Khan, Editor, The Interfaith Harmony, Pakistan.
31. Monica Willard, President Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations.
32. Chryspin Afifu, Programmes Director, Center for Partnership and Civic Engagement, Kenya.
33. Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary General Religions for Peace, USA.
34. Alison Van Dyk, Executive Director, Temple of Understanding, USA.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

35. Dr. Paul Eppinger, Executive Director,
Arizona Interfaith Movement, USA.
36. Charlie Wiles, Director,
International Interfaith Initiative
Indianapolis, USA.
37. Jackie Tabick, Chair, World Congress of
Faiths, UK.
38. Ambassador Mussie Hailu, Regional
Director of Africa, URI, Kenya.
39. Tim Hall, Director, Comeback2faith, New
Zealand.
40. Professor Anwar Fazal, Director, Right
Livelihood College, Malaysia.
41. Miquel Angel Essomba, Director,
UNESCOCAT, Spain.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

42. Riaz Ravat, Faith Training Development Manager, St.Philip's Centre, UK.
43. Eunice Schroeder, D Min., Spiritual Director, Interfaith Spiritual Center, USA.
44. David B Myers, Executive Director, Center for Interfaith Projects, USA.
45. Howard Comen, Charleston Congress of Religions, USA.
46. Heidi Rautionmaa, Interfaith Dialogue Network, Finland.
47. Charles P. Gibbs and Yolanda Trevino Executive Director and Global Council Chair United Religions Initiative (URI)
48. Mohammad Othman, East West Initiatives, Jordan.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

49. Reverend Eva E Schroeder, President,
Lakeshore Interfaith Community, USA.
50. Bruce Lambson, Executive Director, All
Rivers, USA.
51. Ayatollah Shaykh Muhammad Ali Al-
Taskhiri Director-General The World
Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of
Thought, Iran
52. Imam Yahya Hendi, PhD, President, Clergy
Beyond Borders.
53. Hartmut Dreier, Reverend, Christian-Islamic
Association, Germany.
54. The Revd Dr John Perumbalath, Chairman,
North Kent Council for Interfaith Relations,
UK.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

55. Dr.Saheed Timehin, Co-Chairman,Nigerian Inter-Religious Council, Lagos State, Nigeria.
56. Allama Abulfateh G R Chisti, Chairman, Universal Interfaith Peace Mission, Pakistan.
57. H.E. Jorge Sampaio, The Alliance of Civilizations UNITED NATIONS High Representative, UN.
58. Joseph Nahabwe, Director, Global Citizens International, Uganda.
59. Reverend Helen Summers, Director, The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne, Australia.
60. Bart ten Broek, United Religions Initiative, The Netherlands.
61. Mathorel Gilles, Faith and Encounter Centyer, Zambia.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

62. Zafar Iqbal, Senior Policy Officer, Working People of Faith, UK.
63. Sande Hart, President, S.A.R.A.H. (Spiritual And Religious Alliance for Hope, USA.
64. Mehrezia Labidi Maiza, Religions for Peace, France.
65. Richard Martin, Chairman & Founder Children of Peace, UK.
66. Dr. Yehuda Stolov, Executive-Director, Interfaith Encounter Association, Israel.
67. Father Nabil Haddad, Founder & Executive Director, Jordanian Interfaith Coexistence Research Center, Jordan.
68. Chief Rabbi David Rosen, International Director of Interreligious Affairs, AJC, Israel.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

69. Dr. Saheed Timehin, co-chair, NIREC-Nigeria Inter Religious Council. Nigeria.
70. Mazen Barakat, Suffolk Interfaith and Essex Interfaith, UK.
71. Naveed Baig, Vice-chair, Islamic-Christian Study Center Spokesman, Jewish-Muslim Platform Copenhagen, Denmark.
72. Hamde Blakic, Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, Qatar.
73. Armando Bernardini, President, International Foundation for interreligious and Intercultural Education.

Academics

74. Husaini A Hayyan. Lecturer. International Islamic University, Malaysia.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

75. Antonio Fuccillo: Professor, Seconda Università di Napoli. Italy.
76. Dr.Halit Eren, Director General, Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) , Turkey.
77. Yusri Mohamad Ramli, Lecturer, Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia.
78. Prof.Marco Pucciarini, Prof.History of Religions, Uni.Studi Perugia, Istituto Teologici di Assisi, Italy.
79. Dr. Yahya Mahmoud ibn Junaid, Secretary General, King Faisal Center for Research & Islamic Studies, Saudi Arabia.
80. Dr Edward Kessler, Executive Director, Woolf Institute, Cambridge, UK.
Fellow of St Edmund's College, Cambridge.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

81. Ambassador Arif Kamal, Advisor, Global Studies Program, National Defence University, Pakistan.
82. Prof. Ali Auzak, Head, Endowment for Islamic Scientific Studies, Turkey.
83. Prof. Salman Harun, Director, Center for Multi-faith Education, State Islamic University, Jakarta, Indonesia.
84. Bruce Green, Bridge Building Facilitator, Afghan Coalition, USA.
85. Marlies ter Borg, author of Sharing Mary, Bible and Quran Side by Side, Netherlands.
86. Dr. Quazi Rafeequddin, North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon, India.
87. Prof. Aliaa R Rafea, Ain Shams University, Egypt.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

88. Sheikh Omar Khalfan Bizuru, Lecturer at National University of Rwanda, Rwanda.
89. Kenneth Cragg Northampton Community College/Wesley Methodist Church The Reverend Doctor, Adjunct Professor, USA.
90. Dr Sayed Khatab, Monash University, Australia.
91. Shaykh Seraj Hendricks University of Johannesburg, Studies in Islam, Department of Religion, South Africa.
92. Prof. Talib Kucukcan, Director, Middle Eastern Research Center, Marmara University, Turkey.
93. Dr. Ziad Fahed, Associate Professor, Notre Dame University – Louaize -, Lebanon.
94. Dr. Reinhard Kirste, Faculty, Institute of Interreligious Studies, Germany.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

95. Prof.Ozcan Hidir, Islamic University of Rotterdam, Netherlands.
96. Prof.Hasan Hanafi Husnain, Philosophy Dept., Cairo University, Egypt.
97. Prof.Ahmad Matloub, President, Iraq Academy of Science, Iraq.
98. Prof.Adnane Mokrani, Pontifical Gregorian University, Italy.
99. Dr. Muhammad Yusuf Khalid, Senior Lecturer, Islamic Science University of Malaysia, Malaysia.
100. Dr. MIH Farooqi, Sir Syed Scientific Society, Lucknow, India.
101. Dr. Sergio AbdusSalam Scatolini, Senior Lecturer, Leuven Education College, Belgium.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

102. Emeritus Prof. Nicholas F Gier, Philosophy,
University of Idaho, USA.
103. Prof. Mukhtar Ahmad, Aligarh Muslim
University, India.
104. M Nimer, Professor Washington Summer
Program, USA.
105. Prof. Imtiyaz Yusuf, Head, Graduate School
of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption
University, Thailand.
106. Professor Bruce B. Lawrence, Professor of
Islamic Studies, Duke University, USA.
107. Prof. Muddathir Abdel-Rahim, Int'l Inst. of
Islamic Thought & Civilization, Malaysia.
108. Dr. Hisham Nashabeh, President, Makassed
University, Lebanon.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

109. Dr.Said-Kyamilev, Head, Institute of Islamic Civilization, Russia.
110. Dr.Reza Shah-Kazemi, Managing Editor, Encyclopaedia Islamica, UK.
111. Prof.Sharifa M Zawawi, The City University of New York, USA.
112. Glenn Booker, Professor, Drexel University, USA.
113. Rabbi Burton L. Visotzky Appleman Professor of Midrash and Interreligious Studies/Director, Finkelstein Institute Jewish Theological Seminary, USA.
114. Dr. Ingrid Mattson, Director Macdonald Center for Study of Islam and Christian Muslim Relations, Hartford Seminary, USA.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Others

115. George Windsor, The Earl of St Andrews,
UK.
116. Michael Giacalone, Italian Cultural Institute,
Italy.
117. Naushad Cader, CEO Naushad Cader
Family Foundation, Sri Lanka.
118. Daisy Khan, Executive Director, Amercian
Society for Muslim Advancement, USA.
119. Mohamed Ali Harrath Chairman, Islam
Channel and Global Peace & Unity
Foundation, UK.
120. Dr. Asad R Khan, Muslim Council of
Britain, UK.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

121. Santigie Bayo Dumbuya, Programs Coordinator, My Own Children International, Sierra Leone.
122. Dr. James J Hurtak, President, Academy for Future Science, USA.
123. Maha ElGenaidi and Ameena Jandali, CEO, Islamic Networks Group, USA.
124. Suleman Nagdi MBE DL, Federation of Muslim Organisations, UK.
125. Elias El-Halabi, General Secretary, Middle East Council of Churches, Lebanon.
126. Omar Obeidat, News Producer, MBN-Alhurra TV, USA.
127. Dr. Jagjit Singh Taunque MBE DL, Deputy Lord Lieutenant, UK.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

128. Dr.Laxmi D Shah, UN Rep, International Mahavir Jain Mission, USA.
129. Dr.Muhammed Abdur Razzak, Chairman, Al Anjuman Foundation, Bangladesh.
130. Munawar A Karim, Director, Deenway Foundation, UK.
131. Carmen Dietrich and Gregor Merten, Angel of Culture, Germany.
132. Michiel der Horst, Chairman, Iona Foundation, Netherlands.
133. Mir Bashir, VP, Drishti Projects, India.
134. Muhammed Shamsuddin, Secretary-General, Human Rights Lawyers Society-, Bangladesh.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

135. Dr.Chandra Setiawan, Chairman, Global Peace Festival Indonesian Foundation, Indonesia.
136. Rev.Dean A Woodward, Consultant, Advisor on Public Policy in Health and Human Services, USA.
137. Farhad Khadim, President & Director of Education, Islamic Institute of Toronto, Canada.
138. Thomas Block, Author, USA.
139. Shafi Refai, President, United Muslims of America, USA.
140. Amer Hassan E Doro, Board of Trustees, Islamic Brotherhood, Philippines.
141. Prof.Abbas Al-Jarari, Advisor to the King. Morocco.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

142. Khalid Naveed, Gen.Secretary, Movement for peace and justice, India.
143. Hussam Ayloush, Executive Director, Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-LA), USA.
144. Jack Cuffari, Quaker, One Spirit Interfaith Seminary, USA.
145. Zulfiqar Ali Malik, Editor, Muslim News Digest, USA.
146. Arshad Ahmad, Social Director, Islamic Society of Mansfield, USA.
147. Abd al-Hafidh Wentzel, Publisher, Warda Publications, Germany.
148. Gary Edmonds, President, Breakthrough Partners, USA.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

149. Shafiq Morton, Journalist, Voice of the Cape Radio Station, South Africa.
150. John Allen Lapp, Executive Secretary Emeritus, Mennonite Central Committee, USA.
151. Andre Gerth, International Pontifical Mission Society in Munich, Germany.
152. International Pontifical Mission Society in Munich, Germany.
153. Virginia Gray Henry, Director, Fons Vitae, USA.
154. Sayyid Ibrhimul Khaleel Al Bukhari, Chairman, Ma'din Islamic Academy, India.
155. Muhammad Tahir Tabassum, President, Institute of Peace and Development (INSPAD), Pakistan.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

156. Nik Muhd Marzuki Muuhd Nor, Muslim Scholars Association of Malaysia (PUM), Malaysia.
157. Yahya Pallavicini, Chairman, ISESCO Council for Muslims in Non-Islamic Countries, Italy.
158. Veronica E Barnes, Chairperson, Blue Mountain Women's Group, UK.
159. Prof. Omar Jah, President, Sheikh Abdallah Jah Charitable Foundation (SAJCF), The Gambia.
160. Darrell Bouldin, National Coordinator, Coffee Party Progressives, USA.
161. Mariam al-Attar, Head of the Department of Ethics, Philosophy and Religion, King's Academy-Boarding School, Jordan.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

162. Murziq Aboudunrin Etti, Magistrate, Lagos State Judiciary, Nigeria.
163. Sibertin-Blanc, Director, Adem-Informatique, France..
164. Maya Safira Muchtar, Founder, Islamic Movement for Non-Violence, Indonesia.
165. Rev.Dr.Anand Krishna, Anand Ashram Foundation, Indonesia.
166. Sheikh Dr.Shaheed Satardien, Secretary General of the International Islamic Leadership Justice and Peace Conference, Ireland.
167. Ufuk Gokcen, Ambassador, Permanent Observer of the OIC to the UN New York, USA.
168. Gamini Foneska JP, Chairman, Sadaham Foundation of Australia(Buddhist), Australia.

SELECTED LETTERS OF SUPPORT

169. Cassam Uteem, former President of the
Republic of Mauritius.

SELECTED EVENTS HELD IN HONOUR OF WIHW

The first week of February 2010 year saw over 200 events, in over 40 countries honouring the First World Interfaith Harmony Week. From events such as a quiz at a school in Kerala, to formal events at the UN; from harmony breakfasts in numerous countries to mutual visits to places of worship. These and many more events highlight the desire by so many to live in peaceful co-existence and harmony with those of other faiths.

A complete listing of the events held for WIWH 2011 are at:

<http://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/events-calendar/>

Here are a selected few:

- Screening of the documentary “Out of Cordoba: Averroes and Maimonides” at Hartford Seminary, USA.

SELECTED EVENTS HELD IN HONOUR OF WIHW

- World Interfaith Harmony Lunch - The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne, Australia.
- Poster Exhibition of Different Religions of the World and an Interreligious Harmony Rally, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Promoting interfaith cooperation and peace through poetry, Metro FM Radio, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Lecture – Jordan A Model of Harmony, Baptism Site, Amman, Jordan.
- MCB Inter Faith Relations Committee Presents...“Ways of Peaceful Co-existence in Multi-Cultural Britain” Description: As part of the UN’s International Inter Faith Harmony Week, the regional MCB Inter Faith Committee invites you to a programme of talks, poster exhibition, films and refreshments. London, UK.
- In celebration of World Interfaith Harmony Week The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in collaboration with the UN

SELECTED EVENTS HELD IN HONOUR OF WIHW

Department of Public Information invites you to a special screening of "OUT OF CORDOBA: Averroes and Maimonides in Their Time and Ours" A Documentary Film by Jacob Bender Produced by MLK Producciones of Spain, USA.

- An event open to all Permanent Missions, Observers and UN agencies. Talks on interfaith harmony. UN Headquarters, NY, USA.
- The Committee of religious NGOs at the UN and the NGO Section of the UN Department of Public Information are hosting an Interfaith Breakfast. USA.
- Seminar by Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan at Palace of Peace, Astana, Kazakhstan.
- The Matheson Trust is inviting church leaders--Anglican, Catholic and Evangelical-- to initiate an interfaith dialogue between Muslim residents, church leaders and Christian residents of the local community, Westerham, UK.

SELECTED EVENTS HELD IN HONOUR OF WIHW

- The Inter Religious Council (IRC) Indonesia is organizing a large celebration for the World Interfaith Harmony Week. The event is estimated to be attended by 10,000 people of all faiths. Speakers include Speakers of both People's Consultative Assembly and the Parliament of RI. Leaders of religious councils such as Dr. M.Din Syamsuddin will also deliver their message for harmony and peace, Istora Stadium, Jakarta, Indonesia.
- During the week of February 7th, Harvard University will celebrate Harvard Interfaith Awareness Week with events aimed at promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding. Harvard University, USA.
- The Euphrates Institute in concert with the Interfaith Encounter Association will host an interfaith encounter event at the Everest Hotel in Bethlehem, West Bank, Palestine.
- Hosted by the Boston University School of Theology, a Christian seminary, this service

features the Boston University Imam as its guest preacher and a local Jewish peace activist as a guest prayer leader. The service is an intentional act of interfaith (specifically Jewish-Christian-Muslim) worship. Our theme is the revelation of God in the different Abrahamic traditions, Marsh Chapel, Boston University, USA.

- Luncheon of leading figures of various religions with the Prime Minister of Malaysia YAB Dato Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, The International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) Malaysia Putrajaya, Malaysia.
- Meeting of members of various religions and interfaith dialogue groups. Speakers:former Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, (Christian Democrat), Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp, Dr. Umit Tas, chairman of Islam and Dialogue, and Marlies ter Borg, author of Sharing Mary, Bible and Qur'an Side by Side, Continental Art Centre, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

SELECTED EVENTS HELD IN HONOUR OF WIHW

SELECTED NEWS REPORTS ABOUT WIHW

A selection of news reports about the WIHW can be found at

<http://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/the-world-interfaith-week-in-the-news/>

Here are a few of them.

World Interfaith Harmony Week is chance to promote dialogue, says ecumenical leader

Dr Tveit encouraged WCC members to use World Interfaith Harmony Week as an opportunity to engage with other faiths.

He said: “We invite the member churches of the WCC to celebrate this week of interfaith harmony by reaching out to people of other faiths in their

communities and thus showing the love of God and love of neighbour, the primary themes of the week.”

http://www.christiantoday.com/article/world_interfaith_harmony_week_is_chance_to_promote_dialogue_says_ecumenical_leader/27448.htm

Religious Leaders Promote Interfaith Harmony

China's five national religious associations gathered in Beijing on January 28 to issue a Joint Declaration on Promoting Religious Harmony. Representatives from the Buddhist Association of China, the Taoist Association of China, the Islamic Association of China, the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association and the China Christian Council spoke in support of the declaration.

The declaration follows a UN General Assembly decision last year to declare the first week of February every year as World Interfaith Harmony Week. Representatives

from China's religious groups all expressed their belief in harmony and peace at the meeting.

http://www.china.org.cn/china/2011-01/30/content_21847513.htm

OIC SG hails UN proclamation of World Interfaith Harmony Week

Ref: Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu hailed the passing of the UN General Assembly Resolution proclaiming the first week of February each year as the World Interfaith Harmony Week. He highlighted the fact that the UN resolution falls in line with OIC policies, including the initiative for interfaith dialogue by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia. The OIC chief executive, in a message released from Jeddah Sunday, also extended his warm felicitations and congratulations to His Majesty, King Abdullah II, of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for his vision and

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wisdom in initiating the proposal and for its ultimate adoption by the world body. He called on the OIC member-states and the international community to observe the World Interfaith Harmony Week every year in a befitting manner so as to help engender a culture of tolerance and understanding among diverse faiths and civilizations. “Promoting interfaith harmony lies at the heart of the priority accorded to cultural diplomacy of the OIC,” said Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu. “Observance of the World Interfaith Harmony Week will serve peoples of all faiths and beliefs to coexist in peace, harmony and goodwill,” he added.

<http://www.en.bdtodaynews.com/2010/11/02/oic-sg-hails-un-proclamation-of-world-interfaith-harmony-week/>

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LETTER FROM
HIS MAJESTY KING ABDULLAH II
TO THE NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST
3 FEBRUARY 2011

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful,
Mr. President,

My Dear Friends,

The National Prayer Breakfast brings people together each year, not only in fellowship, but in earnest prayer (each to their own faith): that our generation may do God's will on earth. I am honored to join your endeavor, by letter, this morning; as I joined you in person just five years ago.

In all three of the monotheistic faiths, we share the two *greatest* commandments to love God and to love our neighbor. We are thus bound—each and every one of

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us— by our own faiths to reach out to each other as neighbors with goodwill and mutual respect; we must all help ease each other's suffering and want, and promote justice, peace and harmony.

We are also linked not only by belief but also and more basically by our common humanity. However, it is only by truly understanding the best in our faiths and in our common humanity that we can serve God and protect our children's future. In this vein, Jordan has a long and proud heritage of tolerance and moderation. Today, Jordanians are working systematically and boldly to expand the zone of understanding and dialogue around the world.

We began within our own Islamic community, the world's 1.5 billion Muslims. Six years ago, we issued the Amman Message, which sets forth Islam's call for tolerance, respect, justice, and mercy. The initiative strikes at the roots of extremism by building consensus on three essential points: Who is a Muslim and what constitutes essential Muslim belief? Who has the right

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to give a *fatwa*, a religious ruling? And does anyone have the right to call someone an apostate in Islam?

The Amman Message has been supported by recognized religious scholars throughout the Muslim world. The late Grand Sheikh of Al Azhar, the highest authority in Sunni Islam, called its three points, "The best resource for those who wish to travel along the straight path in their words and their actions, and in their spiritual and religious life."

In 2007, Jordan initiated and supported the launch of the historic "A Common Word" initiative, promoting Muslim-Christian harmony. This open letter, signed by 138 Muslim scholars, was sent to the leaders of Christian Churches around the world. It articulates a platform for peaceful relations between Christians and Muslims, based on the core commandments of our faiths. Speaking at the King Hussein Mosque in Amman in 2009, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI observed that the theme of the Common Word letter was consistent with his first Encyclical: in his words, "the unbreakable bond between love of God and love of neighbor, and the fundamental

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contradiction of resorting to violence or exclusion in the name of God."

Last year, 2010, Jordan took the message of religious harmony, peace and love to the whole world, to all faiths, and people of no faith. With support from numerous friends, we achieved a unanimous consensus for a U.N. resolution establishing World Interfaith Harmony Week. This will be an annual, voluntary occasion for people of every faith to express their own religious teachings about tolerance, respect for others, and peace.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week will take place all over the world during first week of February each year starting this year, happily coinciding with the Congress Prayer breakfast, now in its 59th year. It is our hope that during this time every year, more and more people will come together, as you are doing today, in growing goodwill and understanding.

Thank-you,

May God's peace and blessings be with you all.



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