



ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

WORLD INTERFAITH WEEK HARMONY WEEK

(From 1 to 7 February 2011)

BACKGROUND

On October the 20th 2010, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously established the World Interfaith Harmony Week through the adoption of a Resolution upon an initial proposal by H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan on September 23rd 2010.

The UNGA Resolution on “World Interfaith Harmony Week” reaffirms that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace and it proclaims the first week of February of every year the World Interfaith Harmony Week between all religions, faiths and beliefs.

Therefore, it 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.

WHY THIS INITIATIVE AND WHAT FOR ?

“The World Interfaith Harmony Week” is underpinned by the idea that there is a lot to be done by:

(1) Co-ordinating and uniting the efforts of all the interfaith groups doing positive work with one focused theme at one specific time annually, thereby increasing their collective momentum and eliminating redundancy.

(2) Harnessing and utilizing the collective might of the world’s second-largest infrastructure (that of places of worship — the largest being that of education) specifically for peace and harmony in the world: inserting, as it were, the right ‘software’ into the world’s religious ‘hardware’.

(3) Permanently and regularly encouraging the silent majority of preachers to declare themselves for peace and harmony and providing a ready-made vehicle for them to do so. Moreover, if preachers and teachers commit themselves on the record once a year to peace and harmony, this means that when the next inter-religious crisis or provocation occurs, they cannot then relapse into parochial fear and mistrust, and will be more likely to resist the winds of popular demagoguery.

GET INVOLVED

Your help is very much needed. Specifically, we need and gratefully ask you to:

(1) Write a personal email or letter of support for this initiative and post it at www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com at the appropriate place.

(2) Forwarding an email to all those on your email list who you think might be interested in it and them to their friends and so on as much as possible.

(3) Posting any resources you think would be important to the theme of the World Interfaith Harmony Week at www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com at the appropriate place.

(4) Organizing an event as simple as a sermon or a lecture or an event on the first week of next February on the theme of Interfaith Harmony.

(5) Recording your event at www.worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com at the appropriate place according to your own country.

(6) Consult the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations website (www.unaoc.org) to find inspiration to develop your own project for the 2011 World Interfaith Harmony Week.

For additional information contact:

- Thomas Uthup (UNAOC, Secretariat, New York, thomasu@unops.org) or Helena Barroco (High Representative for UNAOC office in Lisbon, hbarroco@netcabo.pt)

Harmony and Peace need your involvement! Helping the neighbor is also helping yourself!