



CONGRESS OF WORLD and TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS

Posted 5th July 2009

About Congress of leaders of world and traditional religions



President of our country Nursultan Nazarbayev as the Head of State and politician, in full measure realizing the increased role of the religion in the society, put forward the initiative of holding a forum of world and traditional religions in the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan - city of Astana. Earlier the organizers of similar events were only representatives of leading religions and denominations. Among other similar events aimed at establishing interdenominational dialogue were the meetings of representatives of world religions and denominations held in Italian city Assisi in October 1986 and January 2002.

By the idea of the President of Kazakhstan the dialogue between the leaders of world and traditional religions formed on common aspects and exact information on each other opens wide prospects for mutual cooperation and contributes to overcoming such negative manifestations of our time as violence, fanaticism, extremism and terrorism. The dialogue of the religions as the conceptual idea of the First Congress and means of disputes settling was opposed to methods of violence and terror in the interdenominational and interethnic relations.

The aim of the First Congress was search of universal guidelines in world and traditional forms of the religion, creation of permanent international

interdenominational institute for realizing the religious dialogue and accepting coordinated decisions.

Between the Forum participants an open exchange of opinions on the role of the religion in modern world and the universal nature of main moral values relating to any religion took place, where the problems concerned with revelation of conflict reasons on religious ground, necessity of improving interreligious harmony, mutual respect to each other, ability to learn on the traditions of other people were raised.

At the First Congress a decisive step has been made towards concord strengthening and establishing a constructive dialogue between civilizations, confessions, countries and peoples. It was noted that the interreligious dialogue is one of key means of social development and improvement of the well-being of all peoples.

By the results of the Congress the delegates came to opinion that the religious dialogue should be profound and be based on the dialectics.

The Forum which became a special and memorable event, again demonstrated its urgency and necessity of realizing the idea of cooperation and unity of representatives of various religions in the name of peaceful and worthy life of the people of the whole world. The idea of the Congress was supported by such influential peace politicians as C. Annan, G. Bush, M. Tetcher, Tzyan Tzemin, N. Mandella, J d'Esten, M. Gorbachev and others.

By the results of the Forum the Declaration was accepted, in which the spiritual leaders declared about realization of joint actions on safeguarding of peace and progress for the mankind and provision of stability in the society as the basis of harmonious world in the future.

The success of the event was consolidated by the decision of the I Congress to hold the interreligious forum on a regular basis - no less than once every three years. By this decision, Kazakhstan has been granted the honor of organizing the Second Congress of leaders of world and traditional religions in the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan - city of Astana. Also Kazakhstan was commissioned with developing all aspects connected with the creation of the Secretariat of the Congress.

On September 12-13, 2006 in Astana the Second Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions chaired by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev took place. The Congress was held in the new building "Palace of Peace and Reconciliation", built specially for realization of the Forum.

The Congress was held with the general subject: "Religion, society and international security" in two directions: "Religious freedom and respect to followers of other religions" and "Role of religious leaders in the strengthening of international security".

On the first day of the Forum "The Principles of interreligious dialogue" were accepted, where basic components by which the participants of the Forum were guided in the course of the Forum work found their reflection.

In the reports of the Forum participants words of gratitude to the address of the Republic of Kazakhstan, its President for the organization of the Forum of Religions where the religious dialogue as a means of disputes settling was opposed to the methods of violence and terror in interdenominational and international relations have sounded.

By the results of the Congress its participants adopted joint Declaration calling representatives of all religions and ethnic groups to non-admission of conflicts on the basis of cultural and religious differences. This document reflects in full the global need in replacement of "opposition ideology" by "culture of peace".

By unanimous consent of all Forum participants it was decided to hold the next Third Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Astana in 2009.

In conclusion of the Forum all religious leaders and guests of honor headed by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev went to the hall upstairs in the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation where they left memorable notes under their own portraits. In the future these notes with the portraits of the delegates of the Second Congress and their report theses will be published in a book.

First congress of world and traditional religions in Astana



Main priorities of the I Congress:

- statement of peace, concord and tolerance as stable principles of human existence;
- achievement of mutual respect and tolerance between religions, confessions, nations

and ethnoses;

- oppositions to trials to use religious senses of people for escalation of conflicts and military actions.

Political tasks of the I Congress:

- strengthening of traditions of interfaith and interconfessional dialogue in form of interfaith congresses;
- establishment of continuously acting agency of the Congress for coordinated, objective and competent preparation of ideology and concept of future congresses;
- establishment of Secretariat of the Congress located in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The following theses were defined as the subject of the Congress:

- every human shall have possibility to follow its religious views;
- religious postulates and differences between religions shall not be used to justify violence, cause hate and discord;
- origins and reasons of the terrorism are outside the religion and religious postulates;
- the dialogue of civilizations is the process aimed to prevent conflicts based on cultural and ethnic ground, which is especially significant in conditions of globalization;
- it is necessary to try to obtain global consensus on elaboration of universal formula of human interrelations, based on moral and ethic values of modern civilizations.

Great preparation work preceded the congress. Some bilateral meetings with leaders of world religions, who discussed questions of forthcoming Congress, were held on February-June, 2003. There should be noted the meetings of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbaev with His Excellency Pope of Rome John Paul II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksiy II, General Secretary of Islamic League sheikh Abdallah ben Abdel Muskhin At-Turki (Saudi Arabia), Chief Rabbi of Israel Jonah Metzger, Secretary of State of Vatican cardinal Angelo Sodano.

Interconfessional headquarter actively cooperated with papal councils of Vatican, World Islamic League and other religious centers in the process of the preparation for I Congress. Plan of preparation for the Congress was developed and affirmed.

17 delegations, representing Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Daoism, Shintoism and Hinduism, took part in the Congress.

The Result of the First Day of I Congress

The President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbaev opened with his welcoming address the I Congress of World and Traditional Religions at 10.00 a.m. on September 23. The President also specified welcoming telegrams of the heads of countries and the leading world politicians: the President of the USA, G.Bush, the President of Russia, V.Putin, The President of France, J.Shirak, the President of Egypt, H.Mubarak, the President of European Committee, R.Prodi, the king of Saudi Arabia, Fahd bin

Abdul Aziza Al-Turki, the Prime-Ministers T.Blair, S.Berlusconi, UN General Secretary, K.Annan, Ex-Premier-Minister, M. Thatcher, Ex-President V.Giscard d'Esten, and religious leaders: Pope of Rome John Paul II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksiy II, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rouen Williams, the Patriarch of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, Varfolomei, etc.

Then the Head of the State paid special attention to insolvency of existing discussions for the theme of "conflict of civilizations" and "crisis of the religions" in his speech. The President marked that mankind tries to find the answers in religious truths in the period of globalization on the background of difficulties of people's adaptation to technological innovations. At the same time, unfortunately, we witness how ability of religion to mobilize people for political actions is exploited in modern society in sake of bad purposes; the sense of sanctity itself and its natural interpretation are distorted. All this leads to defiance of human laws, permissiveness, to the actions incompatible with morality, humanism, which are main postulate of all the religions. The President of Kazakhstan drew participants' attention to the fact that it is time to declare absolutely that it is not admissible to attach ideological, political sense to existing cultural and civilization and religious differences.

Abdallah ben Abdel Muskhin At-Turki, sheikh, General Secretary of the World Islamic League (Saudi Arabia) suggested an idea to establish a row of committees for defining generalized concept "terrorism" pursuant to the regulations of international law, elaboration of criticism of the theory of "collision of civilizations" in his report. The sheikh called the participants to take firm position for the purpose to prevent the forces breaking the human unity.

Joseph Tomko, the cardinal, the President of the Congregation for the Evangelization of the Nations (Vatican), declared in his report the Address of the Pope John Paul II to the Congress, which the participants perceived with great interest. Joseph Tomko reminded all the leaders of the responsibility imposed on them for keeping peace on the Earth, demonstrating the position of Sancta Sedes aimed to establish positive dialogue with all the religions of the world.

Tsamun Losantszumei Tudantsyuetszinim, the Deputy Chairman of Association of Buddhists of China, noted that "modern world is many-coloured and we shall respect variety and differences of nationalities, religions and civilizations, tend to tolerance instead of discrimination and communication instead of confrontation".

The report of **Jonah Metzger**, the Cief Rabbi of Israel, was well-wishing and open for the representatives of all the religions in the world. He marked special friendly atmosphere between nations in our republic, addressed many kind words to the President of our country, people of Kazakhstan and new capital. Having declared that enmity, hate, terror are prohibited things for religious people, when the person finds himself at dangerous line of firing, Jonah Metzger said we can put out this fire, as the God created people not for the purpose they eliminate each other.

The Metropolitane of Astana and Almaty Methodius acquainted the participants of the Congress with the address of Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, having underlined that the position of Russian Orthodox Church is directed to establishment of cooperation of religions, creation of peace and concord on the Earth, and is solidary with other religions relatively blame of terrorism, fanaticism, trials to use religious senses for improper purposes.

Tszhan Tsiyui, the first Deputy Chairman of Chinese Daoism Organization, opened in his speech humanistic purposes of ancient Chinese religion of Daoism, preaching the idea of search and achievement of harmony between body and soul, individual and society, as well as nature and human. With it, such qualities like patience and amicability may become main elements of success.

Nicolas Baines, the Bishop of Croydon (London), proclaimed address of Doctor Rowen Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, which was received with great interest and understanding in connection with its aiming to solve problems concerning the threat of spreading of conflicts and religious extremism. Nicolas Baines noted that "politicians very often see the connection of conflicts with religious reasons, though this is surface statement". He told this Congress has potential of peaceful coexistence, which would permit in the result conflict-free peace.

Shantilal Karamshi Somaya, the Chairman of the Institute for Research of Study of Indian Culture and Interreligious Dialogue (India), paid attention to community of values for all world religions, similarity of views to the problems of good and evil, justice and equality of people, which are stated in a fundamental in Indian religious and philosophical thought, especially in the notion "violence".

Mehdi Hadavi Mogaddam, the Chairmant of the Committee of Jurisprudence and Law at the Ministry of Science and New Technologies of Islamic Republic Iran, declared that mankind paid more attention to the development of natural sciences in 19th - 20th centuries. 21st century showed scientific achievements and new technologies are insufficient for sustainable development of the world. He also paid attention of the participants of the Congress that material security does not ensure security of people, and more often leads the mankind to the search of spiritual guidelines. He called to revive spiritual values, which are initially laid in all the world religions.

Mahmud Zakzuk, the Minister on Waqf Affairs of Arabian Republic of Egypt, paid attention to the fact that interconfessional dialogue is integral part of the dialogue of civilizations. And this fact, in turn, may play critical role in liquidation of many forms of opposition. Interreligious dialogue may be successful, if it will be based on mutual respect and full equality of rights of the parties. Such dialogue will positively influence on social development and enhancement of welfare of all the nations.

In a whole, the result of the first day of the Congress, where 11 reports were heard, including welcoming speech of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbaev, the Chairman of the Congress, demonstrated matured necessity of direct, open and alive dialogue, and proved the fact millions of people are concerned

with deteriorating situation on the planet in connection with sharpening of conflicts on the religious ground. The dialogue of religions was recognized as one of optimal variants to prevent disagreements, prejudices and wars in addressed directed to the I Congress from the leading politicians of the world and in the reports of the participants. All the delegates of the Congress marked the need to appeal to spiritual and moral elements of religions, establishment of interreligious confidence, concord and cooperation.

The Results of the Second Day of the I Congress

The I Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions continued its work at 10.00 a.m. on September 24. The Chairman of the Congress, the President N.Nazarbaev, on behalf of the delegated greeted the Metropolitan of France Emmanuel, arrived one day later. The Chairman of the Congress also informed that of telegram received from the President of Islamic Republic Iran M.Hatami with greeting of the participants of the I Congress, the leaders of world and traditional religions.

10 participants made a speech at the second day of the Congress.

Muhammad Said Al-Tantawi, the sheikh and Supreme Imam of the University Al-Hazar (Egypt), dedicated to the principles of conduct of the dialogue, caused great interest of all the participants and guests of the Congress. The sheikh called participants to conduct positive dialogue based on strong arguments and evidences, true not false facts, which will be founded on objectivity, modesty, that will give its positive results. Such dialogue receives the blessing of the God. Differences of religions does not deny possibility of cooperation and mutual enrichment.

Minoru Sonoda, the Director of the Chief Management of Shintoistic Churches (Japan), focused attention of the participants of Congress on the communal direction of Japanese religion and its centuries-old syncretism with Buddhism. Description of views to spiritual life, especially relatively questions of crisis prevention and rescue of the Earth, change of "cultural cover of materialism" and establishment of new civilization, based on respect of life.

Ishmail Noko, the General Secretary of World Lutheran Federation (Switzerland) paid attention to the fact that World Lutheran Federation have been already over 40 years conducts active dialogue with the representatives of other religions, as the dialogue is the process, which is deeply rooted to nature of absolutely all the religions. To deny the dialogue means to commit act contradictory to the religion, destroy very fragile bridges, which cannot be constructed at once. Mr.Noko noted, time, patience, humility, trust, skill to listen to each other are required to conduct the dialogue.

Salman Al-Khusaini Al-Navdi, the President of Muslim Organization "Jamaat-u-Shabab-e-Islam" (India), said in his report: "Islam does not permit to use force or extremism. It can be used only when other party attacks Moslemin." Islam permits to use force just with the purpose to rebut aggression and only with need. "If there are people who engage in quarrels without excuse and reason, this opposes to Islam", Al-Navdi stressed. With it guilty shall be responsible for their actions, and Islam does not

relate to such people. Speaker noted, the fact today many politicians tries to cover their own mercenary interests and aggressive purposed with Islamic values causes anxiety. In the end he called to rebut such actions.

Tumeekhuu Bulgan, the General Secretary of "Asian Buddhism Conference for Peace" (Mongolia) declared the process of globalization lead the world to recognition of mutual dependence but not to overcoming of the conflicts. Development of interreligious harmony is one of variants to solve the problem of conflict prevention without use of force. It means many problems and difficulties shall be solved through the dialogue, Mr. Bulgan said. All the great religions of the world shall work together, in order to overcome differences of both cultural and social character to reach harmony among the nations. Exchange of opinions of various religious and philosophic studies, traditions is main purpose of interreligious dialogue to overcome existing barrier between religions.

Mahmud Akhmad Gazi, the Vice-President of International Islamic University (Pakistan), focused attention of the participants to the fact Muslim nations always welcomed cooperation and dialogue between religions and civilizations. The Koran calls other religions to act jointly to promote common values and spiritual release of the human. He also thanked the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the initiative of calling of the Congress, this shall serve to better understanding and cooperation between the religious. The speaker said Muslim world stays to be civilization during many centuries, which is able to accept and admit various points of view to the world and integrate them into one universal civilization. Universality of Islam is hidden in its comprehensiveness, Islamic civilization always was interethnic and multinational. He stressed that Islam never refused to learn from ancient Greeks, Mesopotamians, Hindu and other nations. This flexibility provides Islam with universal nature.

Shri Shri Sugendra Tirtkha Svami Madhavacharia, the President of UN World Council of Religious Leaders, the head of school "Shri Madhavacharia" (India), spoke that cruelty, indifference to the suffering of other people, and lack of respect to their rights never shall be accepted by Indian philosophy. He also said religious leaders shall establish and support amicable climate all over the world, otherwise, terrorism may become vast threat. "Time came to mobilize our spiritual possibilities to struggle against the terrorism. In connection with this, we shall express our blame to any act of terrorism wherever it occurred, as the terrorism is directed against the God."

Absattar kazhy Derbisali, the Chairman of the Muslim Religious Board for Kazakhstan, the Chief Mufti, Professor, paid attention in his report to the fact the world community has to reap the benefit of interethnic conflicts, and this is why the affirmation of interreligious dialogue to keep stability and security is topical task. The dialogue shall be constructed on the base of equality, mutual understanding and love. Islam does not make differences basing on national belonging and tends to strengthen international concord. Religion as part of social structure shall not stay aside social and political activity.

Tsutoma Khata, Ex-Prime-Minister of Japan, noted that intolerance to people of other confessions sometimes causes conflicts. In his opinion, poverty and uncertainty in the future are main sources of arising disputes in the world. This is why, overcoming of poverty in the world and faith in bright future shall be laid down in the basis of international cooperation to keep peace on the earth. He also suggested relatively organization of school education, introduction of subject "study of peace" to educational standard, implementation of idea "human security", what would contribute to the refuse from use of military force and terror.

Thomas Geremek (father Ioakim) - general minister (OFM conv.), Assisi city, in its report noted, that he is a representative of Minorites, who find inspiration of Assisi spirit, place of birth and peace of Francis - Saint of Roman Catholics. He has briefly acquainted participants with bases of doctrine of Francis Assisi's, who recognized the unity based on equality of all members of one family, did not count himself above others and « never killed others for the sake of belief, as against of his some christian contemporaries ». From here, as it was expressed Thomas Geremek, personal freedom for Francis who is simultaneously a sample of obedience to the God and freedom of worship without any contradictions proceeds.

Simultaneously Geremek has noted, that he offers evidence of Francis from Assisi as model of perfection which the religion can offer for the resolution of conflicts and strengthening of the world on our planet.

On results of the second day of Congress delegates came to opinion, that dialogue of religions should be profound and to be based on dialectics. The problems connected to revealing of the reasons of conflicts on religious ground, on necessity of perfection of interreligious harmony, mutual respect to each other, skill to study on traditions of other peoples were brought up.

On I Congress of world and traditional religions the decisive step for a way of strengthening of the consent and an establishment of meaningful dialogue between civilizations, faiths, the countries and peoples was made. It was marked, that interreligious dialogue is one of key ways of social development and improvement of well-being of all peoples. On the I Congress forum the Declaration and Decision were accepted.

Address of the President of Kazakhstan Republic N.A. Nazarbayev at the Opening Session of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions



Dear leaders and representatives of World and national traditional religions!

Today the ancient Kazakh land is honored to gather the leaders and high representatives of World and national traditional religions from around the globe to engage in dialogue between civilizations and religions.

Greeting you on Kazakhstan's land, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you for responding to our invitation and gathering here together.

I am grateful to our superior Muslim persons such as Supreme Imam Al Azhar Sheik Muhammad Sayed Tantawy, Secretary-General of World Islamic League Sheik Abdullah bin Abdul Mohsin Al-Turki and representatives of other Muslim organizations. We highly appreciate your participation in the Congress.

I express my deep gratitude to His Holiness Roman Pope John Paul II for his high attention and support to the Congress.

I am grateful to His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexis II for his support to our Congress.

I would like to thank the leaders of Judaism, first of all, Jonah Metzger, for their participation in the Congress at high level.

I would also express appreciation to the representatives of various confessions of Christianity who arrived to Kazakhstan from different regions of the world.

We are very glad to see among us the leaders and representatives of oldest religions and civilizations of the Orient such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism and Shinto.

I would like to greet on your behalf the Honored Guests of the Congress: Ex Premier of Japan Tsutomu Hata, and official representatives on behalf of UN Secretary General - V. Sotirov; of King of Saudi Arabia - Minister for Justice, Dr. Abdallah Al Ash Sheikh; of the President of Egypt - Minister for Vakufs and Islam of Egypt Mahmud Zakzuk; as well as delegation of Assizi City from Italy headed by the Minister Thomas Geremek and spiritual leader Lanfranco Serrini.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all good will men and women who have not remained indifferent to the idea of the Congress of International and National Traditional Religions and who enriched us with their advices.

Thank you for your support to and contribution in the cause of peace and understanding on Earth - for something which unites us all and what we have gathered here today for in Astana.

Speech of N. Nazarbayev upon being elected as the Chairman of Congress

Dear Participants of Congress!

I am highly privileged to announce the Congress of International and National traditional Religions open!

Today's Congress involves delegations of all religions of the world, in total 17 delegations of various religions, honored guests and representatives of international organizations.

Muslim delegations are represented at the highest level: Secretary General of the World Islamic League Sheik Abdullah bin Abdul Mohsin Al-Turki, Supreme Imam Al Azhar Sheik Muhammad Sayed Tantawy, President of Indian Muslim organization "Jamaat-e-Shabab-e-Islam" Salman al-Hussein al-Nadvi, Vice President of International Islam University Dr. Mahmood Ahmad Gazi, and Mehdi Hadawi Mogaddam, Chairman of the Ismal Jurisprudence and Law Committee under the Ministry of Science and New Technologies.

Cardinal Joseph Tomko is the head of the Vatican delegation including two Ministers. Metropolitan of Almay and Astana Methodius represents the Russian Orthodox Church;

Metropolitan of France Emmanuel (to arrive tonight) the Constantinople Orthodox Church; Bishop of Croydon Nicolas Bayns the Anglican Church; and Canon Jonathan Robin Blanning Gauf, Ecumenism Secretary of Canterbury Archbishop.

Dr. Ishmael Noko, General Secretary of Lutheran World Council, represents the Lutheran World Union.

The Judaism delegation headed by Chief Rabbi Jonah Metzger takes part in the Congress at the high level. The delegation includes the President of the European Council of Rabbis, Chief Rabbis of Belgium, Switzerland, Russia, Kazakhstan and the President of the Eurasian Jewish Congress.

The head of the All China's Buddhist Delegation is Chiamyan Lossanchumey Tudangchiuechinim, and T.Bulgan, General Secretary of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Piece from Mongolia. The head of the All China's Taoist Association is Chang Chiuy.

The Shinto Delegation is headed by Minoru Sonoda, Director of Chief Shinto Temple Department; Hinduism Delegation Dr. Shantilal Somaya, Chairman, Indology and Inter-religious dialog Institute.

His Holiness Pope of Rome John Paul II and His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexis II, as well as Canterbury Archbishop Rowan Williams and Constantinople Patriarch Bartholomew sent their messages to the Congress. I am glad to announce that, acknowledging the importance of our forum for piece and consent in the world, the heads of leading states and governments of the world sent their messages to the participants.

They include (by chronology):

Jacque Chirac, President of French Republic; Fahd bin Abdel Aziz, King of Saudi Arabia; Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, President of Russian Federation; George Bush, US President; Toni Blair, UK Premier; Hosni Mubarak, ARE President; Silvio Berlusconi, Prime Minister of Italian Republic; Kofi Annan, UN General Secretary; Roman Prodi, Chairman of European commission; a group of US Senators and Congressmen; Valery Jiscar d'Estain, Ex President of France; Lech Valensa, Ex President of Poland; Margaret Thatcher, UK Ex Prime Minister; and Ditrich Genscher, Ex Vice Chancellor of Federative Republic of Germany.

Dear Participants,

Before commencing the Congress and reading my report, I would like to propose you a minute of silence for reflection and appeals to God to be granted will, force and wisdom to unite all religions, confessions and peoples for piece and consent in the world.

Dear participants and guests,

I am very glad and privileged to greet you, representatives of the leading world religions, on the ancient soil of Kazakhstan.

Personally and on behalf of our multi-ethnic people, I express deep appreciation to you for responding to our invitation and honoring this forum with your presence and participation.

It is deeply symbolic that this forum is taking place in the very heart of Eurasia.

Over many centuries the Great Steppe has been characterized by peaceful co-existence of many peoples who worshipped various religions such as Tengrianism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and many others.

From ancient times until now, this land, through trade and cultural exchange, has functioned as a link between Asia and Europe. It is still home for many peoples and confessions. We are proud to talk about a unique social and humanity phenomenon reflected in the preamble to our Constitution, which starts with: "We are the people of Kazakhstan...".

I would like to bring up a very remarkable fact. There is a 13th century town of Koylyk in the south of Kazakhstan. A Buddhist pagoda, mosque and Christian church neighbored together in this ancient town.

Today in our new capital city and other cities you can freely visit a Mosque, Orthodox Church, Catholic Church, synagogue, or a tabernacle. This is a link of times.

Preparation to this Congress suggested me an idea of building a Palace of Nations in Astana. It will embrace a mosque, church, synagogue and Buddhist temple. It will also have the Assembly of Kazakhstan's Peoples and all ethnic cultural centers.

Apropos, the Assembly of Kazakhstan's Peoples became a unique civil society institute for us to facilitate an efficient national policy. It is acknowledged by Kazakhstan's society and highly appreciated by many countries and international organizations such as UN and OECD.

The Palace of Nations will be a symbol of unity of the people in our country where more than one hundred and twenty ethnic groups live and work in piece and consent. More than forty confessions conduct free activities in the country.

This is our unconditional national wealth and chance for stable future and development.

I am convinced that the inter-ethnic and inter-confessional consent we keep and strengthen has become the foundation for dynamic cardinal and large-scaled transformations and success in the political, economic and social spheres. This is generally acknowledged today.

We also adhere to the principles of tolerance, consent and cooperation in our foreign political activities. These principles are based on the idea of multi-vectors, integration and consolidation for global and regional security, equity and progress.

Kazakhstan was first country to voluntarily refuse from the fourth most powerful nuclear arsenal in the world and to forever close one of the largest nuclear test sites. This was our worthy contribution in the global security recognized by other peoples and states.

Our country was the initiator of convening the Conference for Trust and Security in Asia which was organizationally executed last year at the forum of the regional country leaders in Almaty.

We have held the Conference of Peace and Consent this February. It involved many conspicuous religious actors representing various confessions. It adopted the To Peace and Consent Declaration and established the Peace and Stability Forum.

I think that each confessional leader in Kazakhstan can confirm the fact of revival and spiritual rise in their communities.

This is the result of our efforts to keep peace, consent and stability and we believe this is one of our key achievements. We will continue tirelessly and tediously work to strengthen the foundation of the stability and security in Kazakhstan's society.

At the same time, we can see and clearly realize that however great are the efforts taken by one country, they will not yield any proper result if external factors fail to contribute. This is a gospel truth of any country on the planet.

Peaceful coexistence and constructive interaction of peoples, religions, states and governments nowadays is especially important. It moved from the pure theory to one of the most important practical objectives.

That is why continuing dialog between religions, cultures or civilizations which many eminent political and religious players have been carrying since old times is extremely important.

What we need is an in-depth critical analysis of events and phenomena both globally, regionally and nationally.

This analysis will no doubt help as saying goes "winnow grain from husk" to protect humanity from any political, economic, religious and all the more so military extremism in future.

I have no doubt that this analysis can inoculate against "simple decision" temptations abounding today and against any anti-human ideas.

In this connection, I would like to only share my vision with the respected forum on some problems of today.

Firstly, I believe that recent speculations on "conflict of civilizations" and "crisis of religions" are invalid.

To the contrary, on the background of radical changes in the world order, challenge for billions to adapt to technological innovations all around the world and stringent

requirements of global market, people have widely returned to finding answers in religious truths. By their moral and ethic potential such truths are unmatched.

Peculiarity of the Central Eurasia is the fact that religion here has also become a factor of national consolidation of many peoples. We also cannot forget that the tradition of freedom of conscience and satisfying religious needs was artificially discontinued for decades within this vast space. After adopting new laws on religion, faith had new life and number of parishioners in all communities soared.

This is a gratifying phenomenon because religion if anything is the only global phenomenon before globalization to keep and carry the ideas of humanism and cultural dialog.

Besides spiritual universalism, religion is also an effective institution of international cooperation. This is especially important today with increasing number of local and regional conflicts which in a number of cases have ethnic and religious tinge.

Where political regulation methods fail, Word of God remains the only way for reconciliation and hope. The role of religious traditions underlying highest moral virtues in our wildly sometimes chaotically changing world is impossible to overestimate.

Unfortunately, we witness religious capability being exploited to mobilize people for political actions for purposes far from good.

The very meaning of "sanctity" is being distorted. Perverse interpretation results in disdained human laws, permissiveness, actions incompatible with morality, ethics, humanism or any key postulate of any religion. I am convinced that it is time to decisively announce inadmissibility of attaching any ideological or political tinge to the existing cultural, civilization and religious differences.

We have to learn how to distinguish and reveal the true essence of aggression and violence facts which are disguised by pseudo-religious doctrines.

Secondly, it is more appropriate to talk about "meeting" rather than "conflicting civilizations". No "end of history" can be foreseen simply because the human race at this historical point and I think in future will not have any one and only universal civilization model of cultural and religious order which the world community would accept as the only basis for our existence.

I think all this is myths and absolutely wrong purposes brought by "dreams of mind". Each reasonable politician, each statesman or religious player should clearly realize this.

No mono system, I am deeply convinced, is able to provide balance, stability and development not only for entire humanity but even for its part. It will always hide a threat of conflict and explosion. The only correct formula is unity in variety - multi-ethnic and multi-confessional.

The fact should be realized and reckoned with of the existence of other civilizations, cultures and religions with not less profound or important history, symbolism and mentality. This cannot be broken by any forceful or willful methods.

What is happening today in the world is not conflict of civilization but rather adaptation of cultural and religious systems, though not always easy and adequate, to new world, new technology and new societal relationships.

We are all likely to realize that globalization and modern technology in both industry and socio-political system undoubtedly respond to the challenges of the time. However, they bear not only benefits but also something bad, i.e. negative manifestations which the society can nevertheless minimize if not eliminate.

There are great undoubted values which are no way linked with any material benefits and will always remain priority and fundamental for human being. The key ones are spirituality and morality. Their key carrier is religion which keeps centuries-elaborated national and religious traditions, original historical and cultural experience of every people.

And finally, in the global 21st century world filled with concerns and threats, any state, religion and civil society I think has a special and single strategy and way to manifest good will.

This is peace-building, appeal and action to reach consent, understanding and cooperation between countries, peoples and confessions. Tolerance and partnership are the only way to have success in the fight against global evil such as terrorism, weapons of mass or any other destruction, drug business and its consequences, environmental destructions, and heaviest physical and social diseases of our time.

This is also mercy and charity to any aggrieved strata of society.

In the coming period these issues I think should be high on agenda of governments, international organizations and all international social institutions.

And, of course, international and national traditional religions should play their weighty role in this.

This meeting on Kazakhstan's soil could make its modest contribution in forming the culture of inter-confession dialog.

We think we could establish a system of consultative meetings and develop procedures and rules for such dialog.

At the same time I believe you will share my opinion that we do not need any ultimate goals. We cannot create any common religious space. We cannot ultimately overcome the differences we have the more so as they sometimes touch upon the basics of great religions.

However, the value of continuous dialog is the fact that regardless of the existing differences, the meaning and process of finding some "golden middle" is kept. Dialog is the key to creating a territory of peace and consent and time of harmony and clarity. In this I see the undoubted value of the religious dialog.

In this connection, I appeal to the representatives of all religions and confessions with a proposal - to hold the Forum of Religions on the continuous basis.

Such institution would strengthen the basics of inter-religious dialog and provide systematic constructive contracts between religious officials and believers.

In future this could lay the foundation for an international organization to reduce inter-religious stress in the world and promote spirituality, peacefulness and tolerance.

We could also make a first step to developing a Charter of Religious Tolerance. Today we extremely need a document not only to simply write down the principles of peaceful co-existence of religions but also to prove the necessity in constructive dialog among them.

We could think about establishing an Integrated Religious Cultural Center. This idea has been lingering for a long time and today it is ripe to be implemented.

If religious personages trust this to us, we are ready with your support and participation to try to achieve these important and vital goals.

Dear Participants and Guests,

I would like to again heartily thank your for your participation and deep attention to the problems of the modern world.

I see the highest mission of pastors today in bringing their faith to people pure, unbiased, free of misunderstanding and the more so of hostility or spite.

I know you all bear light of true faith, verity, kindness and benevolence. I pay homage to you for your truly titanic and not always rewarding work.

Wish you well and happiness!

Thank you for your attention.

Declaration of members of the First Congress



We, members of the First Congress of leaders of world and traditional religions, hold in 23-24 September, 2003 in Astana city, capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Recognizing the right of each person for free choice, expression and confession of own religion,

Considering the interfaith dialogue as one of the most important instrument of the maintenance of peace and harmony among peoples and nations,

Supporting the efforts of United Nations, other concerned international and religious organizations, and also governments, non-governmental and civil society organizations for the advancement of dialogue among civilizations,

Confirming the importance of religions for prosperity of all mankind,

Denouncing the wrong presentation of religions and wrong usage of differences among religions as achievement methods of egoistic, destructive and violent aims,

Realizing

The decreasing degree of respect to the gift of human's life and the dignity of each person,

The serious calls of the global stability, created by poverty, hunger, sicknesses, immorality, and also by limitation of access to the clean water and health protection,

The using of oppression, cruelty and violence as main instruments of disputes solving,

The ecological crises, in which world is existing, with threatening consequences for present and future generations,

Declare:

Advancement of such values as tolerance, truth, fairness and love should be as aim of any religious sermon,

Extremism, terrorism and other forms of violence in the name of religion have nothing in common with real understanding of religion; they are threat for human's life and according to this should be rejected,

Variety of religious beliefs and confessions should bring not to mutual suspicion, discrimination and humiliation, but to mutual perception and harmony, demonstrating the originality of each religion and culture,

Religions should work for the better cooperation, accepting the tolerance and mutual acceptance as essential instruments of peaceful co-existence of all peoples,

Educational programs and facilities of the social intercourse should be important instruments for the advancement of positive approaches to religions and cultures,

Interfaith dialogue is the one of key methods of public development and improvement of prosperity of all peoples, encouragement of tolerance of all peoples, mutual understanding and harmony among different cultures and religions, and it also helps to overcome conflicts and violence,

All human society should be encouraged for overcoming of detestation, animosity, intolerance and xenophobia,

We should strengthen the cooperation for advancement of spiritual values and culture of dialogue for the propose of provision of peace in new millennium,

We are ready to make all efforts to prevent the usage of religious differences as instrument of detestation and discord, and save the mankind from global conflict of religions and cultures,

We are expecting joint actions for the provision of peace and progress for mankind and for the provision of stability in societies as basics of harmonious world in future,

We thank the Republic of Kazakhstan and His Excellency President Nursultan Nazarbaev for initialization and holding of this Congress,

May our engagements will be blessed and may the fairness, peace and prosperity for all people will be gifted.

Address of the President of Kazakhstan Republic N.A. Nazarbayev



Dear members and guests of the Congress!

The days of our Forum, our joint meetings went as a short moment. They were pleasant and fruitful. We and you made another one important step on the way of consolidation of harmony and establishment of dialogue's practice among civilizations, religions, countries and peoples.

The results of our conversations and discussions with all convincingsness demonstrated that the idea of cooperation in the name of future, in the name of peaceful and worthy life for peoples of different religions and nations has right for life.

The variety is not disadvantage, visa versa, it's an invaluable gift from God, because of which the present mutual enrichment, real development are taking place. Each people have unique, with its inherent traditions, history and way of thinking. Everyone contributes his own special melody in the polyphony of spiritual culture of mankind.

I want to concentrate your attention on the following problem such as the growth of number and influence of all sorts of pseudo religious associations. They exist practically in every country and mainly are parasitic on existing difficulties in the modern world.

Many of them under fashionable masks preach the ideas far from harmless, do deeds far from good, result of which could be the undermining of basis of not only religion, civil society, but also state.

We should be opposite to such organizations, to stop their activity, protecting our citizens from any negative influence.

For all of us the imperishable urgency of those moral postulates, which are common for the entire world, traditional and national religions, becomes increasingly obvious.

Let us recall the truth, heard in this Congress on different languages and stated figures of different religions:

- "all existence, common for all mankind, is going back to one God " - from the speech of representative of Islam;
- "we have one forefather - Abraham" - from Judaism;
- "don't kill one's neighbor " - Buddhist said;
- "peace and accordance through harmony with yourself and nature " - from Dao religion;
- "help to another one, even he/she is adherent of other religion or even non-believer" - Orthodox Christianity;
- "peace - gift of God, and as gift of God is our meeting" - said clergyman of Vatican.

So we again visually make sure that all religions preach the peace via faith, tolerance, harmony and philanthropy.

This confirms our opinion that world traditional religions can be as connecting link in dialogue of different peoples and civilizations.

In the modern life it's very important for us to use that huge experience of the creation, which was collected by different religions during their rich history.

All of us have the one way to God. And time came for more active dialogue among religions.

We feel the obvious need in international interfaith organization, which could to carry into life the unified will of authoritative spiritual leaders and believers on permanent base.

This function could be done by the Forum of world and traditional-national religions.

Can the religion be as the stimulus of creation and development in XXI century?

I think, our joint work in these two days with evidence showed - undoubtedly, it can be.

We should understand the one simple but inviolable truth - all of us in the modern world are interdependent. And this interdependency is delicate and sensitive mechanism, reacting on any nuances and fluctuations.

It's important that our common home is not only our country, but our entire Earth.

And all of us want that our children, grandchildren and grand grandchildren will live peacefully, in healthy environment, in harmony with other nations and religions, and don't know wars and asperity.

I hope, that our activity, our prayers and sympathy will help to approach that bright time when suffers of millions of people in hotspots of Planet, in zones of different conflicts will stop.

For all of us the happiness and good will happen when long-awaited peace will come in Middle East, the tension will fall in Balkan Mountains, in some regions of Southern Asia, Africa continent and other places.

Concluding my speech, I would like to express again the sincere gratitude to our respected guests - heads and representatives of delegations for their active participation in work.

In these days, we have received a big quantity of letters, telegrams and messages via email to our address from many countries.

In this connection I express the special gratitude to leaders of states, political and public figures, for people from different countries and Kazakhstan, who supported the idea of present Forum and necessity of dialogue among religions.

As I conceive, we could develop the formula, confirming our adherence to eternal truth such as Tolerance, Truth, Fairness and Love.

It was reflected in the Declaration adopted by us.

We agree in opinion that extremism, separatism, terrorism and other types of violence in the name of religion have nothing in common with real understanding of religion and they are threat for mankind.

We recognised that interfaith dialogue is the one of key methods of social development and improvement of prosperity of all peoples.

We expressed the readiness to make all efforts in provision of peace and mankind's progress, stability in societies, as basis of harmonious peace in future.

I thank all members of present Forum for putting of trust for us the preparation of next Congress.

This says, that idea of permanent interfaith dialog as instrument of creation of the Territory of peace and harmony, the Time of harmony and clearness started to be realized.

I would like to hope that we will not forget our meeting in Astana city when we will come back to our homes, and will continue our intercourse, exchange of views and everyday work on development of peace and harmony, getting over the tension and conflicts.

And if we will bring to our entire parish, citizens of our countries the meaning and essence of our conversation here, only by this we will bring big contribution in deed of peace and harmony.

I suppose it is appropriate to conclude our Congress by words from the adopted Declaration: May our deeds will be blessed, may the fairness, peace and prosperity will be gifted for all people of the Earth.

May grace of God will come for you and your countries. May the troubles and misfortunes will bypass you. Let your days will be full of care for good of people, piece and stability.

Have a good trip! Good bye for the moment!

Astana, 24th September, 2003

Simultaneous prayer on the area near the “Baiterek” monument



After end of work of I Congress of leaders of world and traditional religions in the Palace of receptions - « Saltanat Saraiy » September, 24 2003ă. at 14.30 the column of buses with delegates and participants has approached on the area at monument

"Baiterek". To the same place approached cortege of the President of Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbaev.

The place of prayer - area near the "Baiterek" monument was chosen not casually. «Baiterek» for the Kazakhstan and its capital is the same symbol, as, for example, Red Square in Moscow or Statue of Liberty in New York. This construction has incorporated philosophical, political and historical sense. The ancient poetic myth says, that at the top "Koktobe", on a coast of huge ocean the tree of life Baiterek is growing. Every year in crone of Baiterek sacred bird Samruk laid a golden egg - "the sun", every year the dragon eats "the sun", but it appears again. It symbolically means the change of day and night, a summer and winter, struggle of goods and evil, light and darkness. The legend of a sacred tree as well as possible reflects ideals of the renovated Kazakhstan, aspiring to live in peace.

At bottom of monument "Baiterek" in equal distance were established 17 jurts. If it would be possible to draw a hidden string from every yurt to "Baiterek" than from height of the bird's flight this composition could look as "sun" as a symbol of the common aspiration to a unification.

Under the script of work of Congress in jurts the ceremony of divine service of representatives of all faiths was planned. It passed within one hour. It was the unique prayer. It is necessary to note, that before preparation of Congress representatives Anglican and Russian orthodox churches expressed doubt in an acceptability of variant of offering up a prayer in jurts. However, the prayer for the world and well-being on all ground which has sounded in all languages of the world in the centre of Kazakhstan, in the centre of Eurasia, has gone right.

Near every yurt the special indicating tablet was established, indicating to what delegation intends yurt is given, and the appropriate furniture inside of yurt was beforehand prepared.

So, for delegation of Moslems yurt was provided with zhainamaz, the Koran; for Jew - the Tor. At Christians - the Bible and a cross, at Buddhists yurt - figurine Buddha and the lit candles.

After end of a ceremony of divine service the President of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbaev has visited jurts, welcoming all delegates and heads of faiths, talked to them

At 15.00 the President of Kazakhstan has invited leaders of delegations to pass on the top circle of a viewing platform of monument "Baiterk".

On a viewing platform of monument "Baiterk" ceremony of signing by heads of religions and faiths of the historical document was held. This document - an original cloth from a tree where words in the Kazakh and Russian languages were cut: « Let have Kazakhstan - the ground of the world and the harmony be blessed ».

The President of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbaev has thanked representatives of all religions who have left the signatures on blessing of Kazakhstan, its people and new capital. The Head of Kazakhstan has noted, « on this place in hundred meters in height all our

visitors rising, here come a newly-married couples. Your signatures are a symbol, which will forever be entered in a history of our country and our capital. Let your prayers and signatures will reach the Founder. I too want to have a hand together with you ».

At this time at bottom of monument "Baiterek" in a circle of representatives of Buddhists, Catholics, Krishnaists, Franciscans, Lutherans and many other faiths was the spouse of the Head of the state.

S.A.Nazarbaeva. As is well known, the first lady of Kazakhstan welcomes variety of religions and faiths, is interested in religious - philosophical doctrines of different peoples. There were lively conversations, discussions. All exchanged impressions, shared plans for the future. In holding exchanges of opinions father Serrini, the assistant to the chief negotiator, former minister general (OFM ħonv.). Àññèè and mister Bzhahti Brinda Chuvinda Svain, the member of the international society of consciousness of Krishna, founder Ochajro, have highly estimated efforts of President N.Nazarbaev on adjustment of open dialogue. Visitors have noted, that this conference has brought in the huge contribution to business of an establishment of world peace and have emphasized, that Kazakhstan on an own example shows an opportunity of peaceful co-existence, mutual enrichment of different faiths, cultures, traditions. In discussions, conversations, handshakes, smiles within these days for certain were the most important result of this unique event - Congress of leaders of world and traditional religions. It is possible to assume, that Congress will be of great importance for all modern newest history, renders in due course the big influence on all our life. Leaders and members of all delegations, guests of honour have gathered on the area at a tribune of monument "Baiterek". After that the finishing part of a meeting of leaders of world and traditional religions was held. The President of the Republic of Kazakhstans N.Nazarbaev and leaders of religions have made final speeches at monument "Baiterek".

N.Nazarbaev: Dear participants of Congress, our dear visitors!

We now are at bottom of monument "Baiterk" becoming the card of our new capital of Astana and good symbol of renowating for all our people. Under our legends, "Baiterek" is sacred tree of life, eternity, continuity of generations. These upwards lasting branches symbolize different peoples, the nations, the religions holding globe. Therefore "Baiterek" is a unity of peoples, cultures and religions. Our visitor from India has told, that the sphere personifies an egg, and the egg is a life, and the sphere is a unification of all religions. These days we with you have done huge work for growth of trust between religions, peoples and the nations of a planet. During Congress we have heard positive ideas and the desires, driving people of the different countries and continents. We thank all of you for sincerity and desire of a true unification of all of us - people of a Earth planet. We are open for your wise words; we are ready to an exchange of opinions in a name of the world and understanding on the Earth. I am sure, that we shall make such meetings traditional, we shall continue our dialogue. We today with you have agreed upon it and with you we shall search further for the common mutually acceptable ways of the peace and stability.

Our meeting under the canopy of "Baiterek" itself is a bright figurative appeal to peaceful co-existence, cooperation to the peace without wars and violence in a name of calmness and stability, happiness, prosperity of peoples of our countries in this eternal life. In these jurts, which are located around "Baiterek", we have organized temples for all religions, and you have made there the prayers. The prayer made here, outside of any doubts, opens a way to other validity and other image of actions, allocates each of us with ability to reconsider the acts and thoughts. I believe, that this common prayer will strengthen aspiration to the peace, creation in the countries, religious communities which representatives participate in or mentally join this pray.

For people of Kazakhstan the fact of this prayer on our ground in our new capital is gift and blessing of heavens, serves as one more stimulus for new good deeds.

The peace and prosperity to you! Happiness and mutual understanding, may the God help you with all your thoughts and undertakings! I thank you all!

For the blessed word let to ask to speak for statement to Sheikh Muhammadu Al' Tantau.

The sheikh and Supreme imam of University Al'-Azhar Muhammad Said Tantau:

In a name of Allah mercy and merciful!

I thank and once again I thank dear mister President. I express gratitude to the state of Kazakhstan, I thank the Government and people of Kazakhstan for realization of this Congress which was aimed at that world religions which were granted from above, called for a brotherhood, cooperation and tolerance, and also to that everyone has received a measure on its actions.

And at will divine during our following visit we shall see all these buildings constructed. Also it is all that we wish all mankind that in the world were distributed the world, safety and well-being. Once again I express gratitude. The peace to you, favour and the blessings from Allah, thank you.

The President has let have the floor to metropolitan Emmanuelju. metropolitan Emmanuelju: Mister President, thank you very much. I want to say, that you have made impossible. You have created Astana - capital of the country, but today Astana is also the capital of all our religions. Today here have gathered practically all religions which I know, only the God knows, how many they exist worldwide, but today we have gathered here.

We today here in this city, and two days worked at conference and by that have shown a vivid example of that cooperation which should be in the world. And the country of Kazakhstan shows us an example of coexistence of peoples and religions. I want to give due to you and also to all people, which took part in the organization of this conference. This conference was postponed in our hearts and in our minds. And seeing all these buildings which now are under construction, I think, that we too have

brought in the small contribution and each of us has brought the symbolical stone. But it not a stone to throw, but the stone to put in construction.

And today we gathered here to change our life, but it will take very long time because it cannot be changed for once. To change our entire world, we should begin from that we should change our own life.

Mister President we always shall be near to you so, that to successfully continue process which we have begun today these days in Astana. And also, that prospered your region, the country of Kazakhstans, that once again to show, that the person divides, and the God connects.

N.Nazarbaev: the word was asked by head rabbi of Israel mister Metsger.

Yona Metzger: Dear President, dear leaders of the world religions, dear visitors! In these days in which we have got acquainted with your beautiful country, new capital that you build, I was convinced of deep symbolism of a monument at bottom of which we are with you. God has created the world so that we live in it in peace well being. Dear President, you have proved to all world, that you promote the mission executed by God to connect various people of different religions. Each of us here of religious leaders, has applied a palm on this conditional palm there, at top "Baiterek". It is the additional symbol, as two hands is much more strongly, than one, especially, when two hands shake each other. I want to tell to Kazakhstan people - this is your leader. I bless you from all Jewish people. That God accompanied in all your undertakings for the blessing of your country, of all your management. Allow me to assign hands to your head according to the Jewish traditions and to bless you.

N.Nazarbaev: I think, that we have carried out significant historical days in life of all peoples. For the first time in a history here, in the young state, in young capital could gather leaders of all great traditional religions of our planet. You have accepted the Declaration of exclusive importance and the great contents. You have called all people of the world who clash, shed blood, to the peace, tolerance and dialogue. You have decided to make this Forum a constant, have created its Secretariat and have desired, that Kazakhstan became the initiator and the organizer of the following Congress. We shall use our best efforts to bring in the modest contribution to a cause of peace and the consent to our planet.

I thank you all and I do not tell you "farwell", but I tell - "good-bye". Because I am sure, that we shall meet, and you will not forget Astana. Tell the parishioners and peoples about us, about that conversation which has taken place here.

On behalf of people of my country I wish you well-being, a sound health, prosperity to your states and peoples. Have a safe journey! Good homecoming to you! With my kindness wishes!

Participants of the 1st Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions



The Congress was attended by 17 delegations representing Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Taoism, Shintoism and Hinduism.

Islam was represented by delegations headed by the highest religious leaders: Secretary General of the World Islamic League Sheikh Abdullah bin Abdul Mohsin Al-Turki (Saudi Arabia), Supreme Imam of the University Al Azhar Sheikh Mukhammad Sayed Al-Tantawy (Egypt), President of the Indian Muslim Organization "Djamaat-e-Shabab-e-Islam" Salman Al-Hussein Al-Nadvi, President of the Committee of Islamic Jurisprudence and Law of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mehdi Mogaddam, Vice President of the International Islamic University of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mahmud Ahmad Gazi, President of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Kazakhstan, the Head Mufti Absattar Derbisali.

Christianity at the forum was represented by the following heads of the delegations: President of the Congregation for Professing Gospels, Cardinal Joseph Tomco (Vatican), Bishop Croydon (London), Nicolas Banes (the Anglican Church), Metropolitan of Astana and Almaty Methodius (the Russian Orthodox Church), Metropolitan of France Emmanuel (The Constantinople Orthodox Church), Secretary General of the World Lutheran Federation Ishmael Noco.

The Buddhist delegations were headed by the Chinese Society of China - Jia-mu-yang Luo-san-ju-mei Tu-dan-jue-ji-ni-ma, Secretary General of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace - Tumeehuu Bulgan (Mongolia)

The Delegation for the Judaism was headed by the Rabbi of Israel - Jonah Metzger, Shintoism -Directors of Shinto Temple Administration of Japan - Minoru Sonoda, Hinduism - doctor of theology - Shantilal Somaya.

The honored guests of the forum were famous politicians - the Minister of Justice of the Saudi Arabia, A.Al Ash-Sheikh (Special Representative of the King Fadkh), Minister on the Vakuf Affairs of Egypt, M. Zakzuk (Special Representative of the President Kh. Mubarek), Ex Prime Minister of Japan Ts. Hata, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General V. Sotirov.

The following experts were invited to participate in the preparation of the Declaration and Decision of the 1st Congress: Abdallah Abu Ashi Al-Maliki -Councilor of the Department for Studies, Coordination and International Relation of the World Islamic

League; Doctor Said Ismail Seni -Council of the Department for Studies, Coordination and International Relation of the World Islamic League; Doctor Gulam Mokhammad Djaffar -Dean of the Faculty "Islamiat" of the University of the Province of Beludjistan, Muhammad Suheil Umar (Pakistan); Akashek Khaled (Vatikan); Roman Silantiev - Executive Secretary of the Inter-religious Council of Russia; Zhan Wei -Second Secretary of the Chinese Embassy; Doctors Wempati Kutamba Sastri -Director of the Training Center "Rashtia Sanskrit Santhan" (India)