

# Declaration

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## **Second World Conference on Inter-Religious and Inter-Civilization Dialogue: „Religion and Culture –Substantial Relation among Nations”**

May 6th – May 9th 2010, Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia

### **DECLARATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF RELIGION AND CULTURE AS SUBSTANTIAL RELATION AMONG NATIONS “OHRID 2010”**

- Keenly Aware that religion is of vital importance for human life, having the responsibility to encourage compassion and solidarity among communities, nations and states,
- Emphasizing the essential role of culture in preserving and promoting the universal values in our increasingly interconnected world,
- Bearing in mind the necessity of providing inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, thus strengthening peace, stability and prosperity; promoting peaceful and constructive cooperation among all nations in the world while respecting cultural and religious diversities,
- Calling upon provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant human rights provisions,
- Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome that reaffirmed the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, as well as the Global Agenda for Dialogue Among Civilizations and its Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly and the value of different initiatives on dialogue among

cultures and civilizations, including the dialogue on interfaith cooperation and the Alliance of Civilizations, and committed themselves to taking action to promote a culture of peace and dialogue at the local, national, regional and international levels,

- Recalling the Declaration on the Elimination of All forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief and all resolutions on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations,
- Welcoming the resolution 6/37 (December 2007) of the United Nations Human Rights Council,
- Welcoming the work of the UN Special Reporter on Freedom of Religion and Belief;
- Welcoming the resolution 10/23 (March 2009) of the United Nations Human Rights Council, that established a new special procedure "Independent Expert on cultural rights",
- Recalling the Declaration of the First World Conference on interreligious and inter-civilization dialogue held in Republic of Macedonia (2004),
- Underlining that by the Resolution 62/90 of the UNGA the year 2010 is proclaimed as Year of Rapprochement of Cultures and convinced that each and every one of us has to contribute to the promotion of cultural and religious dialogue,

We, the participants of the Second World Conference on Inter-religious and Inter-Civilization Dialogue, held in Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia, proclaim the following Declaration:

## **Religion and culture as peace factors:**

1. We are confirming our determination to actively participate in strengthening peace, cooperation and mutual understanding of whole humanity and promoting advancement and increase of interaction and dialog.
2. We recognize the necessity to protect activities and practices, which bring together different cultures and religions and allow them to reach out to other communities.
3. We are committed to contribute to the development of inter civilization and inter religious dialogue by building and strengthening mutual relations and exchanging and disseminating good practices.
4. We are devoted to provide educational, social and economic opportunities for the new generations, which will guarantee peaceful co-existence and sustainable future.
5. All participants will encourage whenever possible, intercultural events and actions aimed to promote tolerance, acceptance, respect and a peaceful coexistence, instead of fear, hatred, harassment and prejudices.
6. The First World Conference on interreligious and inter civilization dialogue underlined the fundamental values of religious and cultural dimensions. We recognise that previous Declaration has inspired open dialogue, strengthened cooperation and fostered intercultural dialogue.
7. We appreciate the accomplishments of our host country, Republic of Macedonia, which offers valuable experience of successful inter-religious coexistence.

**The role of religion and culture in transforming the society:**

8. Each culture and religion has distinctive qualities and characteristics, which have created different social environments. We have to reduce the false perceptions of these differences and cultural gaps and promote mutual respect and harmonious future for people of all faiths.
9. Everyone shall stress the importance of interreligious dialogue, which affirms the integrity of religious believes, promotes human rights and leads to common action in addressing the global challenges like poverty, violence and abuse, discrimination, climate change and environmental sustainability etc.

**Jubilees of significant persons and events:**

10. We respect the public display of religious symbols or celebration of religious festivals. These should not be seen as an attack to other religions nor a threat to social unity.
11. We recognize celebration of Jubilees as civic festivities which bring together people from wide variety of ethnic or religious backgrounds, reflecting their own customs and traditions.

**Respect for religious rights and cultural diversity– foundation of peace and prosperity.**

12. Call upon all Governments and civil societies to increase the participation of women in all decision-making processes, in strengthening the mutual understanding between cultures, in prevailing over stereotypes, intolerance, prejudices and delusions, peacefully resolving or transforming conflicts and securing peace building processes.

13. We commit ourselves to assure a better education for all. We emphasize education for peace, freedom, and human rights, and religious education to promote openness and tolerance.
14. Religious intolerance presents a threat to the safety and security of all humans and it also constitutes a serious threat to the free media and speech. We have to find new ways to promote and further develop religious tolerance. The media can provide valuable contribution in this endeavour.

**Final Provisions:**

15. We are sending a message to all UN institutions to appeal to their constant dedication to the affirmation of interreligious, intercultural and international dialogue.
16. We support the idea for the institution of a Governing Council of Religions under UN patronage, one that would be able to promote the development of interreligious, intercultural and international dialogue.
17. We call on all participants to increase their efforts in order to promote the implementation of the provisions of this Declaration on national, regional and international levels.
18. The "Declaration for the promotion of religion and culture as substantial relation among nations - Ohrid 2010" shall be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly, the Chief Representative for the UN Secretary-General for the Alliance of Civilizations, the Council of Europe, OSCE, the League of Arab States, OED (Economic Development Organization), the African Union, the Association of South Asian Nations, the Organization of American States, the World Council of Churches, the International Francophone Organization, to other regional and

international organizations, as well as to the Governments of United Nations  
Member-States.

May 9th 2010, Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia