

THE MILLENNIUM WORLD PEACE SUMMIT OF RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LEADERS

Commitment to Global Peace

Humanity stands at a critical juncture in history, one that calls for strong moral and spiritual leadership to help set a new direction for society. We, as religious and spiritual leaders, recognize our special responsibility for the well-being of the human family and peace on earth.

Whereas the United Nations and the religions of the world have a common concern for human dignity, justice and peace;

Whereas we accept that men and women are equal partners in all aspects of life and children are the hope of the future;

Whereas religions have contributed to the peace of the world but have also been used to create division and fuel hostilities;

Whereas our world is plagued by violence, war and destruction, which are sometimes perpetrated in the name of religion;

Whereas armed conflict is a dire tragedy for the human lives ruined and lost, for the larger living world, and for the future of our religious and spiritual traditions;

Whereas no individual, group or nation can any longer live as an isolated microcosm in our interdependent world, but rather all must realize that our every action has an impact on others and the emerging global community;

Whereas in an interdependent world peace requires agreement on fundamental ethical values;

Whereas there can be no real peace until all groups and communities acknowledge the cultural and religious diversity of the human family in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding;

Whereas building peace requires an attitude of reverence for life, freedom and justice, the eradication of poverty, and the protection of the environment for present and future generations;

Whereas a true culture of peace must be founded upon the cultivation of the inner dimension of peace, which is the heritage of the religious and spiritual traditions;

Whereas religious and spiritual traditions are a core source of the realization of a better life for the human family and all life on Earth.

In light of the above, and with a view to discharging our duty to the human family, we declare our commitment and determination:

1. To collaborate with the United Nations and all men and women of goodwill locally, regionally and globally in the pursuit of peace in all its dimensions;
2. To lead humanity by word and deed in a renewed commitment to ethical and spiritual values, which include a deep sense of respect for all life and for each person's inherent dignity and right to live in a world free of violence;

3. To manage and resolve nonviolently the conflicts generated by religious and ethnic differences, and to condemn all violence committed in the name of religion while seeking to remove the roots of the violence;
4. To appeal to all religious communities and ethnic and national groups to respect the right to freedom of religion, to seek reconciliation, and to engage in mutual forgiveness and healing;
5. To awaken in all individuals and communities a sense of shared responsibility for the well-being of the human family as a whole and a recognition that all human beings regardless of religion, race, gender and ethnic origin have the right to education, health care, and an opportunity to achieve a secure and sustainable livelihood;
6. To promote the equitable distribution of wealth within nations and among nations, eradicating poverty and reversing the current trend toward a widening gap between rich and poor;
7. To educate our communities about the urgent need to care for the earth's ecological systems and all forms of life and to support efforts to make environmental protection and restoration integral to all development planning and activity;
8. To develop and promote a global reforestation campaign as a concrete and practical means for environmental restoration, calling upon others to join us in regional tree planting programs;
9. To join with the United Nations in the call for all nation states to work for the universal abolition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction for the safety and security of life on this planet;
10. To combat those commercial practices and applications of technology that degrade the environment and the quality of human life;
11. To practice and promote in our communities the values of the inner dimension of peace, including especially study, prayer, meditation, a sense of the sacred, humility, love, compassion, tolerance and a spirit of service, which are fundamental to the creation of a peaceful society.

We, as religious and spiritual leaders, pledge our commitment to work together to promote the inner and outer conditions that foster peace and the nonviolent management and resolution of conflict. We appeal to the followers of all religious traditions and to the human community as a whole to cooperate in building peaceful societies, to seek mutual understanding through dialogue where there are differences, to refrain from violence, to practice compassion, and to uphold the dignity of all life.

Bawa Jain, Secretary General of the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders

For the first time in history religious and spiritual leaders from the major religious traditions and from all regions of the world met at the United Nations to pledge themselves to work for peace. They signed this "Commitment to Global Peace" and resolved to join together to address the pressing problems of conflict, poverty and the environment. If you would like more information about the work of the Millennium World Peace Summit or would like to support its ongoing activities, you can contact us and send your tax-deductible contributions to:

The Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders Secretariat:
301 East 57th Street, 3rd Floor,
New York, NY 10022
Tel: 212.593.6438

Fax: 212.593.6345

peacesummit@ruderfinn.com

tax-exempt number: 13-409-6810

Among the religions represented at the Millennium World Peace Summit were:

Bahá'í o Buddhism o Christianity o Confucianism o Hinduism o Indigenous Peoples o Islam o Jainism o Judaism o Shinto o Sikhism o Taoism o Zoroastrianism