

The First Alexandria Declaration of the Religious Leaders of the Holy Land

Alexandria, January 21, 2002

The first Middle East Interfaith Summit with the participation of the leaders of the three monotheistic faiths, held in Alexandria, Egypt, issued the following statement:

In the name of God who is Almighty, Merciful and Compassionate, we, who have gathered as religious leaders from the Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities, pray for true peace in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and declare our commitment to ending the violence and bloodshed that denies the right of life and dignity.

According to our faith traditions, killing innocents in the name of God is a desecration of His Holy Name, and defames religion in the world. The violence in the Holy Land is an evil which must be opposed by all people of good faith. We seek to live together as neighbors respecting the integrity of each other's historical and religious inheritance. We call upon all to oppose incitement, hatred and misrepresentation of the other.

1. The Holy Land is holy to all three of our faiths. Therefore, followers of the divine religions must respect its sanctity, and bloodshed must not be allowed to pollute it. The sanctity and integrity of the holy places must be preserved, and freedom of religious worship must be ensured for all.
2. Palestinians and Israelis must respect the divinely ordained purposes of the Creator by whose grace they live in the same land that is called holy.
3. We call on the political leaders of both peoples to work for a just, secure and durable solution in the spirit of the words of the Almighty and the Prophets.
4. As a first step now, we call for a religiously sanctioned cease-fire, respected and observed on all sides, and for the implementation of the Mitchell and Tenet recommendations, including the lifting of restrictions and return to negotiations.
5. We seek to help create an atmosphere where present and future generations will co-exist with mutual respect and trust in the other. We call on all to refrain from incitement and demonization, and to educate our future generations accordingly.
6. As religious leaders, we pledge ourselves to continue a joint quest for a just peace that leads to reconciliation in Jerusalem and the Holy Land, for the common good of all our peoples.

7. We announce the establishment of a permanent joint committee to carry out the recommendations of this declaration, and to engage with our respective political leadership accordingly.

Signatories

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. George Carey

The Grand Imam of Al Azhar, Sheikh Mohamed Sayed Tantawi

The Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Israel, Rabbi Michael Melchior

The Rabbi of Tekoa, Rabbi Menachem Fromen

The International Director of Interreligious Affairs, AJC, Rabbi David Rosen

The Rabbi of Savyon, Rabbi David Brodman

The Rabbi of Maalot Dafna, Rabbi Yitzak Ralbag

The Chief Justice of the Sharia Courts, Sheikh Taisir Tamimi

The Minister of State for the PA, Sheikh Talal Sidr

The Mufti of the Armed Forces, Sheikh Abdulsalam Abu Schkeidem

The Mufti of Bethlehem, Sheikh Mohammed Taweel

The Representative of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem,
Archbishop Aristarchos

The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Michel Sabbah

The Melkite Archbishop of the Holy Land, Boutrous Mu'alem

The Representative of the Armenian Patriarch, Archbishop Chinchinian

The Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, The Rt. Rev. Riah Abu El Assal