



GLOBAL SUMMIT ON RELIGION, PEACE AND SECURITY

Promoting peaceful and inclusive societies by fostering religious freedom and preventing violent extremism and atrocity crimes.

FINAL DECLARATION

Geneva, 25 November 2016

Peace is a journey – a never ending process. (UNESCO). But a culture of human dignity is inconceivable without freedom of religion or belief.

The United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and Responsibility to Protect and the International Association for the Defense of Religious Liberty organized the Global Summit on Religion, Peace and Security, hosted at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, on 23-25 of November 2016. Participants, diverse in terms of gender, religion affiliation and regional origin, attended the Summit, interacted during three days and contributed to multidisciplinary discussions on how to foster better understanding between civilizations, cultures and religions, for the purpose to enhancing peace, security and human rights.

The focus of the Summit was fostering freedom of religion and belief as a tool for fostering peace, security and human rights. The connection between atrocity crimes, for which we mean genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well as violent extremism was explored at the Summit.

The Global Summit highlighted the importance of enhancing the synergy between stakeholders which play a fundamental role in fostering peace, security and human rights worldwide. These stakeholders are: Diplomats, Politicians, Religious Leaders, Academics and Civil Society (NGOs) representatives.

In this context, the main objective of the Global Summit was to establish an international platform named Platform on “Religion, Peace and Security” aimed at connecting the various stakeholders aforementioned, as well as enhancing their cooperation on matters related to peace, security and human rights. The Platform on Religion, Peace and Security aims at supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals and in particular Goals 16 and 17, which call for “Peace, Justice and strong institutions”. There is no doubt that the achievement of these goals requires better cooperation among different stakeholders and a partnership which needs to be built on a shared vision, which places the respect of

fundamental principles and values at its core.

The Global Summit discussed how these different actors can effectively work together and complement each other's work. In addition, the Summit provided an opportunity for participants to share information, experiences, expertise, best practices and lessons learned on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, fostering respect for religious freedom and promoting resilience to atrocity crimes and violent extremism.

Based on three days of discussion, We, the participants to the Global Summit acknowledge the following:

- There is increasing awareness that religion can play a role in intolerance, conflicts, atrocity crimes and violent extremism. In a nutshell, religion matters,
- There is also a growing openness and readiness of political as well as religious forces in being involved in issues linked to religion or the abuse and manipulation thereof,
- There is an impressive number of activities by religious institutions and faith-based organizations that are implemented at local, national, and regional level aimed at fostering human rights, peace and security. These activities need to be better known and publicized locally as they are at the core of conflict prevention and transformation, as well as prevention of atrocity crimes and violent extremism.

We, the participants to the Global Summit also propose the following:

- The Summit on Religion, Peace and Security should take place on a yearly basis and focus each year on a relevant issue. A steering committee, composed of representatives of the five stakeholders aforementioned, and diverse in terms of gender and religious affiliation, should be established to conceptualize and organize the next summit,
- Clear and detailed terms of reference for this Steering Committee should be developed and disseminated among the Global Summit participants on the Prevention of Genocide.

On behalf of the Global Summit on Religion, Peace and Security' participants,

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