

THE TANDEM PROJECT
<http://www.tandemproject.com>
**UNITED NATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS,
FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF**

*UN NGO in Special Consultative Status with the
Economic and Social Council of the United Nations*

PROPOSAL

To create a

FORUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS & FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

**Building Human Rights Constituencies to Combat Intolerance and Discrimination
Based on Religion or Belief in Higher Education**

One of the most destructive, recalcitrant and threatening issues facing human progress today.

**Searching for Solutions and Partnerships Within and Between Universities and
Colleges**

Ask your Institution to host a Forum on Human Rights & Freedom of Religion or Belief
**Open call for higher education to combat intolerance and discrimination based on
religion or belief**

A proposal sent to selected administrators, faculty, students, others, local governments, civil society and NGOs in and around the **[host university]** for partnerships and multi-disciplinary solutions to intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief. Sent to selected Administrators; Faculty; Students; NGOs; and Civil, Religious, and Government Organizations.

(This proposal is available on the Internet for public distribution. Links and attachments to the proposal, related websites, and UN World Programme for Human Rights Education (second phase, 2010-2014) can be accessed at <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/roan.htm>)

INTRODUCTION: The Tandem Project has been involved with the United Nations since 1986 on matters relating to freedom of religion or belief. This is a **unique proposal** for a one-day Forum on Human Rights & Freedom of Religion or Belief at the **[host university]**.

This proposal is also meant to serve as a **template** for **building human rights constituencies to combat intolerance and discrimination based on freedom of religion or belief** in higher education.

Suggestions are welcome to build these constituencies at **[host university]** and other universities and colleges. **Email suggestions to: [new contact]**

OPPORTUNITY: This is an opportunity for the **[host university]** to serve as a leader and a model for engaging civil society. Additionally, the **[host university]** will be a visible exemplar of multi-disciplinary academic collaboration. This is an opportunity for other institutions of higher education to address **intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief**.

OBJECTIVES: Host a one-day **Forum** on Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief. In this forum, identify **multi-disciplinary solutions** to intolerance and discrimination against persons based on religion or belief worldwide, build **awareness and support** for the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education Phase 2 (2010-2014), and promote dialogue and collaboration in a **unique format** on many of the most important issues of our day.

BACKGROUND: The Tandem Project proposes two solutions to combat intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief. The first is a challenge to religions or beliefs and the second a challenge to the nations. The UN held a Geneva Seminar in 1984 to launch the 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. Instead of elimination by 2014, after thirty years, intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief has become more threatening and one of the most destructive and recalcitrant issues facing human progress today. The Tandem Project believes with increased worldwide hostilities and widespread indifference and denial of the problem, there are two key solutions to combat intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief.

Of course, helping to build a human rights constituency will always be helpful in promoting not only freedom of religion and belief, but all other human rights as well. Proposals include an open, constructive, and respectful **debate of ideas** and interfaith and intercultural dialogue for study, research, and engagement purposes from multi-disciplinary perspectives. Universities and colleges may use the **solutions** below as a foundation for **public discussion** and **partnerships** on freedom of religion or belief.

Solution 1. Support and teach Article 18 in tandem with your Religious or Non-Religious Worldview.

Article 18 protects theistic, non-theistic and atheistic beliefs, as well as the right not to profess any religion or belief.

This solution includes drafting a plan of action for the second phase (2010-2014) of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (U.N. Human Rights Council A/HRC/15/28).

- A. *Teaching and Learning Processes and Tools:
Introducing or improving human rights education in the higher education system requires adopting a holistic approach to teaching and learning, by integrating programme objectives, content, resources, methodologies, assessment and evaluation into the existing curriculum; by looking beyond the classroom and the higher-education institution to society; and by building partnerships between different members of the academic community and beyond.*
- B. *Develop Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Human Rights Academic Programmes*

Solution 2. Draft a legally-binding human rights Convention on Freedom of Religion or Belief.

In 1962-1963 the UN General Assembly requested two legally-binding conventions with equal status, on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Elimination of Religious Intolerance. Racial Discrimination was adopted in 1969 as an international and legally-binding Convention with a monitoring Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). Religious Intolerance was down-graded to a non-binding 1981 UN Declaration. Since the 2001 Durban World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, religion or belief has been referred to as Related Intolerance. Intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief is one of the most threatening issues facing human progress today. There is a need to restore the original intent of the UN in 1962 for two legally binding Conventions on race and religion as equals in tandem with each other.

The Tandem Project believes that until a Convention on Freedom of Religion or Belief is adopted, international human rights law will be incomplete. Now is the time for the UN to appoint an Open-ended Working Group on all matters of religion or belief to update this history and to draft a legally-binding convention.

REGISTER: To register for participation in this forum online or in person: [\[new link\]](#)

For further information ask: [\[new contact\]](#)

DISCLAIMER: Universities, colleges and speakers have not been asked for their endorsement, but this proposal welcomes such support.

This proposal seeks **individuals** attracted to the idea of helping build human rights constituencies on and off the campus, but recognizes **institutional protocols** and **budget limits**.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST:

STRENGTHENING THE CONSENSUS ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF: There is a need for published materials that strengthen the consensus achieved on freedom of religion or belief by UN Human Rights Council Draft Resolutions A/HRC/22/L.9 and A/HRC/22/L.40. These Draft Resolutions concern combat against all forms of intolerance and discrimination against persons based on religion or belief. They were adopted without a vote by consensus. The aforementioned reports should encourage states, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), communities of religion or belief, academic institutions, and civil society to provide information on efforts and measures to implement the Draft Resolutions. Individual actions or plans to act can be forwarded to states, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the UN Human Rights Council. Documentation for reports can be forwarded and emailed to: **[new contact]**

SEPARATION OF RELIGION OR BELIEF AND STATE: *Separation of Religion or Belief and State (SOROBAS)* is a term The Tandem Project uses to express the core principles of international human rights law on freedom of religion or belief. *SOROBAS* is a new all-inclusive term with a long history of diverse interpretations. It is an acronym to protect all religious and non-religious beliefs, and reflects the long and historical relationship between religion and state. The UN Special Rapporteur report at the 1998 Oslo Conference, founded and co-organized by the Tandem Project, recommended the usage of this term by the UN. The UN General Assembly in 2000 adopted this title according to his suggestion.

2011 RABAT PLAN OF ACTION OR ACTION PLAN: This plan was introduced by Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and was adopted by consensus without a vote in Geneva on March 24, 2011.

QUESTIONNAIRE: Forty Yes/No questions on the approach of your organization to Freedom of Religion or Belief. Measures indicators relating to beliefs, awareness, understanding, acceptance, cooperation, competition, conflict, respect, taboos, and clarity. <http://www.tandemproject.com/survey/>

VOTE: Now is the time for the UN to appoint an Open-Ended Working Group to bring all matters relating to freedom of religion or belief together in a legally binding, core international human rights treaty. Vote on whether such a treaty should be created and implemented at <http://www.tandemproject.com/fellowship/time.htm>

BUILDING HUMAN RIGHTS CONSTITUENCIES: To help build this human rights constituency, please contact **[new contact]**

PROPOSED AGENDA TEMPLATE

Keynote Speakers (proposed)

OPENING/FORUM QUESTION

Addressed by Keynote Speakers:

*Can a program be implemented on Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief for Study, Research and Engagement from Multidisciplinary Perspectives at **[host university]**, looking beyond the classroom and the higher-education institution to civil society; building partnerships between different members of the academic community and the community beyond? What are the benefits and obstacles? What are the opportunities, challenges and practical options for consideration?*

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Response to the Question

Academic Faculty (invitation list)

Governments & Civil Society (invitation list)

Other Stakeholders (invitation list specific to host university)

RELATED QUOTES:

RELATING TO THE GENERAL COMMENT ON ARTICLE 18 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS (ICCPR):

“Recognizing that the open, constructive and respectful debate of ideas, as well as interfaith and intercultural dialogue at the local, national and international levels, can play a positive role in combating religious hatred, incitement and violence.” – UN Human Rights Council A/HRC/22/L.40 March 2013.

“Indeed, the 21st century will be dominated by religion in ways that were inconceivable just a few years ago. Religious conflict will be less a matter of struggles between belief and unbelief than clashes between believers who make room for doubt and those who do not.” – The Devoted Student

*“As instructed by the Sub-Commission, Special Rapporteur Arcot Krishnaswami of India initiated the work on his study by first collecting, analyzing, and then verifying material relating to discrimination in the matter of religious rights and practices. Krishnaswami presented the study to the Sub-Commission at its twelfth session (1960). In the Sub-Commission, the Special Rapporteur was praised for having successfully carried out, ‘with great skill and painstaking care, an exceptionally comprehensive and constructive study which probably would remain for many years as the classic work in an extremely delicate and controversial field, and which would serve as a guide for action by governments, non-governmental organizations and private individuals.’ In transmitting the sixteen draft principles with the Krishnaswami study to the Commission, the Sub-Commission expressed the belief that the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of recommendations to its Members, based upon these principles, would be a fitting culmination to its study.”
-Krishnaswami Study*

RELATING TO RATIONALE FOR THIS PROPOSAL:

“For many years, I have told students, Do not do what I do; rather, take whatever I have to offer and do with it what I could never imagine doing and then come back and tell me about it. My hope is that colleges and universities will be shaken out of their complacency and will open academia to a future we cannot conceive.

There can be no adequate understanding of the most important issues we face when disciplines are cloistered from one another and operate on their own premises. It would be far more effective to bring together people working on questions of religion, politics, history, economics, anthropology, sociology, literature, art, religion and philosophy to engage in comparative analysis of common problems. As the curriculum is restructured, fields of inquiry and methods of investigation will be transformed.

In my own religion department, for example, we have 10 faculty members, working in eight subfields, with little overlap. And as departments fragment, research and

publication become more and more about less and less. Each academic becomes the trustee not of a branch of the sciences, but of limited knowledge that all too often is irrelevant for genuinely important problems.

My hope is that colleges and universities will be shaken out of their complacency and will open academia to a future we cannot conceive.” -End of the University as We Know It – Collaboration Rather than Specialization, New York Times Op-Ed, April 29, 2007, Mark C. Taylor, Chairman of the Religion Department at Columbia University, New York

RELATING TO SOLUTIONS:

“Multidisciplinary programmes would include study, research, and engagement with human rights from different disciplinary perspectives, such as philosophy, sociology, foreign languages, international and domestic law, etc. Interdisciplinary programmes would entail the crossing of boundaries between disciplines and the pooling of approaches and methodologies to study, research and engage with human rights with a new integrated perspective.” – UN Human Rights Educations (2010-2014)

RELATING TO STRENGTHENING THE CONSENSUS ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF:

“Requests the High Commissioner to prepare and submit to the Human Rights Council, at its twenty-fifth session, a report on the efforts and measures taken by States in the implementation of the Action Plan outlined in operative paragraphs 8 and 9 , as well as on the views of States, United Nations agencies and other relevant stakeholders, and her evaluation on the establishment of a monitoring mechanism on combating intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against persons based on religion or belief” – Draft Resolution A/HRC/22/L.40

RELATING TO SOROBAS:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” First Amendment to Constitution of the United States of America.

RELATED LINKS:

RELATING TO THE GENERAL COMMENT ON ARTICLE 18 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS (ICCPR):

General Comment on Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):

[http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(Symbol\)/9a30112c27d1167cc12563ed004d8f15?OpenDocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(Symbol)/9a30112c27d1167cc12563ed004d8f15?OpenDocument)

International Standards: http://www.tandemproject.com/program/81_dec.htm

Can a Person who is Muslim Choose A Religion Other than Islam? (Attached Example):
http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/muslim_2.pdf

Major Religions of the World Ranked by Number of Adherents, 2005:
http://www.tandemproject.com/program/major_religions.htm

The Tandem Project “Reflections”: <http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/reflections.pdf>

Krishnaswami Study, 89 pages in PDF: http://politics-of-religious-freedom.berkeley.edu/files/2011/06/Krishnaswami_19601.pdf

RELATING TO A CONVENTION ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Electronic Database Helping to Eradicate Racial Discrimination:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DatabaseRacialDiscrimination.aspx>

History of UN Documents Relating to Freedom of Religion or Belief:
<http://www.tandemproject.com/program/history.htm>

Separation of Religion or Belief and State (SOROBAS): www.sorobas.com

History of Organized Religion and the Nation State/ Separation of Church and State:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separation_of_church_and_state

First International Conference on the 1981 UN Declaration, *Tolerance for Diversity of Religion or Belief*: <http://www.tandemproject.com/tolerance.pdf>

RELATING TO ACTION PLANS:

World Programme for Human Rights Education (2010-2014) UN Human Rights Council
Draft of Plan of Action for Higher Education (A/HRC/15/28):
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/WPHRE/SecondPhase/Pages/Secondphaseindex.aspx>

Mr. Zamir Akram’s Speech for Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference) relating to the 2011 Action Plan in English (10 minutes in length):
<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/sixteenth/hrc110324pm2-eng.rm?start=00:39:20&end=00:49:44>

Mr. Ahmed Suleiman Ibrahim Alaquil’s Speech for Saudi Arabia relating to the 2011 Action Plan in English (1 minute in length):

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/sixteenth/hrc110324pm2-eng.rm?start=00:50:10&end=00:51:42>

Ms. Beate Stirø's Speech for Norway relating to the 2011 Action Plan in English (2 minutes in length):

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/sixteenth/hrc110324pm2-eng.rm?start=00:51:47&end=00:53:59>

Mr. Eileen Chamberlain Donahoe's Speech for the United States of America relating to the 2011 Action Plan in English (5 minutes in length):

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/sixteenth/hrc110324pm2-eng.rm?start=00:54:04&end=00:58:47>

Mr. András Dékány's Speech for Hungary (on behalf of the European Union) relating to the 2011 Action Plan in English (3 minutes in length):

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/conferences/unhrc/sixteenth/hrc110324pm2-eng.rm?start=00:59:05&end=01:02:22>

UN Human Rights Council Panel Statements, Resolution A-HRC-16-18, 2010 General Assembly Third Committee Actions: <http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/addendum.pdf>

UN Third Committee Press Release- Resolution L.47 Adopted by Consensus:

http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/un_third.pdf

Rabat Plan of Action:

http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Opinion/SeminarRabat/Rabat_draft_outcome.pdf

RELATING TO STRENGTHENING THE CONSENSUS ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Breaking News- Human Rights Council Draft Resolutions- March 2013:

http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/breaking_news.pdf

RELATING TO SOROBAS:

1998 UN Conference Report: http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/98_report.pdf

University of Oslo, CULCOM Scholar: <https://www.uio.no/english/research/interfaculty-research-areas/culcom/news/2009/borsum.html>

Facilitating Freedom of Religion or Belief: A Desk Book, published as a result of the 1998 Oslo Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief: Chapter 35 from 1739-1998 "The History of Interfaith Dialog in Norway":

http://www.trooglivssyn.no/doc/35%20%20%20%20%20%20_Eidsv%25C3%25A5g.Lindholm.pdf

RELATING TO HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION:

World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing):

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Education/Training/Pages/Programme.aspx>

OHCHR’s Database on Human Rights Education and Training (including forum question in the first section, UN Seminal Krishnaswami Study and Related Intolerance in the second section, and acronym SOROBAS in the last section):

<http://hre.ohchr.org/hret/Intro.aspx?Lng=en>

EARLIER DRAFTS OF THIS PROPOSAL:

For the University of Minnesota: http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/forum_umn.pdf

For Brigham Young University: http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/forum_brigham.pdf

For Augsburg College: http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/forum_ac.pdf

OTHER RELATED READING MATERIALS:

“The Devoted Student” by Mark C. Taylor

“End of the University as We Know It – Collaboration Rather than Specialization.” New York Times Op-Ed April 29, 2007. By Mark C. Taylor, Chairman of the Religion Department, Columbia University, New York

The 1990 Declaration on Human Rights in Islam

“Assimilation’s Failure, Terrorism’s Rise” by Kenan Malik

1998 UN Conference Report http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/98_report.pdf

**APPENDIX 1: UNITED NATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS,
FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF**

**THE TANDEM PROJECT
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Separation of Religion or Belief and State*

RIGHTS & BELIEFS

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world:
First Preamble, United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.

RIGHTS

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others, and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance - *Article 18, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966.*

Freedom to manifest one's religion or belief may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others - *Article 18, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966.*

The terms belief and religion are to be broadly construed. Article 18 is not limited in its application to traditional religions or to religions and beliefs with institutional characteristics or practices analogous to those of traditional religions. Therefore the United Nations Human Rights Committee views with concern any tendency to discriminate against any religion or belief for any reasons, including the fact that they are newly established, or represent religious minorities that may be the subject of hostilities by a predominant religious community - *General Comment 22 on Article 18, United Nations Human Rights Committee, 1993.*

No one shall be subject to discrimination by any State, institution, group of persons or person on the grounds of religion or other beliefs - *1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.*

The concept of morals derives from many social, philosophical and religious traditions; consequently, limitations on the freedom to manifest a religion or belief for the purpose of protecting morals must be based on principles not deriving from a single tradition. - *General Comment 22 on Article 18, United Nations Human Rights Committee.*

BELIEFS *

Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights "*protects theistic, non-theistic and atheistic beliefs, as well as the right not to profess any religion or belief.*" - *General Comment 22 on Article 18, United Nations Human Rights Committee, 1993.*

Theist: God as revealed, supernatural deity, deities, or spirituality without dogma.

Non-theist: Universal Mind, non-theistic mysticism, meditation, pantheism.

Atheist: Not theist, no revealed or supernatural deity, traditional god or gods.

No Religion or Belief: No belief, or agnostic without knowledge.

*This description of beliefs is not endorsed by the United Nations.

The Tandem Project: www.tandemproject.com

http://www.tandemproject.com/issue_statements/statements/2012/021612_issue/021612_issue.pdf

**APPENDIX 2: COMPARING EXCERPTS OF
THE 1990 CAIRO DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM,
AND THE UN DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF
INTOLERANCE AND OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RELIGION OR
BELIEF**

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BACKGROUND

“The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) today signed in Rabat a memorandum of understanding on technical cooperation in the field of human rights. Both organizations will work together in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. The memorandum spells out cooperation in the area of information sharing, inviting each other to relevant meetings and events; as well as building regional, sub-regional and national capacities for the adoption of policies and guidelines on human rights and on encouraging them to ratify international human rights treaties. The signing of the memorandum of understanding took place on the opening day of the UN-OIC general periodic meeting on cooperation between the two organizations and their specialized institutions. OIC is an inter-governmental organization established in 1969 which comprises 57 Member States, with its headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia” – *United Nations Press Release, 11 July 2006, Geneva.*

The Cairo Document can be read in *Religion and Human Rights Basic Documents*, published by the Center for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, New York, 1998. <http://www.religlaw.org/content/religlaw/documents/cairohrislam1990.htm>

The UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief can be found at the following link:
http://www.tandemproject.com/program/81_dec.htm.

PREAMBLE:

THE UN DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF
INTOLERANCE AND OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RELIGION OR BELIEF

Proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations
25 November, 1981 (Resolution: 36/55)

Considering that one of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations is that of the dignity and equality inherent in all human beings, and that all Member States have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organization to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

Considering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights proclaim the principles of non-discrimination and equality before the law and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief,

Considering that the disregard and infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or whatever belief, have brought, directly or indirectly, wars and great suffering to humankind, especially where they serve as a means of foreign interference in the internal affairs of other States and amount to a kindling hatred between peoples and nations,

Considering that religion or belief, for anyone who professes either, is one of the fundamental elements in his conception of life and that freedom of religion or belief should be fully respected and guaranteed,

Considering that it is essential to promote understanding, tolerance and respect in matters relating to freedom of religion or belief and to ensure that the use of religion or belief for ends inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, other relevant instruments of the United Nations and the purposes and principles of the present Declaration is inadmissible,

Convinced that freedom of religion or belief should also contribute to the attainment of the goals of world peace, social justice and friendship among peoples and to the elimination of ideologies or practices of colonialism and racial discrimination,

Noting with satisfaction the adoption of several, and the coming into force of some conventions, under the aegis of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies, for the

elimination of various forms of discrimination,

Concerned by manifestations of intolerance and by the existence of discrimination in matters of religion or belief still in evidence in some areas of the world,

Resolved to adopt all necessary measures for the speedy elimination of such intolerance in all its forms and manifestations and to prevent and combat discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief,

Proclaims this Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief:

PREAMBLE:

THE CAIRO DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

The Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference,

Reaffirming the civilizing and historical role of the Islamic Ummah which God made the best nation that has given mankind a universal and well-balanced civilization in which harmony is established between this life and the hereafter and knowledge is combined with faith; and the role that this Ummah should play to guide a humanity confused by competing trends and ideologies and to provide solutions to the chronic problems of this materialistic civilization.

Wishing to contribute to the efforts of mankind to assert human rights, to protect man from exploitation and persecution, and to affirm his freedom and right to a dignified life in accordance with the Islamic Shari'ah,

Convinced that mankind which has reached an advance stage in materialistic science is still, and shall remain, in dire need of faith to support its civilization and of a self-motivating force to guard its rights;

Believing that fundamental rights and universal freedoms in Islam are an integral part of the Islamic religion and that no one as a matter of principle has the right to suspend them in whole or in part or violate or ignore them in as much as they are binding divine commandments, which are contained in the Revealed Books of God and were sent through the last of His Prophets to complete the preceding divine messages thereby making their observance an act of worship and their neglect or violation an abominable sin, and accordingly every person is individually responsible – and the Ummah collectively responsible – for their safeguard.

Cairo, 14 Muharram 141H 5 August 1990.

ARTICLES

Cairo Document on Human Rights in Islam Excerpts in Bold *UN Declaration Excerpts in Italics*

ARTICLE 1 OF THE UN DECLARATION AND RELATED EXCERPTS OF THE CAIRO DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 1.1: Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have a religion or whatever belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practices and teaching.

Article 1.a – All human beings form one family whose members are united by submission to God and descent from Adam...

Article 25 – The Islamic Shari’ah is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification of any of the articles of this Declaration.

Article 1.2- No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice.

Article 10 – Islam is the religion of unspoiled nature. It is prohibited to exercise any form of compulsion on man or to exploit his poverty or ignorance in order to convert him to another religion or to atheism.

Article 1.3- Freedom to manifest one’s religion or belief may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 17.a – Everyone shall have the right to live in a clean environment, away from the vice and moral corruption, an environment that would foster his self-development; and it is incumbent upon the State and society in general to afford that right.

ARTICLE 2 OF THE UN DECLARATION AND RELATED EXCERPTS OF THE CAIRO DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 2.1: No one shall be subject to discrimination by any State, institution, group of persons or person on the grounds of religion or other beliefs.

Article 24 – All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are subject to the Islamic Shari’ah.

Article 12 – Every man shall have the right within the framework of Shari’ah, to free movement and to select his place of residence whether inside or outside his country and, if persecuted is entitled to seek asylum in another country...

Article 23.a – Authority is a trust; and abuse or malicious exploitation thereof is absolutely prohibited, so that fundamental human rights may be guaranteed.

Article 2.2- For the purposes of the present Declaration, the expression ‘intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief’ means any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.

Article 25 – The Islamic Shari’ah is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification of any of the articles of this Declaration.

Article 14 – Everyone shall have the right to legitimate gains without monopolization, deceit or harm to one self or to others. Usury (riba) is absolutely prohibited.

ARTICLE 3 OF THE UN DECLARATION AND
RELATED EXCERPTS OF THE CAIRO DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 3.1- Discrimination between human beings on grounds of religion or belief constitutes an affront to human dignity and a disavowal of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be condemned as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enunciated in detail in the International Covenants on Human Rights, and as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations between nations.

Article 4 – Every human being is entitled to inviolability and the protection of his good name and honour during his life and after his death...

Article 6 – Woman is equal to man in human dignity, and has rights to enjoy as well as duties to perform; she has her own civil entity and financial independence, and the right to retain her name and lineage.

Article 7 – As of the moment of birth, every child has rights due from the parents, society and the state to be accorded proper nursing, education and material hygienic and moral care....

Article 8 – Every human being has the right to enjoy his legal capacity in terms of both obligation and commitment...

Article 9.a – The quest for knowledge is an obligation, and the provision of education is a duty for society and the State...

Article 11.a – Human beings are born free, and no one has the right to enslave, humiliate, oppress or exploit them, and there can be no subjugation but to God the Most-High.

Article 12 – Every man shall have the right within the framework of Shari’ah, to free movement and to select his place of residence whether inside or outside his country and, if persecuted is entitled to seek asylum in another country...

Article 13 – Work is a right guaranteed by the State and Society for each person able to work...

Article 15.a – Everyone shall have the right to own property acquired in a legitimate way, and shall be entitled to the rights of ownership, without prejudice to oneself, others or to society in general...

Article 16 – Everyone shall have the right to enjoy the fruits of his scientific, literary, artistic or technical production and the right to protect the moral and material interests stemming therefrom, provided that such production is not contrary to the principles of Shari’ah.

Article 18.a – Everyone shall have the right to live in security for himself, his religion, his dependents, his honour and his property.

Article 21 – Taking hostages under any form or for any purpose is expressly forbidden.

Article 22.a – Everyone shall have the right to express his opinion freely in such manner as would not be contrary to the principles of the Shari’ah.

**ARTICLE 4 OF THE UN DECLARATION AND
RELATED EXCERPTS OF THE CAIRO DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS:**

Article 4.1: All States shall take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life.

Article 4.2: All States shall make all efforts to enact or rescind legislation where necessary to prohibit any such discrimination, and to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance on the grounds of religion or other beliefs in this matter.

Article 24: All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are subject to the Islamic Shari’ah.

Article 25: The Islamic Shari'ah is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification of any of the articles of this Declaration.

ARTICLE 5 OF THE UN DECLARATION AND
RELATED EXCERPTS OF THE CAIRO DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 5.1- The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.

Article 5.a – The family is the foundation of society, and marriage is the basis of its formation...

Article 5.2- Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the wishes of his parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, and shall not be compelled to receive teaching on religion or belief against the wishes of his parents or legal guardians; the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

Article 9.b – Every human being has the right to receive both religious and worldly education from the various institutions of education and guidance, including the family, the school, the university, the media etc., and in such an integrated and balanced manner as to develop his personality, strengthen his faith in God and promote his respect for and defense of both rights and obligations.

Article 5.3- The child shall be protected from any form of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance and friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, respect for the freedom of religion or belief of others and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.

Article 9.a – The quest for knowledge is an obligation, and the provision of education is a duty for society and the State...

Article 5.4: In the case of a child who is not under the care either of his parents or of legal guardians, due account shall be taken of their expressed wishes or of any other proof of their wishes in the matter of religion or belief, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

Article 5.5: Practices of a religion or belief in which a child is brought up must not be injurious to his physical or mental health or to his full development, taking into account Article 1, paragraph 3, of the present Declaration.

Article 7.a – As of the moment of birth, every child has rights due from the parents, society and the state to be accorded proper nursing, education and material hygienic

and moral care...

ARTICLE 6 OF THE UN DECLARATION AND
RELATED EXCERPTS OF THE CAIRO DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS:

In accordance with Article 1 of the present Declaration, and subject to the provisions of Article 1, paragraph 3, the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief shall include, inter alia, the following freedoms:

Article 6.1- to worship or assemble in connection with a religion or belief, and to establish and maintain places for these purposes;

Article 6.2- to establish and maintain appropriate charitable or humanitarian institutions;

Article 6.3- to make, acquire and use to an adequate extent the necessary articles and materials related to the rites and customs of a religion or belief;

Article 6.4- to write issue and disseminate relevant publications in these areas;

Article 6.5- to teach a religion or belief in places suitable for these purposes;

Article 6.6- to solicit and receive voluntary financial and other contributions from individuals and institutions;

Article 6.7- to train, appoint, elect or designate by succession appropriate leaders called for by the requirements and standards of any religion or belief;

Article 6.8- to observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays and ceremonies in accordance with the precepts of one's religion or belief;

Article 6.9- to establish and maintain communications with individuals and communities in matters of religion or belief at the national and international levels.

ARTICLE 7 OF THE UN DECLARATION AND
RELATED EXCERPTS OF THE CAIRO DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 7.1- the rights and freedoms set forth in the present Declaration shall be accorded in national legislation in such a manner that everyone shall be able to avail himself of such rights and freedoms in practice.

Article 19.a – All individuals are equal before the law, without distinction between the ruler and the ruled.

Article 8 – Every human being has the right to enjoy his legal capacity in terms of both obligation and commitment...

ARTICLE 7 OF THE UN DECLARATION AND
RELATED EXCERPTS OF THE CAIRO DOCUMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS:

Article 8.1- Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as restricting or derogating from any right defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

Article 24: All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are subject to the Islamic Shari'ah.

Article 25: The Islamic Shari'ah is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification of any of the articles of this Declaration.

The Tandem Project: www.tandemproject.com
<http://www.tandemproject.com/pdf/cairo.pdf>

**APPENDIX 3: EXCERPT OF ADDRESS TO UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY BY
HRH PRINCE GHAZI BIN MUHAMMED**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the 29 other co-sponsors Albania, Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Bangladesh; Costa Rica; the Dominican Republic; Egypt; El Salvador; Georgia; Guatemala; Guyana; Honduras; Kazakhstan; Kuwait; Liberia; Libya; Mauritius; Morocco; Oman; Paraguay; Qatar; the Russian Federation; Saudi Arabia; Tanzania; Tunisia; Turkey; the United Arab Emirates; Uruguay and Yemen, the draft resolution A/65/L5: *World Faith Harmony Week*.

Allow me to explain in brief the reasoning behind this resolution which was launched by H.M. King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein before the United Nations General Assembly on September 23rd 2010.

As this august assembly is well aware, our world is rife with religious tension and, sadly, mistrust, dislike and hatred. These religious tensions can easily erupt into communal violence. They also facilitate the demonizing of the other which in turn predisposes public opinion to support war against peoples of other religions. Thus, for example, according to the results of the 2008 Gallup Poll one of the largest international religious surveys in history 53% of Westerners have 'unfavorable' or 'very unfavorable' opinions of Muslims and 30% of Muslims polled worldwide hold negative views of Christians.

The misuse or abuse of religions can thus be a cause of world strife, whereas religions should be a great foundation for facilitating world peace. The remedy for this problem can only come from the world's religions themselves. Religions must be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Much good work has already been done towards this

starting really with the Second Vatican Council from 1962-1965 by hundreds of intra-faith and interfaith groups all over the world and of all religions. Yet the forces inciting inter-religious tensions (notable among them being religious fundamentalisms of various kinds) are better organized, more experienced, better coordinated, more motivated and more ruthless. They have more stratagems, more institutes, more money and more power and garner more publicity such that they by far outweigh all the positive work done by the various interfaith initiatives. The sad proof of this is that religious tensions are on the rise, not on the decline.

In summary, then, I very humbly ask the member states of the United Nations General Assembly to adopt the proposed draft resolution for the World Interfaith Harmony Week, noting that it excludes no individual, compromises no one, commits no one, forces no one, harms no one, costs nothing, and on the contrary includes everyone, celebrates everyone, benefits everyone, unites everyone and has the potential to bring much needed Peace and Harmony to the entire world in sha Allah. Thank-you Mr. President.

Draft Resolution A/65/L5 Sixty-fifth Session World Interfaith Harmony Week The General Assembly, Recalling its resolutions 53/243 of 6 October 1999 on the declaration and program of action relating to a culture of peace; 57/6 of November 2002 concerning the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence; 58/128 of 19 December 2003 on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation; 64/164 of 18 December 2009 on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief; 64/81 of 7 December 2009 on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, and 64/14 of 10 November 2009 on the Alliance of Civilizations; Recognizing the imperative need for dialogue among different faiths and religions in enhancing mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people; Recalling with appreciation various global, regional and sub-regional initiatives on mutual understanding and interfaith harmony including, inter alia, the Tripartite Forum for Interfaith Cooperation for Peace, and the 'A Common Word', Recognizing that the moral imperatives of all religions, convictions, and beliefs call for peace, tolerance, and mutual understanding:

1. Reaffirms that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace;
2. Proclaims the first week of February of every year the World Interfaith Harmony Week between all religions, faiths and beliefs;
3. Encourages all States to support, on a voluntary basis, the spread of the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world's Churches, Mosques, Synagogues, Temples and other places of Worship during that week based on Love of God and Love of the Neighbor, or based on Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbor, each according to their own religious traditions or convictions;
4. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the General Assembly informed of the implementation of the present resolution.