

RELIGIONS

FORTRESSES TO BE DEFENDED OR SPIRITUAL WELLSPRINGS?

COMMON COMMITMENTS



We recognize that the challenges we face in the world are too strong for any one of our traditions to deal with, and that we need each other in our attempts to respond to them.

Therefore, we must not do separately what we can do together. It is in the course of discerning and acting together that we would truly discover each other, and it is in making common commitments that we would grow together. Therefore, we make the following affirmations and commitments:

WE AFFIRM that humankind, made up of many peoples, nations, races, colours, cultures and religious traditions, is one human family.

Therefore, **WE REJECT** all attempts to drive wedges between religious traditions by presenting them as mutually exclusive communities.

WE COMMIT OURSELVES to learn more about each other, to learn from each other, and to discover and re-discover ourselves in relation to the other.

WE AFFIRM that at the heart of all our religious traditions are love, compassion, self-giving and values that sustain life, and life in community.

Therefore, **WE REJECT** all interpretations of religious teachings that promote enmity, hatred, or exclusion.

WE COMMIT OURSELVES to lift up the teachings and practices in our religious traditions that nourish life and promote community.

WE AFFIRM that conflict, violence and warfare are inconsistent with our religious teachings and none of our religious traditions support the resolution of conflicts through violent means.

Therefore **WE REJECT** all violence used in the name of religion, all interpretations of religion that support warfare, and any attempt to interpret our scriptures to support conflicts.

WE COMMIT OURSELVES to interpret, teach and practice our religious traditions for the promotion of peace and harmony.

WE AFFIRM that discrimination on the basis of race, caste, social status, physical and mental abilities, ethnicity, gender, etc., is inconsistent with all our religious teachings.

Therefore, **WE REJECT** all forms of discrimination and exclusion.

WE COMMIT OURSELVES to work towards an inclusive community and to struggle against interpretations of our faith and scriptures to justify discrimination.

WE AFFIRM that justice and fairness are central to religious life; that poverty, deprivation, hunger and disease are forces that diminish human dignity and potential.

Therefore, **WE REJECT** the ordering of economic and political life that brings about injustices, inequalities and the unconscionable exploitation of the earth for human greed.

WE COMMIT OURSELVES to defend together the dignity and the human, social and economic rights of all people, and the integrity of the earth.

WE AFFIRM the rights of young people and children and the gifts they bring to the understanding and practice of religious life.

Therefore **WE REJECT** all attempts to exclude them from the mainstream of religious life.

WE COMMIT OURSELVES to foster inclusive communities that would incorporate young people and children fully to enable them to bring their gifts to our common life.

It has been said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. We see these commitments as the steps we take towards the vision of a world that would live in justice and peace. We call upon all religious communities to make such acts of commitment their own and so further the vision of a spirituality that would bring healing and wholeness to our fractured world.