



General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 December 2020

Seventy-fifth session

Agenda item 15
Culture of peace

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 2 December 2020

[without reference to a Main Committee ([A/75/L.36/Rev.1](#) and
[A/75/L.36/Rev.1/Add.1](#))]

75/26. Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹ in particular the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion,

Recalling its resolution [74/23](#) of 12 December 2019 on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, and its other related resolutions,

Recalling also its resolution [53/243](#) of 13 September 1999 on the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, which serves as a universal mandate for the international community for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence that benefits humanity, in particular future generations, and welcoming the convening of the High-level Forum on the Culture of Peace by the President of the General Assembly on 10 September 2020,

Recalling further that, in its resolution [67/104](#) of 17 December 2012, it proclaimed the period 2013–2022 the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures and invited the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in that context, to be the lead agency in the United Nations system,

Encouraging, in this regard, activities aimed at promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue in order to enhance peace and social stability, respect for diversity and mutual respect and to create, at the global level, and also at the regional,

¹ Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).



national and local levels, an environment conducive to peace and mutual understanding,

Recalling its resolution [69/312](#) of 6 July 2015 on the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, in which it reaffirmed its support for the Alliance and reiterated the valuable role of the Alliance in promoting greater understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures, religions and beliefs,

Recalling also its resolution [36/55](#) of 25 November 1981, by which it proclaimed the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, and its resolutions [72/241](#) of 20 December 2017 on a world against violence and violent extremism, [72/284](#) of 26 June 2018 on the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review, [73/285](#) of 2 April 2019 on combating terrorism and other acts of violence based on religion or belief and [73/328](#) of 25 July 2019 on promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue and tolerance in countering hate speech,

Recalling further its resolution [72/130](#) of 8 December 2017, by which it proclaimed the International Day of Living Together in Peace and underlined that it constitutes a means of mobilizing the efforts of the international community to promote peace, tolerance, inclusion, understanding and solidarity,

Recalling its resolution [74/306](#) of 11 September 2020, in which it recognized that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is one of the greatest global challenges in the history of the United Nations, expressed deep concern about the rise in discrimination, hate speech, stigmatization, racism and xenophobia related to the pandemic and stressed the need to counter them as part of the COVID-19 response,

Bearing in mind the valuable contribution that interreligious and intercultural dialogue can make to an improved awareness and understanding of the common values shared by all humankind,

Noting that interreligious and intercultural dialogue has made significant contributions to mutual understanding, tolerance and respect, as well as to the promotion of a culture of peace and an improvement of overall relations among people from different cultural and religious backgrounds and among nations,

Noting also the growing importance of interreligious and intercultural dialogue in the context of the global phenomenon of migration, which increases interaction among persons and communities from various traditions, cultures and religions,

Recognizing that cultural diversity and the pursuit of cultural development by all peoples and nations are sources of mutual enrichment for the cultural life of humankind,

Convinced that the promotion of cultural pluralism and tolerance towards and dialogue among various cultures and civilizations would contribute to the efforts of all peoples and nations to enrich their cultures and traditions by engaging in a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and intellectual, moral and material achievements,

Noting the launch by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech,

Noting also the leading role played by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in preparing the United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, noting further the launch of the Plan of Action by the Secretary-General on 12 September 2019, and inviting Member States to consider implementing the relevant recommendations addressed to them, in collaboration with other stakeholders, as appropriate,

Noting further the Unite for Heritage campaign launched by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in March 2015, which is aimed at celebrating and safeguarding cultural heritage and diversity around the world, and the Conference on Safeguarding Endangered Cultural Heritage, held in Abu Dhabi on 2 and 3 December 2016, and the declaration adopted at the Conference,

Recalling that States have the primary responsibility to promote and protect human rights, including the human rights of persons belonging to religious minorities, including their right to exercise their religion or belief freely,

Recalling also its resolution [73/296](#) of 28 May 2019, in which it decided to designate 22 August as the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief,

Expressing deep concern at the instances of intolerance and discrimination and acts of violence occurring in the world, including cases motivated by discrimination against persons belonging to religious minorities, in addition to the negative projection of the followers of religions and the enforcement of measures that specifically discriminate against persons on the basis of religion or belief,

Recognizing the significance accorded to religious symbols by individuals in many religions and societies, and in this regard underscoring the importance of promoting mutual respect, tolerance and peaceful coexistence,

Reaffirming that violence can and should never be a justifiable or acceptable response to acts of intolerance on the basis of religion or belief and that such violence should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group,

Reaffirming also the positive role that the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and full respect for the freedom to seek, receive and impart information can play in strengthening democracy and combating religious intolerance, and reaffirming further that the exercise of the right to freedom of expression carries with it special duties and responsibilities, in accordance with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²

Recalling article 20 (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law,

Recalling also its resolution [73/329](#) of 25 July 2019, in which it declared 5 April the International Day of Conscience,

Bearing in mind that tolerance of cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversities contributes towards peace, mutual understanding and friendship among people of different cultures and nations and that these diversities should be made part of intercultural and interreligious dialogue efforts, as appropriate,

Reaffirming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,³ and acknowledging that the 2030 Agenda includes the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development,

Noting the various initiatives at the local, national, regional and international levels for enhancing interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation, and for strengthening people-to-people bonds, which are mutually reinforcing and interrelated, such as the establishment of the Hamad bin Khalifa Civilization Center in Copenhagen in 2014, the African Initiative on Education for

² See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

³ Resolution [70/1](#).

Peace and Development through Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, launched in Cotonou, Benin, in May 2015, the thirteenth Doha Conference on Interfaith Dialogue, held in Qatar, the sixth Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, held in Astana in October 2018, the third World Nomad Games, held in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan, and organized under the patronage of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in September 2018, the establishment of the International Institute for Tolerance and the Muslim Council of Elders in the United Arab Emirates, in 2017, and the launch of the World Tolerance Summit, in Abu Dhabi, all of which contribute to promoting social cohesion and inclusion, peace and development,

Acknowledging the preparations under way by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in cooperation with the United Nations, to organize, in May 2022 in the Russian Federation, the World Conference of Heads of States, Parliamentarians and Representatives of the World Religions on Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue for the Benefit of Peace and Mankind,

Noting the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations in the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue,

Noting also the adoption of the Yerevan Declaration of the seventeenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of la Francophonie, on the theme “Living together”, held in Yerevan on 11 and 12 October 2018,

Welcoming the leading role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as well as the work of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, in promoting intercultural dialogue,

Welcoming also the work of the Anna Lindh Foundation and the ongoing work of the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue in Vienna,

Noting the declaration of the Forum on the Role of Religious Leaders in Preventing Incitement that could Lead to Atrocity Crimes, held in Fez, Morocco, on 23 and 24 April 2015, and further efforts that build on the Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence⁴ and the Istanbul Process for Combating Intolerance, Discrimination and Incitement to Hatred and/or Violence on the Basis of Religion or Belief,

Welcoming the Declaration on Promoting Cultural Pluralism and Peace through Interfaith and Inter-ethnic Dialogue, endorsed by the 137th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, from 14 to 18 October 2017,

Referring to the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, organized biennially by Azerbaijan in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, the World Tourism Organization, the Council of Europe and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, as a key global platform for promoting intercultural dialogue,⁵

Acknowledging the positive contribution of individuals and of relevant civil society organizations to the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and the culture of peace,

⁴ A/HRC/22/17/Add.4, appendix.

⁵ A/74/476, para. 9.

Underlining the importance of education, including education on culture, peace, tolerance, mutual understanding and human rights, in promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue, respect for diversity, and the elimination of discrimination based on religion or belief,

Recognizing the contributions of the media and of new information and communications technologies to promoting peoples' understanding of different cultures and religions, including through the promotion of dialogue,

Reaffirming the importance of sustaining the process of engaging all stakeholders, including young men and women as relevant actors, in interreligious and intercultural dialogue within the appropriate initiatives at various levels, which is aimed at challenging prejudices, improving mutual understanding and fostering cooperation,

Recognizing the commitment of all religions to peace and the contribution that interreligious and intercultural dialogue among religions, groups and individuals, in particular religious leaders, can make towards an improved awareness and understanding of the common values shared by all humankind,

Noting the Appeal for Peace, signed by religious leaders during the World Day of Prayer for Peace, held in Assisi, Italy, on 20 September 2016,

Taking note of the document entitled "Human fraternity for world peace and living together", which was signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmad al-Tayyib, on 4 February 2019 in Abu Dhabi,

1. *Reaffirms* that mutual understanding and interreligious and intercultural dialogue constitute important dimensions of the dialogue among civilizations and of the culture of peace;

2. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace;⁶

3. *Recognizes* the importance of interreligious and intercultural dialogue and its valuable contribution to promoting social cohesion and inclusion, peace and development, and calls upon Member States to consider, as appropriate and where applicable, interreligious and intercultural dialogue as an important tool in efforts aimed at achieving peace and social stability and the full realization of the Sustainable Development Goals;

4. *Also recognizes* the efforts by relevant stakeholders to foster peaceful and harmonious coexistence within societies by promoting respect for religious and cultural diversity, including by engendering sustained and robust interaction among various segments of society;

5. *Further recognizes* the leading role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on intercultural dialogue and its contribution to interreligious dialogue, as well as its activities related to the culture of peace and non-violence and its focus on concrete actions at the global, regional and subregional levels, and recognizes the contribution by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in this regard;

6. *Welcomes* the declarations adopted by the Global Forums of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, and invites relevant stakeholders to continue their efforts to promote mutual understanding among different civilizations, cultures, religions and beliefs;

⁶ A/75/233.

7. *Also welcomes* the efforts undertaken by the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue, strengthening social cohesion and promoting a culture of peace, and takes note of his recent “Call for mutual respect”;

8. *Calls upon* Member States, which have the primary responsibility to counter discrimination and hate speech, and all relevant actors, including political and religious leaders, to promote inclusion and unity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to combat and speak out and take strong action against racism, xenophobia, hate speech, violence, discrimination, including on the basis of age, and stigmatization;

9. *Reaffirms* the solemn commitment of all States to fulfil their obligations and commitments to promote universal respect for and observance and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other instruments relating to human rights and international law, the universal nature of these rights and freedoms being beyond question;

10. *Welcomes* the initiative to open up the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor in the spirit of interfaith harmony and peaceful neighbourhood, and appreciates the agreement between the Governments of India and Pakistan to allow visa-free access to pilgrims of all faiths, especially Nanak Naam Levas and the Sikh community from across the world, as a landmark initiative for interreligious and intercultural cooperation for peace;

11. *Also welcomes* the joint statement issued by Spain and Turkey as co-sponsors of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations after the successful conclusion of the eighth Global Forum of the Alliance, on the theme “#Commit2Dialogue: partnerships for prevention and sustaining peace”, held in New York on 19 and 20 November 2018, and invites relevant stakeholders to continue their efforts to promote cross-cultural dialogue and mutual understanding among different civilizations, cultures, religions and beliefs;

12. *Underlines* the importance of moderation as a value within societies for countering violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for further contributing to the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, tolerance, understanding and cooperation, and encourages efforts, as appropriate, to enable voices of moderation to work together in order to build a more secure, inclusive and peaceful world;

13. *Welcomes* the efforts by the media to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue, encourages the further promotion of dialogue among the media from all cultures and civilizations, emphasizes that everyone has the right to freedom of expression, and reaffirms that the exercise of this right carries with it special duties and responsibilities and may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but that these can be only such as are provided by law and necessary for respect of the rights or reputations of others, and protection of national security or of public order, or of public health and morals, and are non-discriminatory and applied in a manner that does not obstruct the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;

14. *Also welcomes* the efforts to use information and communications technologies, including the Internet, to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue, including through the Interfaith Dialogue ePortal established following the Special Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace and Development, held in Manila in 2010, as well as the Peace and Dialogue ePortal of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and encourages relevant stakeholders to utilize the opportunity to

disseminate their best practices and experiences on interreligious and intercultural dialogue by contributing to the Interfaith Dialogue ePortal and to the Peace and Dialogue ePortal;

15. *Encourages* Member States to consider, as and where appropriate, initiatives that identify areas for practical action in all sectors and levels of society for the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, tolerance, understanding and cooperation, *inter alia*, the ideas suggested during the High-level Dialogue on Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace, held in New York in October 2007, including the idea of an enhanced process of dialogue among world religions, as well as the ideas suggested during the third High Panel on Peace and Dialogue among Cultures, held in Paris in November 2012;

16. *Acknowledges* the active engagement of the United Nations system with faith-based and cultural organizations and other relevant non-governmental organizations in the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue and in bringing together people of different cultures, religions, faiths or beliefs to discuss common issues and objectives;

17. *Also acknowledges* the important role of civil society, including academia, in fostering interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and encourages support for practical measures that mobilize civil society, including building capacities, opportunities and frameworks for cooperation;

18. *Invites* Member States to further promote reconciliation to help to ensure durable peace and sustained development, including by working with faith leaders and communities and through reconciliatory measures and acts of service and by encouraging forgiveness and compassion among individuals;

19. *Recognizes* that the Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat plays a valuable role as focal point within the Secretariat on the issue, and encourages it to continue to interact and coordinate with the relevant entities of the United Nations system and coordinate their contribution to the intergovernmental process aimed at promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

35th plenary meeting
2 December 2020