



ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

Statement of Religious Youth Organizations

In discussing the topic of shared security, we recognized that one of the main threats to peace is the different forms of extremism. Therefore, it is the duty of all religious leaders at all levels to avoid religious extremism in favor of dignity, tolerance, and diversity.

One of our biggest challenges is effectively engaging all stakeholders in fruitful dialogue with each other:

1. Calling all believers to inter-religious dialogue

Though religious leaders have an important role in inter-religious dialogue, it is also their responsibility to encourage all believers to take initiatives in their own way. Inter-religious dialogue at the local level should be considered equally as important as inter-religious dialogue at the global level. The more people know about each other, the more they are able to understand each other.

2. Religious education

Special attention should be paid to the field of education. Learning respect of other religions and faiths should be a necessary part of religious education as well as learning about the celebrated aspects of other religions. An excellent opportunity of achieving this can be through the curricula of a formal education as well as in non-formal education methodologies.

3. Advocating for religious minorities

Recognizing that fruitful dialogue is only possible between equal partners, we should advocate for other religious communities which are suppressed in our own nations. Non-extremist religious minorities should not be prohibited from establishing themselves where they have chosen to live.

4. Freedom from fear

It is an important responsibility of all people to guard against creating fear of other religions. If members of our own religious communities exhibit disrespectful attitudes against other religions, we should feel empowered to correct this mis- or uninformed behavior.

The above statement was prepared by youth representing religious organizations during Working Session 3 of the Alliance of Civilizations Forum: The Role of Religious Leaders and Communities in Promoting Shared Security.