

**Global Pledge for Action by Religious Actors and Faith-Based Organizations to
Address the COVID-19 Pandemic in Collaboration with the United Nations**

Preamble

As religious actors and faith-based organizations, we reiterate our role and responsibility in bringing people together to strengthen our common humanity, solidarity, compassion and equality. This is more crucial than ever in response to the multi-faceted response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the short, medium and longer terms.

Only through a multi-stakeholder, human-centered and mutually reinforcing response that reinforces synergies and addresses gaps in a collaborative manner will the international community be able to respond to the multidimensional repercussions of the pandemic, which are particularly dire for the most vulnerable groups around the world.

The United Nations Secretary-General has stressed the influence faith actors have on people's values, attitudes, behaviors and actions, and in his message to mark the start of the Ramadan on 22 April 2020, has called on religious leaders to play a key role in addressing the pandemic by working together and translating common values into action.

In response to this call by the Secretary-General, the UN Alliance of Civilization, Office on Genocide Prevention and Responsibility to Protect and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights organized a virtual consultation on 28 May 2020, which brought together religious leaders and actors as well as faith-based organizations to discuss possible areas of action and collaboration with the United Nations in the common fight against COVID-19 and its socio-economic consequences. This consultation resulted in this Global Pledge for Action.

The objective of this Global Pledge for Action is not to add yet another declaration, but rather to advance and reinforce ongoing actions and stimulate new result-oriented activities by religious actors and faith-based organizations around the world and to identify specific actions to respond to the current and future challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Global Pledge for Action is complemented by a matrix which includes ongoing and planned initiatives by religious actors, including in collaboration with the United Nations.

Global Pledge for Action

In the spirit of unity, solidarity and partnership and in support to the policy framework of the United Nations in response to COVID-19¹:

We stand determined to respect and protect human rights standards as the overarching framework for our policies and actions.

We will ensure that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will guide our responses to the pandemic to build a healthier, safer, fairer and more inclusive world where no one is left behind.

We will continue to stand up and speak against hate speech and hate crimes, xenophobia, racism and all other forms of discrimination. We will work with the United Nations and all other relevant stakeholders to implement the UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech and the UN Guidance on Addressing and Countering COVID-19 related Hate Speech.

We pledge to address disinformation and misinformation, and to disseminate science-based information, facts and evidence in accordance with UN policies and frameworks.

We recognize the central role of education and commit to prioritize education within our mandates so vulnerable populations in particular can access remote learning when needed. We pledge to contribute to fostering capacity-building and peer-learning activities at the community level, including in partnership with the United Nations. In particular, we will cooperate with relevant UN entities, as well as international and regional human rights mechanisms, to enhance the human rights knowledge of religious actors at the grass root level, engage with them in recovery efforts and exchange experiences in a peer-to-peer learning mode.

¹ [A Joint call for Solidarity, Compassion and Unity](#);
[Secretary-General Appeal for Global Ceasefire](#);
[Secretary-General Global humanitarian Appeal to Combat COVID-19](#);
[Secretary-General Report on the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19, Shared Responsibility, Global Solidarity](#);
[Global Multi-religious Faith-in-Action COVID initiative](#);
[“Faith for Rights” framework](#) and [#Faith4Rights toolkit](#);
[United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites](#);
[UN Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech](#);
[Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together](#);
[Statement of Solidarity from the New Alliance of Virtue](#);
[Joint Statement of the UN Interagency Multi Task Force for Religion and Sustainable Development](#);
[Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes](#);
[United Nations Guidance Note on Addressing and Countering COVID-19 related Hate speech](#)

We commit to working collaboratively in the promotion of interfaith initiatives that will support religious actors and faith-based organizations in the responses to COVID-19.

We pledge to implement initiatives that will strengthen social cohesion and knowledge sharing and will help build resilience at the local level with special focus on youth.

We underscore the importance to renew efforts at disarmament and arms control, reduce defense budgets and dedicate additional financial resources to strengthening global preparedness for future pandemics.

We are committed to the promotion of gender equality, women's and girls' empowerment, and the fight against all forms of gender-based violence in our responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, in collaboration with the United Nations.

We commit to help implement the United Nations Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 and the Secretary-General's call for global ceasefire so that essential humanitarian relief operations can reach populations in the most fragile and vulnerable contexts. We will also support, promote and advocate for the Plan and global call with all relevant stakeholders within our respective spheres of influence and authority.

We stand determined to ensure that recovery policies are respectful of the protection of the environment. We will collaborate with the UN to deliver a transformational change for nature and people, ensure that economic recovery creates resilience to future crises, and to modernize global environmental governance.

The attached matrix of ongoing and new actions provides all relevant actors and organizations with a clearer landscape of "who does what" with a view to allow more synergy, partnerships and collaboration to emerge. As a living document, the matrix is open to inputs by additional religious actors and faith-based organizations which would like to join this initiative after the signature of the pledge (email: global-pledge-religious-actors@un.org).

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the Office of the United Nations Special Adviser on Genocide Prevention will follow the implementation of the Global Pledge for Action in collaboration with the signatories.

Signatories

ACT Alliance

Al Azhar University, International Islamic Center for Population Studies and Research

American Sikh Forum and Global Sikh Council New York

Divine Shakti Foundation

Global Interfaith WASH Alliance

Global One 2015

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

Higher Committee of Human Fraternity

Jewish Theological Seminary

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID)

Milstein Center for Interreligious Dialogue

Muslim Council of Elders

Religions for Peace International

Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society

Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding

The Centre for Responsible Leadership

The Elijah Interfaith Institute

The Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees (MFA)

World Council of Religious Leaders

World Jewish Council