

Geneva International Declaration for the Culture of Humanitarian Dialogue 2015

**International Conference:
Information and Culture of Humanitarian Dialogue
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University of Geneva - Switzerland - Auditorium Ernest Boninchi
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Preamble

Whereas the substantial principles agreed upon by human societies promote equality between all human beings in dignity, freedom and human values without discrimination;

Whereas human values that unite all human beings are more important than the factors that separate them;

Whereas human societies are pluralistic in nature, which requires respecting democratic values based on the right to differ within the context of the right to diversity;

Whereas pluralism cannot be a cause to withdraw into oneself, but rather a strong motivation to compete in a creative manner for the sake of a better humanity;

Whereas coexistence is the basic covenant of human societies since it guarantees human peace, while authoritarianism and oppression elicit violence;

Whereas human coexistence requires mutual respect among peoples and promotes openness and convergence;

Whereas tolerance is the opposite of fanaticism, while being synonymous with the capacity to understand the circumstances of human societies, their specificities as well as their civilizations;

Whereas resorting to violence to impose a single ideology, doctrine or religion on human societies is against all religions, laws and systems;

Whereas “human values” regulate the lives of human beings and have an impact on their way of thinking thus affecting the creation of a culture of dialogue;

Whereas God created all human beings different and gave them the right to reject injustice and oppression, as well as the right to demand a dignified life;

Whereas all divine messages call for justice and doing good, as well as for love, mercy, security, peace, coexistence, openness and dialogue;

Whereas coexistence among religions, cultures and civilizations is necessary to promote dialogue among human societies, while keeping in mind that the messages of the prophets complement one another;

Whereas the emergence of fanatic ideologies is currently causing conflicts leading to humanitarian catastrophes;

Whereas world peace cannot be achieved without peace among religions, and peace among religions cannot be achieved without humanitarian dialogue and the promotion of common human values;

Whereas education is closely linked to the development of the individual's capacity for dialogue, while media outlets remain the main promoters of this concept from childhood onwards;

Whereas the media play an essential role in sustainable development since they are linked to the economy in lasting partnerships;

Whereas the concept of social justice is closely linked to a just system of governance, and most conflicts are caused by territorial and resource disputes, and hostility among cultures is caused by media incitement linking the absence of social justice to the existing social contract thus eliminating all possibilities of human dialogue;

Whereas the media play a crucial role in personality-building and enhance the sense of belonging that human beings have within a culture of citizenship and national unity;

Whereas the media may sometimes play an inciting role in sowing discord among human societies by highlighting archaic beliefs, thus ceasing to be a means of human communication and becoming a tool for the destruction of civilizations, cultures and religions;

Whereas media stereotyping of acts of violence by unknown perpetrators creates fear among human societies and leads them to resorting to retaliation and acts of vengeance;

Whereas fanatic media coverage increases tension in the name of a fake holiness has led to the creation of inhumane human beings full of hatred, hostility and a culture of violence;

Whereas dialogue has become more difficult and complicated due to several geopolitical factors related to violence, terrorism, extremism and corruption;

Whereas human societies are today in need of a charter that regulates freedom of speech and stops the media from inciting to acts of violence and hatred;

Whereas some transformations in the behavior of human beings could give rise to the fear that human values may disappear, that the culture of hatred may replace that of tolerance and that the culture of war may replace that of peace; while all such factors have threatened and continue to threaten international peace;

Whereas we live in a tragic reality where conflicts and crises are erupting as a result of the dissemination of ideas inciting to acts of hatred and violence and sowing discord while destroying the cultural heritage of humankind and the human conscience;

Whereas the participants believe that humanitarian dialogue is based on the acceptance of others in their human dimension, rather than in the political dimension proposed by some;

Whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights grants each person the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;

Whereas the world's intellectual elite must take action against the disastrous situation of mankind that threatens humanity as a whole;

Whereas humanitarian dialogue is among the best means to stop human suffering, and plays a crucial role in facilitating communication among societies when political dialogue becomes impossible;

An International Scientific Conference entitled “**Information and the Culture of Humanitarian Dialogue**” was held in Geneva, the capital of international humanitarian work and city of peace, on the 24th and 25th of October 2015. An international, humanitarian and “cultural-scientific” initiative entitled: “**The Geneva International Declaration of the Culture of Humanitarian Dialogue 2015**” was also launched.

This initiative is considered a common space for all nations, peoples and societies and its respect is essential to ensure the survival of human civilization.

Article 1: Media outlets should play a crucial role in promoting noble religious principles and the common values of cultures ,civilizations and peace.

Article 2:Media should play a vital role in religious awareness-raising and in promoting real faith with the objective of putting an end to rigid historical fanaticism which incites fear of the other, divergence among human societies and mobilization of potential to protect oneself against the other.

Article 3: Media should play an awareness-raising role in putting an end to the use of religion for political purposes and to resorting to violence in the name of religion. Media outlets should also commit to refrain from using past episodes of mutual violence between human societies and thus avoid the exacerbation of mutual hatred.

Article 4: Media outlets should adopt moral values in their work methodology so as to control psychological and social reactions that undermine common values shared by societies. Media outlets should also commit to dedicating appropriate coverage of moral values in human societies and ensuring a dignified life for all peoples.

Article 5: Human societies are called upon to take into consideration that diversity and differences are not contrary to the concept of tolerance in any religion, social contract or set of social norms, all of which consider human dialogue and the acceptance of the other as a duty.

Article 6: Governments and decision-makers should commit to a discourse that respects human rights, dignity and freedom of belief, accepts differences of opinion and cultures, and respects all human values as pillars for human dialogue.

Article 7: Media should insist on the importance of the concept of mercy as essential to the human system of values so as to combat hatred and hostility, and achieve peace.

Article 8: Media should play a positive role in enhancing tolerance and coexistence, and in helping minorities make their voice heard in order to strengthen cohesion among all segments of society, and promote human communication among all societies of the world.

Article 9: Media outlets should play their role in promoting a culture of democracy in view of enhancing a culture of dialogue and rejecting inherited partisanship in order to promote national and international peace.

Article 10: Media should play their pivotal role in building a culture of citizenship protected by a fair judicial system in a context that is respectful of the fundamental principles of human rights laws.

Article 11: Media outlets should implement a media policy that goes hand in hand with education to enshrine a culture of dialogue at home, in schools and in societies. As for education systems, they should promote media education to enhance media awareness and the culture of civilized dialogue among individuals.

Article 12: Universities and academic institutes should establish educational institutions specialized in teaching the culture of citizenship and related human sciences, and to carry out scientific research in these fields.

Article 13: Media should adopt a culture of knowledge and promote a spirit of cooperation and unity among citizens of society and among different human societies.

Article 14: Educational, cultural and scientific institutions of the world should promote solidarity and openness to others among their students.

Article 15: Media outlets should commit not to promote, neither explicitly nor implicitly, violence, extremism, and the rejection of the opinion of others, which would lead to the lack of humanitarian dialogue and ultimately drag the parties in conflict into bloody conflicts.

Article 16: Human societies should not resort to the use of weapons or any other form of violence or repression in the event of political disputes, in order not to violate the spirit of national partnership.

Article 17: Media of authorities responsible for maintaining security should be objective and should convey information, away from provocation, misinformation and incitement, in order to preserve common spaces for dialogue among societies and thus achieve socio-political security, which is the basis for a civilized globalization with a human dimension.

Article 18: Based on the important relation between the media and the economy, governments and decision-makers shall take into account economic and developmental considerations in their discourse in order to contribute to building social justice and fighting corruption. Governments and decision-makers should realize that humanitarian dialogue is an added economic and developmental value for societies, without which individuals feel aggrieved and thus resort to extremism and violence.

Article 19: Governments should establish an economic legislative system that tackles the challenges to the livelihoods of people in order to prevent flagrant inequalities that threaten social justice and national peace.

Article 20: Media should allocate an adequate space to disseminate a culture of respect for the rights of human societies, especially the right to live in dignity.

Article 21: Based on the existential relation between peace and justice, governments and decision makers should implement laws based on equality, in order to transform contradictions into integration, clashes into coexistence, and fanaticism into tolerance and humanitarian dialogue.

Article 22: All forms of media outlets should not incite fanaticism, since it contradicts the right of human societies to live without repression of their own religious, moral and social beliefs.

Article 23: Media outlets should promote a culture of peace through allocating an adequate media space to disseminate the principles and values of international humanitarian law and human rights that reject excessive violence that, in turn, undermine the common platforms of humanitarian dialogue.

Article 24: Requesting the United Nations to consider the media issue, cause of emergence of conflicts, as one of the legal issues for consideration of its working system.

Article 25 : The United Nations is requested to draft an international document on sanctions to be imposed on member states harming international security through dissemination of unjustified and incorrect information, through official channels, leading to tensions between human societies, promotion of fear, extremism or exclusion of others.

Article 26: The promotion of humanitarian dialogue as an element of the modern state brings civilizations, cultures, and religions closer to each other, and encourages them to establish dialogue rather than to resort to disputes in view of preserving the heritage of human civilization.

Article 27: Encouraging human societies to implement humanitarian and relief work during conflicts, which contributes indirectly to the creation of a common space for dialogue between conflicting parties.

Article 28: Media should establish a preventive strategy to protect human societies from being lured into armed conflicts. This strategy should include the promotion of humanitarian dialogue , and the initiatives of preventive diplomacy, and respect previous dialogue traditions.

Article 29: Participants and parties involved in humanitarian dialogues should not be lured into hostilities or any acts that involve racial discrimination. Otherwise, the gap between conflicting parties would be widened, leading them to armed conflicts.

Article 30 : Institutions that have international legitimacy should support efforts for humanitarian dialogue in countries suffering from internal conflicts, and provide assistance in implementing the dialogue outcome both morally and materially.

From this conference, we announce to the whole world that this humanitarian and international DECLARATION with a scientific background will go down in history as long as humanity exists, with the aim of contributing to the protection of human societies from human disasters . It is a neutral , objective and independent DECLARATION , agreed upon by participants and attendees from the four corners of the world.

Our humanitarian call should be heeded by all media and mass communication outlets of all peoples and nations. It should become an international humanitarian instrument, recognized by the United Nations and documented by UNESCO and the UN Human Rights Council. This DECLARATION should become an international humanitarian reference that contributes to the implementation of an education, information and knowledge strategy that enshrines a culture of humanitarian dialogue.

Peace starts from the mind, and only from within the mind does peace start.

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