

EGYPT



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نيويورك

**Statement
By**

**His Eminence Dr. Mohammad Saed Tantawy
The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar**

**Before
The General Assembly**

**On
Item 45: "Culture of Peace"**

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In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Mr. President of the General Assembly,
Your Majesties and Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations
Ladies and Gentlemen,

When we talk about the culture of peace in Islam, we talk about positive dialogue among civilizations, religions and cultures, and about realities that the wise of all times and places concur about:

1. The first reality is that all people are created by God, the Most Exalted, from one kind to devoutly worship their creator, and to cooperate with each other on virtue and piety, not on transgression and aggression.

In the Quran, God –praise be to Allah- emphasizes: *“O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from whom created his spouse (Eve), and from them both created many men and women...”*

The Almighty also says: *“O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other...”*

Mohammed (PBUH) says in this regard: *“You all belong to Adam, and Adam is from dust. No Arab is better than a non-Arab, except by piety”.*

2. The second reality is that difference in beliefs and ideas is a human nature. Beliefs are not traded. Each individual is born different, and there should be no imposition of beliefs. Imposition would not produce true believers, but only lying hypocrites. God alone is the One who calls people to account for their beliefs.

Many verses in the Quran reflect these concepts, among which is God's saying that *“There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right path has become clearly distinct from wrong path...”*

The Most Exalted also told His Messenger (PBUH): *“... your duty is only to convey the message and on Us is the reckoning”.*

3. The third reality is that the difference in beliefs among people does not preclude their cooperation, mutual understanding, friendliness or exchange of benefits sanctioned by God. Human beings are civil by nature, and cannot do without interaction with others. States cannot also do without interaction and exchanging benefits with others, particularly in our era, in which the world has become a global village, mainly due to the high advancement in means of transportation and communications through science and knowhow.

The relentless active efforts of the General Assembly of the United Nations should continue to promote security and peace in this world. Its good offices should continue unabated to reduce frictions among nations and prevent conflicts and envy among peoples.

4. The fourth reality as agreed to by the wise is that the divine religions revealed by God to the noble messengers have two main common cornerstones. The first is to worship God alone with devotion, and the second is to maintain good manners. Any disagreement among them is related to secondary issues, not the basics and principles.

Such is the case, it follows that due respect ought to be paid to all noble Messengers, and the guidance of religions to be pursued. Defamation of religions and assaults on the noble Messengers therefore do not emanate from sensibility, good nature or clear insight.

5. The fifth reality as agreed to by the wise is that the good word works equally with friends and others.

It works to add to the warmth and affability with friends. God refers to His good servants by saying: *"...and they are guided to goodly words and they are guided into the path of the God."*

It also works with others as it serves to curb their rage and animosity. God says in this regard: *"Tell my servants that they should speak that which is best; because Satan verily sows a state of conflict and disagreement among them; surely Satan is an open enemy to human."*

6. The sixth reality as agreed to by the wise since eternity is that there are virtues that need to be respected, and lapses that need to be avoided.

They concurred that justice is a virtue.

God instructed it in ruling saying: *"... when you judge between people, you judge with justice..."*

God instructed it in articulation saying: *"... and when you speak, then be just, though be it against a relative..."*

God instructed it in testimony saying: *"... and take as witness two just persons from among you, and establish the testimony for God..."*

The wise also agreed that injustice is a crime that leads to great loss in the herein and hereafter.

God demonstrates that by saying: *"These are their houses in utter ruin, for they were unjust..."*

God also says: *"Consider not that God is unaware of that which the unjust do, God only gives them respite to a Day on which the eyes shall be fixedly gazing."*

All divine religions, and human minds, seek the promotion of justice and rejection of injustice, for there could be no peace or security in the world at large unless we exert our utmost effort to stand strong for the virtue of justice until it overwhelmingly triumphs, and to stand firmly against the crimes of injustice until it is totally rolled back.

7. The seventh reality as agreed by the wise of all times and places is that consolidating security and peace in any State is a blessing that leads to prosperity, increased production in agriculture, industry or otherwise, thereby creating happiness and ensuring more affluence and progress.

When Abraham (PBUH) left his wife, Hajar, and his son, Ismail, in holy Mecca, the blessed lands, he asked God: *"My Lord, make it a secure town and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in God and the Last Day..."*

The wise have also agreed to reject terrorism and targeting people's safety, and to reject spreading mischief in the land through annihilation and destruction of State institutions. They agreed that such terrorism is a religious and worldly tragedy.

It is a religious tragedy because it explicitly violates the provisions of divine laws that call for safeguarding human life, dignity and all rights from all violations, and consider the murder of one person same as slaughtering all people.

God says in this respect: "... whoever slays a person, unless it is for a murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it would be as if he slew all humans; and whoever saves a life, it would be as though he saved the lives of all humans..."

It is a worldly tragedy because terrorists attempt to tear apart the nation's unity, destroy the nation's wealth and economy, create national discord and spread horror and disruption wherever they go.

Undoubtedly, whoever does that is in fact committing a crime against his or her nation, for which they deserve the harshest of penalties. It is incumbent upon us all, each in our respective field, and the duty of the General Assembly of the United Nations and the Security Council, being the rostrums for peace calls, to stand together as one in the defence of security and to curb aggression.

8. The eighth reality as agreed by the wise of all times and places is that the constructive dialogue is the most appropriate way to settle conflicts and disputes among people. Such a constructive dialogue needs to be free from sinister purposes, with noble goals and reasonable requirements. Those who moderate it need to have positive insights, good judgement, clear intentions and solid determination to enable them to deal with the difficulties with great patience.

If a dialogue is to embark on religious grounds, then it has to focus on salvaging the oppressed and helping the needy. It should focus on promotion of virtues and defeating vices. In this regard, every effort should be done to help our brothers in Palestine to realize all their rights to the fullest.

Any dialogue on religions or beliefs should not centre on which is right or which is wrong, for it would then be a futile exercise that only creates hatred and repugnance. There should not be a problem that each side explains its perspective, so long as it is done in a wise and refined manner, in which each side respects the opinion of the others, and only wishes them guidance and reconciliation.

9. The ninth reality is that every state has its culture; the East has its culture and the West has its own, so do the South and the North.

The East should take what it finds most appropriate to it in the Western civilization, while the West should take what it finds most appropriate to it in the Eastern civilization. The same should be also true between the North and the South.

We believe in cooperation between civilizations, their complementarity and agreeableness, not in the claims of clash, repulsion, incongruity or animosity.

We support the conclusions and recommendations of the World Conference on Dialogue, which was organized by the Islamic World Association in Madrid on 18 July 2008, under the auspices of His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, and His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain.

We pray to God –the Most Exalted- to grant us all success in speech and deeds.

May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.