

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



 WORLD INTERFAITH
HARMONY WEEK
THE OFFICIAL UN WEEK 1st WEEK OF FEBRUARY



The
H.M. King Abdullah II
World Interfaith
Harmony Week Prize
Ceremony 2016



PROGRAM

DATE : SUNDAY, 17TH APRIL 2016

Remarks by H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, Chief
Advisor to H.M. the King for Religious and Cultural
Affairs, Personal Envoy of H.M. the King

Presentation of Medals and Certificates to the Winners

- Third Prize
- Second Prize
- First Prize

Remarks by the First Prize Winner

Group photo with the winners and judges





THE OFFICIAL UN WEEK

WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK

1st WEEK OF FEBRUARY

*Love of God and Love of the Neighbour, or
Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbour*

www.WorldInterfaithHarmonyWeek.com



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WELCOME

Welcome to the fourth annual WIHW prize-giving ceremony! We have now celebrated six years of the WIHW and each year has seen the range and quality of events improve. We congratulate all those who have managed to support an event during the WIHW, and thus have helped make the WIHW firmly established on the international peace calendar.

Since the first year the WIHW was celebrated in 2011, the number of events held has risen steadily:

2011 - 213 events

2012 - 290 events

2013 - 363 events

2014 - 409 events

2015 - 901 events

2016 - 816 events

The events are held in over 50 countries of the world and are arranged by groups as diverse as government agencies, various social groups, schools, private individuals and of course the numerous interfaith organizations that exist worldwide.

UN WIHW Resolution Initiative

In September 2010, His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan proposed a World Interfaith Harmony Week at the Plenary session of the 65th United Nations General Assembly in New York. This was a call to establish a week every year where people of all faiths, and those of no faith, would promote the message of 'Love of God, and Love of the neighbour', or 'Love of the Good, and Love of the Neighbour'. The Draft Resolution for the World Interfaith Harmony Week was later written and presented by H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, Chief Advisor to King Abdullah II for Religious and Cultural Affairs and Personal Envoy of King Abdullah II, before the United Nations General Assembly where it was unanimously adopted on 20 October 2010

UN Resolution A/65/PV.34; the World Interfaith Harmony Week (WIHW) as it is called, recognises the first week of February of every year as a time when people of all faiths, and those

of no faith, work together to promote and celebrate religious and cultural understanding and cooperation, to address each other in favorable terms drawn from their own traditions and to accept and respect ‘the other’ based on the foundations of ‘Love of God, and Love of the Neighbour’, or ‘Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbour’. Remarkably the WIHW excludes no one and includes and unites everyone.

The H.M. King Abdullah II World Interfaith Harmony Week Prize

The Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan established the WIHW Prize in 2013 to recognize the three best events or texts organized during the UN WIHW (first week of February) which best promote the goals of the WIHW. Prizes are awarded to each event or text that is judged to have been most successful in promoting interfaith harmony and impacting religious understanding. Since 2014, this prize has been known as the King Abdullah II WIHW Prize. The prizes are:

| | |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| First | \$25,000 and a gold medal |
| Second | \$15,000 and a silver medal |
| Third | \$5,000 and a bronze medal |

The Judges for the 2016 The King Abdullah II WIHW Prize were:

- H.R.H. Princess Areej Ghazi
- H.B. Patriarch Theophilus III – Patriarch of the Holy City, Palestine and Jordan
- H.E. Sheikh Dr Ali Gomaa – former Grand Mufti of the Arab Republic of Egypt
- H.E. Bishop Munib Yunan – Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and President of the World Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches
- Sheikh Usama al-Sayyid Al-Azhari – Professor at Al-Azhar University
- Father Nabil Haddad – Founder and Executive Director of the Jordanian Interfaith Coexistence Research Centre
- Dr. Minwer Al-Mheid – Director of the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought

THE WINNERS



FIRST PRIZE

EUCLID "Common Word" Interfaith Harmony Week

Submitted by

Euclid University of The Gambia

On the occasion of the 2016 UN Interfaith Harmony Week, Euclid engaged academic, intergovernmental and religious institutions and their representatives for several events, which were held in 5 countries: Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Gambia, Trinidad and Tobago, and United States.

Monday February 01, 2016

EUCLID's week began with an interview of Ambassador Charles Armel Doubane, former Minister and Permanent Representative of the **Central African Republic** to the United Nations, from **Bangui**. This was significant because this country, which is EUCLID's historic headquarters state, has seen tremendous inter-religious violence, as well as a great effort to overcome inter-religious intolerance. It was especially moving to hear Ambassador Doubane who a Christian mention his adoptive daughter whom he raised in her native Muslim faith. He also mentioned the efforts of the three national religious leaders (Catholic, Protestant and Muslim) to take on a leadership role in healing the wounds.

Details at: <http://tinyurl.com/gwflgcd>



Tuesday February 02, 2016

On the second day of the Week, EUCLID's International Faculty Coordinator, Pr Laurent Cleenewerck, interviewed an American man who spent several years in **Turkey**. The interview was recorded and posted on video, and focuses on the inter-cultural respect.

Details at: <http://tinyurl.com/hqq2l7q>

Wednesday February 03, 2016

On the third day of the Week, EUCLID and **COMESA-LLPI** jointly organized an event at the COMESA-LLPI headquarters in **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**. This is significant because COMESA-LLPI is a specialized intergovernmental organization current serving 10 Member States (of Christian and Muslim majority populations), and employing a religiously diverse staff. The event focused on creating awareness of the landmark document *A Common Word*.

Details at: <http://tinyurl.com/zwcl532>
and <http://tinyurl.com/j77nbrv>

On the same day, EUCLID cooperated with **Humboldt State University** (Arcata, California) and **St Innocent Orthodox Church** (Eureka, California) to organize a lecture entitled "Christian-Muslim Dialogue; Finding Common Words?" On this occasion, Pr Laurent Cleenewerck, in his dual capacity as EUCLID faculty and rector of the parish, delivered a lecture presenting his academic paper "Finding Common Words" prepared especially for the Interfaith Harmony Week (included with report documentation).

Details at: <http://tinyurl.com/zwcl532>

Thursday February 04, 2016

On the fourth day of the Week, EUCLID cooperated with Dr Glenville Ashby (of the Global Interfaith Council, and EUCLID faculty member) and Dr Jerome Teelucksingh to organize a lecture at the **University of the West Indies** campus, in **Trinidad and Tobago**. The lecture was recorded and included in the event report.

Details at: <http://tinyurl.com/grawurf>

Friday February 05, 2016

On the fifth day of the Week which is the Muslim Day of Prayer, EUCLID organized an event at its headquarters office in The Gambia, West Africa. The Gambia is a Muslim majority country with significant Christian minority, which co-exist in harmony.

Several participants shared their experience and noted the importance of such an event, which should be repeated and expanded in the years to come.

Details at: <http://tinyurl.com/hbz2uye>

Last but not least, it is hoped that Pr Cleenewerck's remarkable paper "Finding Common Words: An Eastern Orthodox academic contribution to *A Common Word*, on the occasion of the 6th UN Interfaith Harmony Week" will serve as a milestone to encourage a renewed level of interaction and dialogue based on the landmark document *A Common Word*.

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SECOND PRIZE

2016 WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK CELEBRATION PHILIPPINES

Submitted by

UniHarmony Partners Manila The Philippines

UniHarmony Partners Manila was established in 2011 and brings together under one umbrella a network of faith based organizations which aims, through a series of activities, to spread the message of interfaith harmony, dialogue and cooperation as key elements towards nation building.

Organizations:

1. EPISCOPAL COMMISSION ON INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES (CBCP)
2. MINISTRY OF ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH AFFAIRS, ARCH-DIOCESE OF MANILA
3. UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS-INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
4. RELIGIONS FOR PEACE PHILIPPINES
5. UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES-INSTITUTE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES
6. SILSILAH DIALOGUE MOVEMENT
7. PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE (PCOO)
8. SM GROUP OF COMPANIES
9. IMAM COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES



10. PHILIPPINE COUNCIL OF EVANGELICAL CHURCHES
11. MIRIAM COLLEGE-CENTER FOR PEACE EDUCATION
12. PEACEMAKERS' CIRCLE
13. FOCOLARE MOVEMENT
14. UNITED RELIGIONS INITIATIVE PHILIPPINES (URI)
15. PACIFIC DIALOGUE FOUNDATION
16. INTERFAITH COUNCIL OF LEADERS-QUIAPO
17. PNP CHAPLAIN SERVICES
18. FO GUANG SHAN MABUHAY TEMPLE
19. AKSIYON PARA SA KAPAYAPAAAN AT KATARUNGAN-
20. CENTER FOR ACTIVE NONVIOLENCE FOR PHIL., INC.
AKKAPKA-CANV
21. TEODORA: IN DEFENSE OF THE AUTHENTIC WOMAN
22. THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS-PHILIPPINES PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
23. 2016 WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK

DAY I

1. Breakfast Dialogue Meeting with Cardinal Tagle, Archdiocese of Manila

The breakfast dialogue gathering of religious leaders, key government officials and the Diplomatic Corps hosted by his Eminence, Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, the Archbishop of Metro Manila, commenced the weeklong interfaith harmony celebration. At this meeting, Cardinal Tagle delivered his keynote address on the significance of the World Interfaith Harmony Week celebration.

2. Media Forum

The “Tapatan sa Aristocrat” is a regular media forum organized and hosted by Mr. Melo Acuna, a veteran journalist. Sitting on the panel to discuss and address questions from the media audience were Venerable Miao Xing from the Fo Guang Shan Mabuhay Temple, Professor Val Brillo and Professor Philip Fuentes from the University of Sto. Tomas Institute of Religion.

3. World Hijab Day (Symposium)

The World Hijab Day was held at the University of the Philippines Diliman. sponsored by UP’s Institute of Islamic Studies.

DAY 2

1. Interfaith Meal for Peace: Halal, Kosher and Vegetarian

2. Interfaith Peacebuilding Workshop for Muslim and Christian Youth

The two-day Interfaith Peace Building Workshop at Miriam College focused on breaking down barriers of historical prejudice between Muslim and Christian youth.

Months prior to the 2016 workshop, students from Manila and Mindanao became acquainted through letters. At the workshop, they finally met each other in person. Muslim and Christian students were grouped into teams and did team building activities. They learned to work together for a shared goal.

3. IFLC Festival of Language and Cultures

In conjunction with the 2016 World Interfaith Harmony Week, the 14th International Festival of Language and Culture kicked off with a spectacular show held in Manila. The event was held at the Newport Performing Arts Theater with an enthusiastic audience of 2,000 attendees.

DAY 3

1. A Round Table Discussion on Climate Change



DAY 4

1. Peacemakers' Circle

Participants from different faith based organizations gathered in a Circle of Peace to share their personal thoughts and views on preserving peace, and how the love of God and love of neighbor can be applied in their lives to benefit their families and communities.

2. The Gift of Womanhood

Creating Peace & Hope Through the Three Acts of Goodness:
A Digital Poster-making Contest

DAY 5

1. Love, Mercy and Compassion for the Law Enforcers Symposium

2. A Symposium on Mary in the Bible, Mariam in Quran as a Woman of Love, Mercy and Compassion

DAY 6

1. An Interfaith Solidarity Walk

2. 2016 Youth Peace Camp

DAY 7

1. Love, Mercy & Compassion as Wellsprings of Peace and Hope: A Festival of Harmony

THIRD PRIZE

Interfaith Harmony Halifax WIHW

Submitted by Interfaith Harmony Halifax, Canada

2016 was the third year for Halifax to celebrate World Interfaith Harmony Week. We are happy to see the growth in this initiative, as each year relationships, sponsorships, events, and other elements expand and deepen.

Who is Interfaith Harmony Halifax?

A Halifax team whose purpose is to promote the vision of WIHW. We represent diverse community partners, cultures, ages, skills and abilities, along with diverse faiths and good will. The team meets monthly throughout the year to plan, de-brief, report, envision, deepen and expand. This year, along with planning for WIHW 2016, we clarified our name and purpose, developed a new website, and worked to strengthen our team and community network.

Elements of 2016:

1. Interfaith Engagement Certificate Program

An intensive week-long experiential engagement with the people, places, and practices of world religions. This year 35 people participated from government, health, education, immigration services, and religion. Along with diverse cultures and ages, the participants represent a diverse range of religious, spiritual, and secular beliefs. To receive a certificate, they are



required to participate in a session before and after WIHW; visit at least three out of 12 'sacred spaces', plus one interfaith celebration; keep a reflective journal during the week and share learning with others

2. Meeting Our Neighbours: Visits to Sacred Spaces

Opportunities to visit sacred spaces in Halifax to observe, meet, and engage with diverse faith communities. The following 11 communities participated: Aboriginal, Baha'i, Brahma Kumaris, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Sikh and Unitarian Universalist. During the visits, guests were warmly welcomed, received an introduction to WIHW, participated in a spiritual practice traditional to that community, and then shared in a time of socializing and refreshments

3. Celebration of Interfaith Harmony

Bringing together approximately 200 people from diverse faiths and good will, we celebrated 'peace and friendship' through song, music, prayers, images, chants, spoken word, proclamations and declarations, as well as socializing, refreshments and displays. A highlight was to have the Mount President, Mayor of Halifax, Deputy Premier of Nova Scotia present, along with other dignitaries. Another highlight was to have representatives from all eleven communities who hosted 'Visits to Sacred Spaces' participate as we all read the 'declaration of interfaith peace and friendship'. The 'Wall of Declarations', displayed for the first time, was of special interest to all gathered.

4-5. Proclamation of the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week NEW

The Mayor of Halifax and City Council were invited to proclaim the first week of February as the annual World Interfaith



Harmony Week in Halifax. They immediately agreed and offered further support by participating in the Celebration of Interfaith Harmony. In addition, we were delighted the Premier of the Province of Nova Scotia also Proclaimed February 1st to February 7th United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week.

- Participants of the Interfaith Engagement Program
- Representatives from 11 Faith Groups
- City of Halifax Proclamation, Members of City Council & NS Legislature with Mount President, Nova Scotia Proclamation

6. Declaration of Interfaith Peace and Friendship NEW

Inspired by WIHW, the 2015 Parliament of Religions, and our own deep desire for peace and harmony in the world, we developed a 'Declaration of Interfaith Peace and Friendship', which we invited organizations to endorse with their logo and signature. Over 30 declarations have been received to date from local, regional, national and international organizations representing education, media, government, business, diverse faiths, as well as community groups involved in compassion, peace, interfaith and contemplative work.



APPENDICES



APPENDIX I

The World Interfaith Harmony Week Resolution UNGA Resolution A/65/PV.34

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 53/243 of 13 September 1999 on the declaration and programme of action relating to a culture of peace, 57/6 of 4 November 2002 concerning the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, 58/128 of 19 December 2003 on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation, 60/4 of 20 October 2005 on a global agenda for dialogue among civilizations, 64/14 of 10 November 2009 on the Alliance of Civilizations, 64/81 of 7 December 2009 on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace and 64/164 of 18 December 2009 on the elimination of all forms of intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief,

Recognizing the imperative need for dialogue among different faiths and religions in enhancing mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation among people,

Recalling with appreciation various global, regional and subregional initiatives on mutual understanding and interfaith harmony including the Tripartite Forum on Interfaith Cooperation for Peace, and the initiative “A Common Word”,

Recognizing that the moral imperatives of all religions, convictions and beliefs call for peace, tolerance and mutual understanding,

1. Reaffirms that mutual understanding and interreligious dialogue constitute important dimensions of a culture of peace;
2. Proclaims the first week of February of every year the World Interfaith Harmony Week between all religions, faiths and beliefs;
3. Encourages all States to support, on a voluntary basis, the spread of the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world’s churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other places of worship during that week, based on love of God and love of one’s neighbour or on love of the good and

love of one's neighbour, each according to their own religious traditions or convictions;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the General Assembly informed of the implementation of the present resolution.

APPENDIX II

His Majesty King Abdullah's address at the Plenary Session of the 65th General Assembly of the UN in NY on Thursday September 26, 2010, in which he proposed the World Interfaith Harmony Week



Bism Illah Al-Rahman Al-Raheem

President Deiss,
Mr Secretary General,
Your Excellencies,

More than ever before, our world is confronting multiple global crises, which cannot be effectively addressed, without a coordinated, multilateral action. No country can face these crises and provide for its future in isolation. The threats are global, and so are the solutions. A strong, central role for the United Nations is essential.

It is also essential to resist forces of division that spread misunderstanding and mistrust, especially among peoples of different religions. The fact is, humanity everywhere is bound together, not only by mutual interests, but by shared commandments, to love God and neighbour; to love the good and neighbour. This week, my delegation, with the support of our friends on every continent, will introduce a draft resolution for an annual World Interfaith Harmony Week. What we are proposing is a special week, during which the world's people, in their own places of worship, could express the teachings of their own faith about tolerance, respect for the other and peace. I hope this resolution will have your support.

My friends,

Another critical area for UN leadership is peace, and one peace hangs in the balance today. With direct negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis, a door opens to a final, two-state settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the establishment of an independent, viable and sovereign

Palestinian state, living side by side with Israel, will pave the way for a comprehensive regional peace.

An end to this conflict is long overdue. No regional crisis has had a longer or broader impact on global security and stability. No such crisis has been longer on the UN agenda or has frustrated peacemakers more. Every resource spent in this conflict is a resource lost for investing in progress and prosperity. Every day spent is a day lost to forces of violence and extremism that threaten all of us in the region and beyond.

People are wary of disappointment, and spoilers are doing everything they can to make us fail. We cannot underestimate the importance of success, or the painful cost of failure. All of us need to support swift action, hard choices and real results. The alternative is more suffering deeper frustrations with spreading, more vicious warfare. Such a catastrophic scenario will continue to drag in the whole world, threatening security and stability far beyond the borders of the Middle East.

To prevent that, the talks must be approached with commitment, sincerity and courage. There should be no provocative or unilateral actions that can derail the negotiations. Instead, the parties must work hard to produce results, and quickly. That means addressing all final-status issues, with a view to ending the occupation and reaching the two-state solution, the only solution that can work, as soon as possible. The status quo is simply unacceptable, Enough injustice, enough bloodshed.

Jordan and the rest of the Arab and Muslim worlds are committed. In the Arab Peace Initiative, we reach out to Israel with an unprecedented opportunity for a comprehensive settlement, A settlement that will enable Israel to have normal relations with 57 Arab and Muslim states, one-third of the United Nations.

Now, we reach out to you, our fellow members of this United Nations. All stand to lose if the talks fail; all gain when peace is achieved. Our global and collective influence is key. Together, we must tip the balance towards peace.

Thank you.

APPENDIX III

**H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad,
Personal Envoy of and Special Advisor to
H.M. King Abdullah II, delivers H.M. King
Abdullah II's World Interfaith Harmony
Week proposal at UN on October 20, 2010**



Bism Illah Al-Rahman Al-Raheem

Mr. President, I have the honour to introduce, on behalf of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the 29 other co-sponsors Albania, Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Bangladesh; Costa Rica; the Dominican Republic; Egypt; El Salvador; Georgia; Guatemala; Guyana; Honduras; Kazakhstan; Kuwait; Liberia; Libya;

Mauritius; Morocco; Oman; Paraguay; Qatar; the Russian Federation; Saudi Arabia; Tanzania; Tunisia; Turkey; the United Arab Emirates; Uruguay and Yemen, the draft resolution A/65/L5 entitled the 'World Interfaith Harmony Week'.

Allow me to explain in brief the reasoning behind this resolution which was launched by H.M. King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein before the United Nations General Assembly on September 23rd 2010.

As this august assembly is well aware, our world is rife with religious tension and, sadly, mistrust, dislike and hatred. These religious tensions can easily erupt into communal violence. They also facilitate the demonizing of the other which in turn predisposes public opinion to support war against peoples of other religions. Thus, for example, according to the results of the 2008 Gallup Poll one of the largest international religious surveys in history 53% of Westerners have 'unfavorable' or 'very unfavorable' opinions of Muslims and 30% of Muslims polled worldwide hold negative views of Christians.

The misuse or abuse of religions can thus be a cause of world strife, whereas religions should be a great foundation

for facilitating world peace. The remedy for this problem can only come from the world's religions themselves. Religions must be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Much good work has already been done towards this starting really with the Second Vatican Council from 1962–1965 by hundreds of intra-faith and interfaith groups all over the world and of all religions. Yet the forces inciting inter-religious tensions (notable among them being religious fundamentalisms of various kinds) are better organized, more experienced, better coordinated, more motivated and more ruthless. They have more stratagems, more institutes, more money, more power and garner more publicity such that they by far outweigh all the positive work done by the various interfaith initiatives. The sad proof of this is that religious tensions are on the rise, not on the decline.

Mr. President, Turning now to the text itself, allow me to explain some of its most essential terminology and concepts: 1) In the very title of the resolution and in the second operative paragraph and elsewhere, the word 'harmony' is used in the Chinese sense of the term. We add it to the term 'tolerance' (which we have also used) because 'tolerance' can suggest that the other is so negative they have to be 'tolerated'; we cannot use 'acceptance' because it implies that religions accept each other's doctrines rather than their right to those doctrines and this is not the case; we cannot use the term 'peace' alone because it suggests merely the absence of war, and not necessarily the absence of hatred. Only the Confucian concept of 'harmony' can rescue us here because it suggests not merely 'peace', but also 'beautiful and dynamic interaction between different elements within a whole'.

2) In the third operative paragraph, there is mention of 'Love of God and Love of the Neighbor, or Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbor'. Why is this religious reference necessary in a UN resolution? In answer to this question, it will be noted first that this draft resolution is unique because it is specifically about peace between religions and not about anything else, therefore some religious references in this particular case is only natural. To rigidly maintain the contrary would be to disregard the feelings of 85% of the world's population which belongs to one or another faith.

Second and more importantly perhaps we include these references because whilst we all agree that it is clearly not the

business of the UN to engage in theology, it is nevertheless the primary goal of the UN to make and safeguard peace, and without the specific mention of God and of the Two Commandments of Love [see: Matthew 22:34–40 and Mark 12:28–31] many if not most devout Muslims, Christians and Jews will consider a secular call for an interfaith harmony week a feckless platitude that they cannot fully or sincerely support. For in the Holy Bible Jesus Christ ﷺ (echoing the words of Deuteronomy) said: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God [Luke 4:4 and Matthew 4:4, see also: Deuteronomy 8:2–3] and also that: Hallowed be Thy Name [Matthew, 6:9], and similar meanings are to be found in the Holy Qur'an wherein it is stated that no act is rewarded Save for seeking the Countenance of [the] Lord, the Most High [Al-Layl, 92:19–20] and that: Verily the Remembrance of God is of all things the greatest [from: Al-Ankabut, 29:45]. In other words, for many Muslims, Christians and Jews who together make up perhaps 55% of the world's population and (I regret to say) are involved in most of the world's conflicts it is necessary to mention the Substance of their faiths. Otherwise, hoping to foster peace between religions by foisting upon them an external and purely secular and bureaucratic language is simply a house divided against itself which shall not stand [Matthew, 12:25]. Third, it will be noted that this language excludes no one, of any religion or of no faith at all: every person of good will, with or without faith can and should commit to Love of the Neighbour and Love of God or Love of the Neighbour and Love of the Good. Loving the neighbour and the good is after all the essence of good will. And referring to 'the Good' obviously does not necessarily imply belief in God or in a particular religion, even though for many believers 'the Good' is God precisely: Jesus Christ ﷺ said: 'No one is Good but God Alone' [Mark, 10:18; Luke 18:19, and Matthew 19:17], and 'the Good' ('Al-Barr') is one of God's Names in the Holy Qur'an [Al-Tur, 52:28]. Thus speaking of 'the Good' is a theologically-correct but inclusive formula in so far as it goes that unites all humanity and leaves out no one. Fourth, there is another reason why it is specifically necessary to mention love of the neighbour: it sets an invaluable practical standard based upon which people can ask themselves and each other if their actions stem from caritas (love) towards the neighbour or not. Indeed, as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "None

of you has faith [in God] until you love for your neighbour what you love for yourself.” [Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Iman, Vol. p.67, Hadith no.45].

3) Also in the third operative paragraph, the phrase ‘on a voluntary basis’ is used because the entire proposal must be purely voluntary. No place of worship should be forced to observe the World Interfaith Harmony Week; for whilst we hope to encourage interfaith harmony, the last thing we want is for anyone at all to feel that anything is being imposed on his or her faith, beliefs or convictions. Nevertheless, one can conceive of positive incentives to encourage and help support and monitor the implementation of this resolution.

4) Finally, also in the third operative paragraph, the phrase ‘each according to their own religious traditions or convictions’ is vital because the different religions do not necessarily interpret ‘Love of God and the Neighbour’ in exactly the same way, and do not all want it said that they do. This phrase thus avoids the dangers of syncretism or reductionism and allows for religious differences within the same goal of working towards inter-religious peace and harmony.

In summary, then, I very humbly ask the member states of the United Nations General Assembly to adopt the proposed draft resolution for the World Interfaith Harmony Week, noting that it excludes no individual, compromises no one, commits no one, forces no one, harms no one, costs nothing, and on the contrary includes everyone, celebrates everyone, benefits everyone, unites everyone and has the potential to bring much needed Peace and Harmony to the entire world in sha Allah.

Thank-you Mr. President.