

**Declaration on
“The Dialogue Among the Three Monotheistic Religions:
Towards a Culture of Peace”**

Rabat, Morocco, 16 February 1998

We, representatives of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, meeting in Rabat under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco and on the initiative of the Director-General of UNESCO and the Minister of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Culture, to consider how we may act in concert to reinforce and consolidate the dialogue between the three monotheistic religions;

Recalling -the decision of the General Conference of UNESCO in October 1995 on the necessity to promote a culture of peace, defined as a culture of conviviality and sharing, based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, tolerance and solidarity ; a culture that rejects violence, stressing the importance of stifling conflicts before they begin and resolving problems through dialogue and negotiation ; a culture ensuring that each and every citizen benefits from his/her rights and has the means to participate fully in the endogenous development of society;

Recalling moreover the *Declaration on the Role of Religion in the Promotion of a Culture of Peace* (Barcelona, December 1994), the *Proposals of the Meeting of Experts on the a “Roads of Faith” Project* (Rabat, June 1995) and the *Malta Declaration* referring to the same project (June 1997);

Acknowledging with satisfaction the various activities - such as the “Symposium on the impact of religion on the eve of the new millennium” held in Cordoba in February 1998 - in recently organized or foreseen in the near future on the question of inter-religious dialogue;

Strongly reaffirm the ethical values common to our three monotheistic religions - justice, comprehension, compassion, humility and forgiveness, solidarity and sharing, dialogue and non-violence - which must draw together rather than divide and contribute to the moral solidarity of humanity rather than clash between civilizations;

Express our firm conviction that all forms of intolerance, intimidation, coercion, discrimination and violence are contrary to the fundamental message of love and peace of our religions, **and urge** the media to refrain from describing religions or qualifying them in ways that contradict their teaching;

Are convinced that cultural diversity is one of the riches of humanity

which, together with religious freedom, form the basis for a lasting peace;

Solemnly call for a wider dialogue between all convictions and beliefs in order to reiterate their profound values, bring an end to intolerance and violence and establish a universal ethic based on justice, moral and intellectual solidarity of humankind, thus bequeathing to future generations a world motivated by a dynamic of peace;

Consider that the welcome initiative taken by His Majesty King Hassan II and the Director-General of UNESCO to organize this seminar in Rabat should be followed by the establishment in Morocco of a permanent structure of reflection and action between the representatives of the three monotheistic religions, with a view to identifying activities aimed at various target groups and encouraging mutual comprehension and an evolution towards a culture of peace;

Expressly invite UNESCO to set up appropriate mechanisms to support and sustain the initiatives of dialogue between the three Abrahamic religions on the culture of peace, together with other activities aiming to extend this dialogue to other religions;

Consider it highly desirable that the efforts undertaken by UNESCO should result in a lasting dialogue between the religions and be translated into concrete activities aimed at establishing a culture of peace, in particular for:

- a) the education of young people through the development of teaching materials aimed at modifying daily behavioural patterns;
- b) rereading of our common history so as to reconcile the contradicting interpretation we have of it;
- c) assessing the current status of the teaching of religions in Members States as well as that of teaching the history of theological systems;
- d) providing the media with appropriate information to eliminate discriminatory stereotypes;

Recommend that a large part of the above-mentioned activities be launched within the framework of a UNESCO Chair established in Morocco for that purpose, which would also have as a mandate to assist Member States in setting up national committees for inter-religious dialogue.

16 February 1998