



**TBILISI APPEAL  
FOR PEACE AND TOLERANCE, FOR A DIALOGUE  
OF CULTURES**

Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia,  
14 July 1995

We, participants of the International Forum « For Solidarity Against Intolerance, for a Dialogue of Cultures », gathered in Tbilisi at the initiative of representatives of the cultural life of Georgia and at the invitation of the Head of State of the Republic of Georgia, Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, and the Director- General of UNESCO, Mr Federico Mayor, address all those who are concerned by the scourge of intolerance and violence in the world.

*For Solidarity Against Intolerance*

We share the suffering of all those who are victims of intolerance and we express our sympathy and solidarity with them.

We are greatly concerned by the fact that manifestations of intolerance are affecting millions of people and are spreading across new regions throughout the world, breeding aggressive fanaticism, inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts, and civil war.

Cemeteries and places of religious worship are desecrated and destroyed, houses of immigrant and foreign workers are burnt while women and children sleep; people with a different religion, language, culture or colour of skin are slaughtered.

Millions of people are forced to leave their homes and become displaced persons or refugees simply because they have a different religion or culture. Populations of vast areas and entire countries are marginalized and excluded from civil life.

Even in prosperous countries, the germs of intolerance penetrate into society and create an environment conducive to violence.

Politicians, state officials, national governments and international organizations frequently fail to resist the rising tide of violence which has taken the form of a global epidemic

Many of the organs of the press, cinema, television and other mass media all too often encourage violence which threatens to become an inalienable part of daily life, imprinted into the minds of the young.

**We cannot remain indifferent to this danger Indifference and complacency equal complicity.**

All of us together, and each of us individually, are responsible for the psychological climate around us. Our moral duty is to resist the spreading of intolerance and violence which leads to conflicts and wars and negates the dialogue of cultures -- the heritage of the whole of humanity.

This information is provided by

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It is true that cultural differences have indeed been the cause of numerous conflicts. But history also teaches us that these conflicts were often followed by even longer periods of collaboration between former enemies.

We believe that mutual tolerance leads to peace. The examples which prove this peaceful settlement in South Africa and the dialogue now started in the Near East -- should encourage our efforts.

*For Peace and Tolerance. for a Dialogue of Cultures*

It is true that people are different -- in colour, language, religion, life-style, customs and values. But they are, at the same time, united by common problems, challenges, threats, dependence on nature, and by a common aspiration for survival and for a better life.

Violence and aggressive behaviour are not genetically programmed into human nature. Violence and aggressiveness are neither a part of Our evolutionary legacy nor of our genes. Cores of intolerance are to be found in poverty and ignorance, arrogance and fear. Prejudices, born of ignorance, are the seeds of hostility and hatred.

In the global world of today, tolerance becomes not Only a virtue but a condition for the survival of mankind. Tolerance is the understanding of and respect for the cultures, beliefs and styles of life of others. Tolerance is the acceptance of differences which exist within our societies and between our cultures. Tolerance is an attitude which considers the diversity of the world as a part of our common heritage.

The Dialogue of Cultures is destined to strengthen the ideals and practices of tolerance in order to understand and respect others, and as a way to mutual spiritual enrichment.

*Appeal*

**Taking into consideration the above, we appeal to all people of goodwill** to multiply and unite their efforts against the manifestations of intolerance and violence and toward a peaceful settlement of dissensions and conflicts through dialogue and discourse. Dialogue is not only a means of communication but is an expression of equality between partners, of the art of living together, by developing respect for common moral values.

**Being aware of our responsibility towards future generations,** we appeal for their protection from new wars, as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. We must exclude war and violence from human community life and replace a culture of war by a culture of peace.

**We appeal to Heads of State and Government, to official representatives of all levels, to parliamentarians of all countries** to settle peacefully, by negotiations and not military force, all disputes. We must call upon them to remember that all wars were in the end lost by one of the sides. The responsibility of those who govern is that peace be secured and lives of citizens be preserved.

**We appeal to ensure** full implementation of international and national norms against intolerance, as well as against all forms of discrimination, xenophobia and racism, to respect fundamental freedoms and human rights, in particular the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

**We appeal to representatives of public and religious life of all countries** to use their authority and influence to strengthen the spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding between peoples with different views and beliefs so as to avoid hostility, to seek reconciliation and to defend the rights, dignity and life of each individual.

**We appeal to representatives of cultural and public life of all countries** to apply all their intellectual and moral authority to organize a world movement of resistance to intolerance. The solidarity of all intellectuals and of all people of goodwill can overcome a new global threat of aggressive intolerance by promoting and developing a Dialogue, of Cultures, promoting a culture of peace, of tolerance and a culture of democracy.

**We appeal to teachers and parents of all countries, to those who are responsible for education and training of children and youth** to inculcate in children and youth the spirit of openness and respect for other peoples, to foster the ideals of tolerance and the rejection of violence, as well as the ideals of altruism, compassion and solidarity for all those who suffer from poverty, disease and illiteracy.

**We appeal to journalists, to all those who work in mass media** to affirm their personal responsibility while covering the cultural and socio-political life of other peoples, to avoid manifestations of irreverence and intolerance towards representatives of various ethnic groups and religions, and to refuse to cultivate violence, hatred and cruelty.

**We appeal to the young people of all countries** to strengthen mutual understanding and friendship with people of their age, to study the languages and cultures of other peoples, to value and respect -the diversity of cultures as the common heritage of humanity and to express solidarity against and violence.

It is necessary to develop a new culture of tolerance through the perception of a newly interrelated world in which the security of everyone is based on mutual understanding confidence and co-operation.

Towards this end, the Tbilisi International Forum adopted the **Programme of Action « For Solidarity Against Intolerance, for a Dialogue of Cultures »**, which is our contribution to a guarantee of the future of all peoples, and to the building of a more secure, a 'More Just and a more human world.

Adopted on 14 July 1995  
by participants of the Tbilisi International Forum  
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