

**Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief**

***Unofficial translation***

Declaration of 25 November 1981

      The General Assembly,

      Considering that one of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations is that of the dignity and equality inherent in all human beings, and that all Member States have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the   Organization to promote and encourage universal respect for and  observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without   distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

      Considering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and   the International Covenants on Human Rights proclaim the principles  of non-discrimination and equality before the law and the right to  freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief,

      Considering that the disregard and infringement of human rights   and fundamental freedoms, in particular of the right to freedom of  thought, conscience, religion or whatever belief, have brought,  directly or indirectly, wars and great suffering to mankind,  especially where they serve as a means of foreign interference in  the internal affairs of other States and amount to kindling hatred  between peoples and nations,

      Considering that religion or belief, for anyone who professes  either, is one of the fundamental elements in his conception of life   and that freedom of religion or belief should be fully respected and   guaranteed,

      Considering that it is essential to promote understanding,  tolerance and respect in matters relating to freedom of religion and   belief and to ensure that the use of religion or belief for ends  inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations, other relevant  instruments of the United Nations and the purposes and principles of   the present Declaration is inadmissible,

      Convinced that freedom of religion and belief should also  contribute to the attainment of the goals of world peace, social  justice and friendship among peoples and to the elimination of  ideologies or practices of colonialism and racial discrimination,

      Noting with satisfaction the adoption of several, and the  coming into force of some, conventions, under the aegis of the  United Nations and of the specialized agencies, for the elimination  of various forms of discrimination,

      Concerned by manifestations of intolerance and by the existence   of discrimination in matters of religion or belief still in evidence   in some areas of the world,

      Resolved to adopt all necessary measures for the speedy  elimination of such intolerance in all its forms and manifestations  and to prevent and combat discrimination on the ground of religion  or belief,

      Proclaims this Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of  Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief:

 **Article 1**

      1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought,  conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have a  religion or whatever belief of his choice, and freedom, either  individually or in community with others and in public or private,  to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice  and teaching.

      2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have a religion or belief of his choice.

      3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be  subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are  necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the  fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

 **Article 2**

      1. No one shall be subject to discrimination by any State,  institution, group of persons, or person on grounds of religion or  other beliefs.

      2. For the purposes of the present Declaration, the expression "intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief" means any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment or  exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.

 **Article 3**

      Discrimination between human beings on grounds of religion or  belief constitutes an affront to human dignity and a disavowal of  the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be  condemned as a violation of the human rights and fundamental  freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and   enunciated in detail in the International Covenants on Human Rights,  and as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations between  nations.

 **Article 4**

      1. All States shall take effective measures to prevent and  eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the   recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental  freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and  cultural life.

      2. All States shall make all efforts to enact or rescind  legislation where necessary to prohibit any such discrimination, and   to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance on the  grounds of religion or other beliefs in this matter.

 **Article 5**

      1. The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the  moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.

      2. Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to  education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the   wishes of his parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, and  shall not be compelled to receive teaching on religion or belief  against the wishes of his parents or legal guardians, the best  interests of the child being the guiding principle.

      3. The child shall be protected from any form of  discrimination on the ground of religion or belief. He shall be  brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among   peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, respect for freedom of  religion or belief of others, and in full consciousness that his  energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow  men.

      4. In the case of a child who is not under the care either of his parents or of legal guardians, due account shall be taken of  their expressed wishes or of any other proof of their wishes in the  matter of religion or belief, the best interests of the child being  the guiding principle.

      5. Practices of a religion or beliefs in which a child is  brought up must not be injurious to his physical or mental health or   to his full development, taking into account article 1, paragraph 3,   of the present Declaration.

 **Article 6**

      In accordance with article 1 of the present Declaration, and  subject to the provisions of article 1, paragraph 3, the right to  freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief shall include,  inter alia, the following freedoms:

      (a) To worship or assemble in connexion with a religion or  belief, and to establish and maintain places for these purposes;

      (b) To establish and maintain appropriate charitable or  humanitarian institutions;

      (c) To make, acquire and use to an adequate extent the  necessary articles and materials related to the rites or customs of a religion or belief;

      (d) To write, issue and disseminate relevant publications in these areas;

      (e) To teach a religion or belief in places suitable for these purposes;

      (f) To solicit and receive voluntary financial and other contributions from individuals and institutions;

      (g) To train, appoint, elect or designate by succession appropriate leaders called for by the requirements and standards of any religion or belief;

      (h) To observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays and ceremonies in accordance with the precepts of one's religion or belief;

      (i) To establish and maintain communications with individuals and communities in matters of religion and belief at the national and international levels.

 **Article 7**

      The rights and freedoms set forth in the present Declaration shall be accorded in national legislation in such a manner that everyone shall be able to avail himself of such rights and freedoms in practice.

 **Article 8**

      Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as restricting or derogating from any right defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

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