



PEACE BE WITH YOU: DISCERNING RESPECT AND DIVERSITY

THE JAKARTA CALL

Preamble

We, the 51 participants of the 3rd International Interfaith Conference, gathered at the invitation of UEM and PGI¹ in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 21-23 November 2023.

We are representatives/members of Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, and NGOs from nine countries around the world.

We share a deep concern about the threat to human life and nature by violent conflicts and climate crisis in today's world.

We are called to unite our wills to take responsibility and action for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

We do this on the basis of our faith in humanity, Holy Scriptures, and according to the mission given by our calling as people of faith.

Our Lamenting World Is Longing for Peace and Inclusion

Our lamenting world is longing for peace between people, peace with the planet, and respect for the rights of all.

Our meeting took place at a time of violent conflict, accelerating climate change, and the growing threat of religious and political extremism. The ongoing violence between Israel and Hamas and the suffering and death of many civilians grieves our hearts, as does the increase in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. At a time when there are more than 100 other violent conflicts taking place around the globe, the shared vision of a world rooted in peace, where human rights are upheld and communities are protected, propels us forward with a sense of purpose and determination for change.

Next month's UN climate negotiations, whose president is the chief executive of a major fossil fuel corporation, is unlikely to produce progress at the necessary speed and scale. At the same time, the impacts of climate change inflict suffering and loss on ever-larger numbers of people.

And on every continent, threats to our freedom and rights stem from the leaders of governments and influential corporations who continue to rule with greed for resources and power. Aggravating this is the rise of religious extremists and right-wing nationalists that pose a threat to the rights of women, ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities, LGBTQIA people, Indigenous communities, and the planet. It is not an exaggeration to say that the future of the human family and the planet presently hang in the balance.

¹ UEM (United Evangelical Mission) - PGI (*Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* or Communion of Churches in Indonesia)



Our Contributions for Peace and Inclusion

On the basis of our intensive, international, and interreligious dialog, and with regard to the challenging question of how religions can *actually* contribute to peace in the world, we would like to state the following points: Religions can only truly contribute to peace if they respect and value the diversity of humanity on a theoretical and practical level. We agree that diversity must be understood as given by God (or *dhamma*, in Buddhism) in order to meet each other on an equal level in a global context, to show solidarity and to fight against suffering and peace-threatening situations together in different contexts, and to form inclusive communities.

However, the recognition and appreciation of diversity does not only refer to people. Appreciating God-given (or *dhamma*-given, in Buddhism) diversity also includes plants, animals, and all of nature and requires all of us to make a serious commitment to their preservation. Religious actors must become practical, which means that we must take action in our communities, stand up to various political interests and claims to power, and consider ethical issues where politics does not. Religious actors, all of us, must therefore engage rigorously with politics in the global context when it comes to issues of peace and the preservation of our environment for generations to come. This is our responsibility as believers, beyond the question of which religion we belong to.

A Call for Peace and Inclusive Communities

Trusting into the reconciling, transforming and encouraging power of God (and *dhamma*, in Buddhism), we call our respective faith communities, countries, and contexts to re-orient priorities to the following commitments:

- to pray and work for world peace, especially for ceasefires and reconciliation in conflict areas such as Ukraine and Russia, Israel and Palestine, the DR Congo as well as West Papua; and to urge the international community to implement cessation of violence and open corridors for the entry of humanitarian aid in the affected areas;
- to explore scriptural texts and teachings that promote justice and peace and open space for dialog to discuss problematic interpretations of religious texts that undermine religious freedom, the rights of many, and the protection of the earth;
- to insist on the continuing importance of the principles of human rights and human dignity, to demand that all governments fulfil their legal and moral responsibility to ensure the unbiased and consistent application of these principles in all contexts, and to refuse to be misled by malevolent politicians and demagogues²;
- to insist that global governments and political actors abolish discriminatory laws and regulations and remind them of their duty to work for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation;
- to open spaces for dialog between polarized people and transform our societies towards inclusive communities, embracing diversity, gender justice, and care for the integrity of creation;

² Peter Prove, <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/at-peace-conference-in-jakarta-wcc-shares-positive-examples-of-interfaith-action-for-peace>



- to provide responsible education and encourage interfaith communities to accelerate learning programs of interfaith and intra-faith dialog specifically at the grassroots level;
- to be with young people to strive for peace and the integrity of creation through inclusive education, local wisdom, digital technology and to encourage them to participate in the struggles of the people;
- to build an environmentally just society through greening the operation of our religious facilities and our own lives, advocacy with political leaders to rapidly phase out fossil fuels and ensure universal access to clean energy, and participation in civil society movements for climate justice.

We commit ourselves not only to speak about peace, justice, and preservation of creation, but to take concrete steps towards more peace, more justice, and more climate justice.

Supporting Scriptures

“Whoever destroys a soul, it is considered as if he destroyed an entire world. And whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world” - Sanhedrin 37a - Judaism

“For this reason; We decreed for the Descendants of Israel that whoever kills a human being [...], so it shall be as if he had killed all mankind; and whoever saves the life of one person, is as if he had saved the life of all mankind; [...]” - Sura 5:32 (al-Maida) - Islam

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God” - Matthew 5:9 - Christianity

“7 He raised the sky high, and has placed the scale, 8 so that you do not defraud the scales, 9 and weigh with justice, and skimp not in the Balance” - Sura 55:7-9 (ar-Rahman) - Islam

“Leave the path of hatred. Choose the path of love” - Dhammapada 5 - Buddhism