



The Tripoli Declaration

ACRL-Religions for Peace 2nd General Assembly

**Confronting Violence and Advancing Shared Security:
*Religions in Africa Working Together***

December 2008

Preamble

We, the African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions for Peace*, representing all major religious traditions and faith communities from 26 African countries, as well as networks of youth and women of faith; convened in Tripoli, Libya from 2nd to 5th December 2008 as the 2nd General Assembly under the theme, “Confronting Violence and Advancing Shared Security: Religions in Africa Working Together”;

Praise the Almighty God for His sustaining Grace and our ability to forge a strong partnership among our faith traditions and religious communities to work for the well being of all people on this Continent;

Express heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Brother Mu'ammarr Al-Qaddafi, the Leader of the Great Jamahiriya

Thank Dr. Mohamed Ahmed Shariff, the Secretary General of the World Islamic Call Society for the generous hospitality and excellent facilities placed at our disposal which made this 2nd General Assembly a success;

Are grateful to the former Presidents H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, H.E. Tejan Kabbah of the Republic of Sierra Leone, and H.E. Joaquim A. Chissano of the Republic of Mozambique for gracing the Assembly and for sharing their rich experiences as leaders and their significant contributions to the positive transformation of conflicts in Africa.

Reaffirm our partnership and our place within the worldwide *Religions for Peace* coalition of Inter-religious Councils and women and youth networks as its affiliated regional Council in Africa; and,

The objectives of the African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions for Peace* to:

Address the Pan-African challenges of building peace, transforming conflict, and advancing sustainable development through partnerships with the African Union and other regional institutions; facilitate cooperation and coordination among African national Inter-religious Councils affiliated with the African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions of Peace* to respond and take action within African states in times of emergencies or crises.

We acknowledge and recognize Africa's abundant natural resources and the capacity of its peoples to remain resilient and the efforts of our nations to promote and support positive transformation on the Continent. Africa contributes to global socio-economic and political discourse on governance, gender justice, peace and is the source of hope for humanity. We acknowledge with gratitude the positive efforts taken by African leaders to develop the African Union and further build pan-African instruments to serve Africa. We appeal for the unity of the peoples, countries and governments of Africa.

We, as Religious Leaders, recognize and acknowledge:

The prevalence of abject poverty and its feminization, poor governance and corruption as major causes of conflict, gender inequality and socio-economic stagnation;

The ever changing dynamics of the nature and structure of conflicts and their adverse impact on the people of Africa;

The need for new models of leadership to be imperative for enhancing sustainable development, human dignity and conflict transformation;

The inequitable distribution and misplacement of resources resulting in resource based conflicts and the stifling of human development;

The need to develop and apply African mechanisms, structures, and methods to address the challenges of conflict transformation, poverty alleviation and human dignity;

The need to engage with relevant global actors on issues of climate change and trade, formulation of policies for addressing food crises and mechanisms for environmental degradation;

The necessity to build, enhance capacities and develop skills for peace building, conflict transformation, as well as mitigation of ignorance and other prejudices;

The need to sustain the fragile peace in West Africa and deplore the resurgence of violence in other areas like the Great Lakes Region, Somalia and Darfur. We are concerned about the grave humanitarian crisis and the ongoing political impasse in Zimbabwe and appeal to the parties to find a peaceful resolution. We also appeal to the parties in conflict in Uganda to exercise concerted efforts to achieve peace based on mutual forgiveness and justice;

The Assembly urges the African Governments to establish consultative forums in their respective states which will regularly bring together policy makers and religious leaders for discussion on vital issues.

We, the African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions for Peace* commit to:

- a) Uplift human dignity through poverty eradication and promote socio-economic justice;
- b) Promote gender equity and equality and condemn the misuse of religion and traditions that disempower women;
- c) Speak out against mismanagement and misplacement of resources and ensure equitable wealth distribution and better living standards for all humankind including demonstrating our responsibility and accountability;
- d) Partner and collaborate with relevant economic and political players at national, continental and global (e.g. African Union and United Nations) levels and other inter-faith initiatives in Africa to overcome poverty and enhance sustainable livelihoods;
- e) Collaborate with the Forum of Former Heads of State and Governments in the promotion of peace and sustainable development;
- f) Provide leadership in the prevention of conflict and the promotion of sustainable peace;
- g) Enhance good governance and empower religious leaders to dialogue and engage various players to develop a single, coherent, and consistent voice to address societal concerns;
- h) Empower youth through appropriate skills acquisition and leadership development programs.

By this Declaration, we reaffirm our commitment to cooperation and multi-sectoral partnership. We call on

The Religious Communities to:

- a) Strengthen Inter-religious Councils and develop plans with concrete targets that are monitored and evaluated;
- b) Cooperate to combat poverty, communicable diseases, especially HIV/AIDS and violence against women and children, and especially the cases of wife inheritance, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Gender Based Violence (GBV);
- c) Build capacity for resource mobilization to improve the quality of life of the disenfranchised, impoverished, and powerless in our respective faith traditions and religious communities;
- d) Educate religious leaders to address heresies and misinterpretation of the Holy Scriptures to ensure peaceful co-existence and tolerance;
- e) Liaise with governments to include peace education in the national curriculum;
- f) Mainstream women in decision-making structures and include them in peace building and civic education;
- g) Use the media for promoting peace initiatives and sensitizing the public for positive change;
- h) Formulate and articulate a faith rationale for engagement on stewardship of creation.

The African Women of faith Network to:

- a) Strengthen national Women of Faith networks and launch new networks in the Countries where they do not exist;

The African Religious Youth Network to:

- a) Work towards formally launching networks in their respective countries;
- b) Network with youth organizations to harness the unique potential of the youth to work for peace and sustainable development;

- c) Acknowledge personal responsibility to support peace and increase their awareness of peace building efforts;
- d) Network with other Inter-religious Council youth groups to learn, share experiences and build capacities as stakeholders for conflict transformation;
- e) Advocate for recognition of youth as key stakeholders in building a culture of peace in society.

Our Faith calls us to work together and we hereby commit to drawing strength from God as we work for peace.

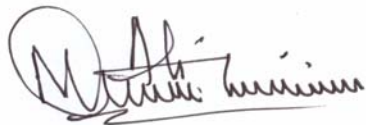
Signatures:



His Grace Archbishop Dr. John Onaiyekan
Catholic Archbishop of Abuja
Co-Chair of ACRL-*Religions for Peace*



His Eminence Sheikh Shaban Mubajje
Grand Mufti of Uganda
Co-Chair of ACRL-*Religions for Peace*



Dr. Mustafa Yussuf Ali
Secretary General of ACRL- *Religions for Peace*

Tripoli, Libya

5th December 2008