



"Wisdom is the lost property of the believer.  
It is his wherever he finds it"

Muhammad (SAW)



**IONA**  
REPENTANCE  
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH  
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Press Release: April 1, 2008

### **DECLARATION FOR LIFE FROM FAITH TRADITIONS OF JEWS, CHRISTIANS, AND MUSLIMS.**

Religious leaders from various faith communities met Monday, March 31, 2008 to issue a "Declaration for Life" that deplores global violence and exhorts to world peace.



Imam Steve Elturk of the Islamic Organization of North America, Father Lawrence Ventline of the Archdiocese of Detroit, Revs. David Kasbow, and Earnest Hatcher Co-chairmen of the American Clergy Leadership Conference, Victor Ghalib Begg of Bloomfield Hills, Chairman of the Council of Islamic Organizations of Michigan (CIOM), and David Ivers of the Interfaith Center for Racial Justice (ICRJ) stood together in solidarity during a press conference at the Islamic Organization of North America, 28630 Ryan Rd., Warren, Michigan, USA (586) 558-6900.

The text of the declaration is as follows.

#### **Declaration for Life from Faith Traditions of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian**

It is time that we as faith leaders come together and condemn the senseless loss of life all around the world, and at home.

It is time for all faiths to stand together: The Jewish people have deep roots in Iraq. Abraham, the Old Testament patriarch, was born in the ancient city of Ur, in what is now southern Iraq. Abraham fathered Isaac, who fathered Jacob, who was renamed Israel by God and promised a nation. Jesus is said to have descended from that line. Abraham's other son, Ishmael, was also promised a nation in the bible. He is considered the progenitor of the Arab peoples. From the branch of Ishmael, Islam's central figure, the Prophet Muhammad, descended.

The time has come for leaders to stand together in holding high regard for human life across the globe when so much conflict, carnage and human bloodshed mocks the mandate of the Hebrew Scriptures: "Thou shall not kill." The Christian Scriptures: "Love one another!" And the Islamic Scriptures: "killing an innocent person unjustly is like killing all of mankind"

Global war with countless human casualties depresses and demeans the dignity and worth of humans made in God's image and likeness. God helps moral leaders rise together to stop the carnage enveloped in a culture of fear holding hostage the conscience of America.

The Children of Adam must stop killing each other. None of our faiths tolerate unjust killing. It is required by our faiths to stand up against all forms of terror, whether committed by individuals or by sovereign states. We must call for justice and peace on earth. God Almighty expects us, as the Children of Abraham, to speak out against acts of unwarranted violence, no matter where and by whom.

Certainly, war is the most primitive method of resolving conflicts. We urge a new era of reconciliation where we can end conflicts by loving people on both sides of all issues. God loves the Palestinians and the Jews. He loves Muslims and Christians. He loves African Americans and Whites alike. God loves Democrats and Republicans, Catholics and Protestants. We stand here in repentance because none of us have done enough to love each other and reconcile with one another. We pledge to live up to a higher standard and call on others to do the same. May God forgive us for our failures, guide us in healing and help us to usher in a new era of peace.

Respectfully submitted by the leaders listed above, and, to be presented to Pope Benedict XVI during his visit with interfaith representatives when he visits Washington, D.C, in April.

Islamic Organization of North America, IONA

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