

Final Statement
“Call for Peace in Syria”

22-23 February 2012
Larnaca, Cyprus

Religions for Peace Middle East/ North Africa (MENA) Council, an international and independent NGO committed to peace, convened a meeting of Muslim Ulemas and Christian Clergy, in addition to a number of researchers and concerned persons from Syria and other countries, in Larnaca, Cyprus, on 22-23 February 2012.

The meeting built upon the *Religions for Peace* MENA Marrakesh Declaration (16-17 November 2011) that rejected violence, the misuse of religions, and acknowledged religious diversity and respect for human dignity.

Given the recent bloody developments that stir conscience, and based on their religious and human responsibility as well as their belief in God Almighty, the participants agreed on the following:

1. Our faith in the Lord inspires us *to support* the quest for a peaceful solution, mainly based on national dialogue and the rejection of all forms of violence regardless of its sources.
2. *To reject* the use of military and security measures by all parties after they proved inefficient and exacerbated the problem.
3. *To call* upon the authorities to the immediate release of prisoners of opinion to respect human dignity.
4. *To refuse* all forms of foreign interference given that the Syrian crisis is an internal issue which should be solved only by Syrians with the support of others.
5. *To call* Syria to embrace all its citizens, with no distinction or discrimination, as a mother nurtures its children within its territory and abroad.
6. *To reject* absolutely the violation of the territorial integrity of Syria or its ethnic, religious and denomination diversity.
7. *To reaffirm* that Christians and Muslims are historical components of the Syrian social fabric that should be preserved to guarantee the future, prosperity and coexistence in this country.
8. *To acknowledge* that the values of justice, freedom, dignity and equality are the basis of citizenship. Citizenship is not a grant but a right for every Syrian citizen.
9. *To reaffirm* the responsibility of religious, political and cultural elites to face all forms of religious incitement, and cooperate in disseminating a message of moderation, tolerance and rejection of hatred.
10. Through *Religions for Peace*, *to call* upon all countries involved in economic sanctions imposed on Syria to reconsider these sanctions, which have affected the Syrian people, exacerbated the crisis and undermined stability and growth.

We, the participants, pray the Lord to have mercy on the souls of Syrian martyrs, spare the lives of citizens, bring them together and establish security and safety.

We express our appreciation for the efforts made by the Secretariat of *Religions for Peace*, in the person of the Secretary General and his colleagues, for hosting and supporting this meeting.