



Wilton Park

Wilton Park Dialogues
on Inclusive Citizenship

DIALOGUE REPORT



June 2021



At the first meeting of the Wilton Park Inclusive Citizenship Dialogues,
Abu Dhabi, November 2018

WILTON PARK DIALOGUES ON INCLUSIVE CITIZENSHIP

Introduction

A recent series of Wilton Park Dialogues, in partnership with The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies and the Rashad Centre for Cultural Governance of the Adyan Foundation, has been exploring the concept of Inclusive Citizenship in the Arab world as a means of promoting peace in the region.

This was in response to the recommendations of a Wilton Park meeting in Frascati, Italy in 2018, held in partnership with The British Embassy to the Holy See, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Adyan Foundation on how policy makers and religious leaders in the Middle East could work together to combat violent extremism.

At this meeting, religious leaders and British ambassadors from the Middle East agreed that inclusive citizenship was critical to promote peace and co-existence in the region to provide an alternative narrative to Daesh's exclusive narrative and to help address the root causes of violent extremism. In response, it was agreed that Wilton Park should facilitate discussion on the development of a new framework for citizens and members of different religious groups to live together as equal citizens, respecting each other's rights and existence.

Three Dialogues were held on this theme - in November 2018 in Abu Dhabi, in March 2019 in the United Kingdom and in September 2019, again in Abu Dhabi. Three further virtual dialogues took place in June and October 2020 and in June 2021.

Major local and international faith-based organizations, as well as senior experts from different religious and cultural backgrounds, joined the Dialogues to develop a vision of Inclusive Citizenship as a framework which captures and promotes a new interfaith rooted model for peace and coexistence in the region. This was a unique Consortium representing the diversity of religious traditions, united in their aim of promoting peace.

The historic document presented here is the outcome of these discussions. At our last meeting it was decided that this should be a global document coming from the Middle East region.

There was no agreement on this as a final Charter but each organisation has been invaluable in giving its input and insight. Although the document does not formally represent the views of the organisations and individuals involved, it is our hope that this text and this series of Dialogues will serve to promote the idea of inclusive citizenship in the region and globally. We trust that it will be the basis for further discussion and exchanges. The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, for example, has committed to continuing to explore this document with major stakeholders from around the world, leading to further discussion in its upcoming annual meeting, which will be dedicated to the concept of inclusive citizenship.

In our 75th year of Wilton Park, this series of Dialogues on Inclusive Citizenship is testimony to the organisation's core mission of promoting peace through dialogue.

It has been a privilege to be inspired by all those who gave their time, energy and vision to this journey.



Alison Hilliard
Programme Director
Wilton Park

The Wilton Park Inclusive Citizenship Dialogues were held in partnership with The Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies and the Rashad Centre for Cultural Governance of the Adyan Foundation.



Those engaged by alphabetical order:

Organisations

Adyan Foundation, Al Irfan Organization for the Monotheistic Druze community, Al Khoei Institute – Najaf, Anglican Commission for Interfaith relations, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, KAIIICID Interreligious Platform and Co-operation in the Arab World, Kalam Research and Media, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), Muslim Council of Elders, Muslim World League, Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies (RIIFS), UNESCO Chair for interreligious dialogue studies in the Islamic world, Kufa University

Individuals

Sheikh Usama Al-Sayyid Al-Azhari, Advisor to the President of Egypt on religious affairs; Lecturer at Al-Azhar University, Cairo; Archbishop Angaelos, Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London; Monsignor Khaled Akasheh, Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue of the Holy See (Vatican); Dr Ali Rashid Al-Nuaimi, Chairman of Hedayah International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, Chairman of The World Council of Muslim Communities, United Arab Emirates; H.E. Rev. Dr. Mouneer Hanna Anis, Archbishop of the Episcopal / Anglican Province of Alexandria Diocesan Bishop of Egypt, Egypt; Mr. André Azoulay, Senior Adviser to His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco, Morocco; MP Saeb Khidr, representative of the Yazidi community in the Iraqi Parliament, Dr Fabio Petito, Director of Freedom of Religion or Belief and Foreign Policy Initiative, University of Sussex

Dialogue Series Moderator

Alison Hilliard, Programme Director, Wilton Park, UK

Dialogue Series Co-Moderator and Editor:

Professor Fadi Daou, Senior Advisor, Adyan Foundation, Lebanon

Dialogue Series Rapporteur:

Dr Professor Michael Driessen Associate Professor and Chair of Department of Political Science and International Affairs, John Cabot University, Italy



Vatican Me

His Holiness Pope Francis receives participants from the Wilton Park conference on tackling violence committed in the name of religion at the Vatican, 2 February 2018. The Inclusive Citizenship Dialogues were an outcome of this conference.



His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos, Dr Mohamed Elsanousi, Shaykh Al Mahfoudh Bin Bayyah and His Excellency Shaykh Abdullah Bin Bayyah at the Inclusive Citizenship meeting held at Wiston House, March 2019.

Preamble

1) In the name of God
In the name of humanity,
In the name of all those suffering from discrimination and lack of security,
In the name of all those yearning for justice and peace,

We, who have engaged in this dialogue, as local and international organizations with diverse religious backgrounds, together with prominent figures and experts supporting this process,

With hearts full of love towards our peoples, shared concern to defend the dignity of every human being, and loyalty towards our nations,

Desiring to contribute to the work of healing the wounds caused by discrimination, extremism and conflict,

Determined to renew the bonds that unite us, and promoting together the opportunities of sustainable peace and interreligious harmony, as well as living-together in fraternity and security, building a prosperous future based on human dignity and rights, and ensuring the stability needed for development and social justice, and providing young generations with opportunities to fulfill their lives and realize their ambitions in their homelands,

Present this report that is rooted in our shared human and national values and grounded in our diverse cultures and religious beliefs, in order to promote inclusive citizenship in our countries and increase our societies' contribution to sustainable development and civilizational progress and its current challenges across the world,

We call upon all, from ordinary citizens to religious and civic activists, intellectuals, and opinion leaders, as well as political and spiritual leaders, to join with us in our engagement, to make this dialogue report into a way of life, a source of reflection and a reference for future policy and strategy making; a dialogue through which we move from word to action, from diverse beliefs to a shared commitment.

A) From the land of pain and hope: A call for life

2) Our vast land, extending from the ocean to the gulf, from the Mashreq to the Maghreb, cradle of the Abrahamic religions and ancient civilizations, rich with so many beautiful models of civilization and civic ways of life which reflect its wealth of ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious diversity, rich also in its people and resources, has become today a land of pain and hope.

3) The people of the world are suffering from conflicts and wars that have ravaged - and are still ravaging - a number of countries, taken the lives of thousands of its sons and daughters, and displaced thousands of others who have found themselves homeless and miserable whether in their own land or abroad. Wars have devastated cities, destroyed their historical heritage, and jeopardized their religiously and culturally diverse fabric. They have caused large waves of migration, especially among the victims of discrimination, extremism and terrorism, and those who have suffered tyranny, abduction and persecution for their identity or their religious beliefs. Other communities have been subject to different types of authoritarianism, oppression and injustice, from lack of social justice to increasing poverty and unemployment rates.

4) The Covid-19 pandemic has further exacerbated people's sufferings, heightened their social and economic vulnerability, and deepened the gap between citizens. It has caused an economic recession, and the loss of many jobs and incomes. However, the pandemic has also constituted a lesson in humility, as the virus does not differentiate between the rich and the poor, or between people based on their affiliations, or even between developed and developing countries. The pandemic has highlighted our need to overcome selfishness, to cooperate and stand together in solidarity, whether on the level of individual behavior or in the relations between countries, to overcome the disease and its destructive effects.

5) And yet, despite the accumulated pain in the world, a new hope has manifested in the aspirations of its citizens to live together in freedom, dignity, security and peace, rejecting all forms of discrimination, extremism, hatred and violence. Youth are our Hope. They pioneer these ideas and aspirations and seek any opportunity that would allow them to harness their creative energies to develop their societies and build their homelands, considering that life is a precious gift, and that our responsibility is to preserve and develop it. [1]

[1] God says in the Law of Moses: "This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live" (Deuteronomy 30:19). The Gospel declares: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10) The Holy Qur'an states: "We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely" (Surah Al Ma'idah 32).

B) New dynamics in Interfaith relations

6) Over the past decades, an increasing number of declarations and statements by religious authorities have endorsed human dignity, citizenship, religious freedom, dialogue, spiritual solidarity, and interfaith cooperation. On the one hand, these declarations have reflected the concrete development of a positive approach to citizenship and diversity by religious actors. On the other hand, they reflect a growing acknowledgement of the social responsibility of religion to contribute to social cohesion and living together peacefully. These declarations and documents have provided a religious grounding for these social concepts, asserting their harmony and conformity with the various religious beliefs and teachings, and have helped stem distorted interpretations by some religious extremists and radicals. [2]

7) This path has generated a renewed awareness among religious institutions and leaders, people of faith, and civil society and government authorities of their shared responsibility towards human beings and society. It has thus paved the way for new models of partnerships with civil society and governmental authorities. It has also led to an increased acknowledgement by political authorities and international organizations of the importance of investing in the heritage of faith to build peace, social cohesion and sustainable development. [3]

8) The shared base of values between religions constitutes a strong starting point and unique potential to contribute to the common good. In fact, all religions call for mercy and love, justice and peace, forgiveness and clemency. People of faith and religious groups, institutions and leaders must be pioneers together in all these areas by drawing on their spiritual traditions and applying this system of values which is inseparable from religion.

[2] We mention among these, with special reference to the Middle East: the third pastoral letter of the Eastern Catholic Patriarchs: Together before God for the welfare of the individual and the society: coexistence between Muslims and Christians in the Arab world (1994); the document of the Arab Group for Muslim Christian Dialogue which was founded by an initiative of the Middle East Council of Churches, Dialogue and living together: towards an Arab Muslim Christian charter (2001); the Amman message (2004) released in Amman by H.M King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein; The Common word between us and you letter (2007) signed by 138 Muslim leaders and addressed to Christian church leaders; the Al Azhar basic freedoms document (2012) issued by Al Azhar; the Vienna Declaration United against violence in the name of religion (2014) by King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz international Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue; the Marrakech declaration on rights of religious minorities in Muslim majority countries (2016) issued by the Forum for promoting peace in Muslim societies, the Document on Human Fraternity for world peace and living together (2019) signed by H.H Pope Francis and H.E Sheikh Ahmad Al Tayyeb of Al Azhar in Abu Dhabi; The Makkah declaration (2019) issued by the Muslim World League conference; The Charter of the new Alliance of Virtue (2019) by the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim societies. These documents were preceded by many initiatives at the international level, among which: the Second Vatican Council of the Catholic Church: Nostra Aetate on the Church's relationship with other non-Christian religions (1965), and the Declaration Towards a Global Ethic by the Parliament of the World's Religions (1993).

[3] For example: the Beirut declaration Faith for Rights (2017) issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

9) And because together we believe that God is the God of peace, we hope that our initiative will contribute to adjust our individual and collective attitudes, renew the discourse and writing within our communities and the public sphere, and the cross-sectarian and interreligious relations in our societies. We hope it will contribute to the rebuilding of our social and political systems, the making straight of our paths, our liberation from the effects of ignorance and extremism, the ending of wars and conflicts. Our commitment to dialogue, therefore, is as an instrument of peace, to purify our memory, achieve reconciliation, build peace, ensure just opportunities to live in dignity and renew trust and cooperation in and within countries. In doing so, we hope it will enrich our societies, our countries and the world at large through the participation of all in building our common future.

C) An open call for shared commitment

10) Our initiative, which was launched from the Arab region and bears its marks of authenticity and openness, it is also directed towards the world. We consider this report an open text, and part of the cumulative path of intellectual, social, political, cultural and religious renewal in the region. We hope that it reflects the aspirations of our peoples to move societies around the world to a new stage marked by participation and solidarity, and respect for diversity and difference of opinion and belief, where rights complement duties, where recognition of the inherent dignity of all people leads us to act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood, [4] where freedoms grow in harmony with the requirements of virtue and public order, [5] and where citizens become more aware of the interconnectedness of their interests, the complementarity of their abilities, the harmony of their aspirations, and the values that they share.

11) This group expresses a shared feeling of social and religious responsibility, which reflects the hope of its organizations, institutions and members in a brighter future. It also reflects their conviction of the active and interactive role that religions play in the public sphere for the common good of humanity. The aim of this dialogue is not to appropriate a religious concept of citizenship but rather to anchor the general and common concept

[4] See: United Nations, The Universal Declaration of Human rights (1948), Article 1: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

[5] See: The Universal Declaration of Human rights (1948), Article 29: (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible. (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

of citizenship, and of human dignity and rights, in religious discourse and awareness. The convergence between diverse civil and religious discourses offers an incentive for people of faith and religious institutions and leaders to support inclusive citizenship and, alongside other citizens, to be at the forefront of the struggle to lay its foundations and achieve its goals.

12) This report, therefore, is directed to people of faith, and religious leaders, institutions, and communities on the one hand, and to governments, international organizations, civil society institutions, media institutions, and the educational and business sector, on the other hand, with the aim of encouraging them to cooperate – each from their position and field of competence - in order to achieve inclusive citizenship in the Arab countries. The support and encouragement garnered from international institutions, organizations and figures during the dialogue is an affirmation of the global importance of stability and prosperity in our region. That is why we also hope that this report will have a positive impact all over the world. In fact, in all countries, the issue of the good governance of diversity has become the foundation for maintaining social cohesion, and achieving sustainable development, environmental balance, and world peace.

Inclusive citizenship: From coexistence to a shared conscience

A) Global citizenship path

13) More and more people around the world are convinced by the choice of citizenship and demand to adopt it, since it is considered as the only option that can save their societies from sectarian, tribal, regional, and other divisions. Citizenship is an old concept which arose during ancient civilizations, and evolved across generations throughout the diverse human experience in organizing and managing public life. Today we understand the concept of citizenship, which regards a citizen's relationship to the state and to one another, to be based on three main principles: First, the guarantee of citizens' rights and civil, political, social and cultural freedoms; Second, the duties of citizens towards the state and their participation in public life; and Third, the rule of law to ensure equality and justice for all.

14) As such, citizenship has become a framework through which individuals belong to the national community and contribute to the management of public affairs and the realization of the common good through constitutional means. In the context of globalization, international organizations have adopted the concept of "global citizenship" in their literature to express the citizens' responsibilities at the global level. This includes the relationship between the entirety of citizens' networks and interests on the one hand, and the global issues that they need to interact with and influence on the other hand, such as the environment, international peace, global human solidarity and cross-border and cross-cultural communication. Thus, citizenship has become an agent for peace, and for integral and sustainable human and environmental development, at both national and global levels.

[15] The Covid-19 pandemic has offered a striking and concrete example of the inherent connection between people across national and continental borders through the global spread of infection. It has also demonstrated the need for international cooperation to share information and medical resources, and to conduct scientific research on appropriate vaccines and treatment. The solidarity required is no longer limited to

humans and nations, but extends as well to the environment [6], in order to ensure the requirements of safety, the preservation of life and sustainable development. The need has also arisen to strengthen solidarity with and care for marginalized groups, such as the elderly, refugees, migrant workers, women, children and people with special needs.

16) Thus, religious organizations and groups have sought to anchor the concept of citizenship in their own writings and common documents. In this sense, the Marrakesh Declaration, which tackled the issue of the rights of religious minorities in predominantly Muslim majority communities, represented an important milestone in terms of its recognition of the principles of pluralism and religious freedom, and in its confirmation of the authenticity of the concept of citizenship in Islam, as "a contractual formula and a fair constitution for a multi-ethnic, religious and linguistic society whose members enjoy the same rights, and assume the same duties." [7]

B) The definition of inclusive citizenship

17) Citizenship seeks to achieve equality between all citizens who are treated as such under the umbrella of the law and the system of rights and duties. However, differences and pluralism remain the natural aspects of life. Difference may pertain to social conditions and the needs associated with them, or to cultural backgrounds or even linguistic, historical, religious, or other aspects resulting from them. Therefore, inclusive citizenship aims to not disregard "the other" in society, whether these others represent socially marginalized, or culturally different groups.

18) Inclusive citizenship, therefore, is an integrated system of policies, legislations and behavior that embodies a comprehensive culture of participation. On the one hand, it aims to ensure the effective participation of citizens in public life, to guarantee that their voices are heard, and that their special needs are met. On the other hand, it also seeks to integrate their cultural specificities into national life.

[6] Pope Francis expressed this in the Encyclical Letter "Laudato Si" on Care for our common home, Vatican (2015) when he wrote: "Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor." Paragraph 49.

[7] Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies, the Marrakech Declaration (2016), paragraph 13.

19) Inclusive citizenship protects societies from slipping into the formation of isolated groups, because of their social, cultural, linguistic or religious marginalization. This "hidden diversity" in the shadows of the public sphere contributes to the decline of social justice, civil peace, and national unity. Inclusive citizenship promotes fraternity and solidarity between people, and allows them to move from mere coexistence to a shared consciousness, to achieve the humanization of life, social progress and sustainable peace. Therefore, the principles of inclusive citizenship do not differ from the general principles of citizenship. Five of these principles, however, are of particular importance and assume special dimensions in their understanding and application, namely: human dignity, pluralism and inclusive national identity, comprehensive participation in public life, religious freedom and inviolability of the human conscience, the culture of dialogue and respect of difference.

C) Human dignity

20) Human dignity is among the first in our shared system of values. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights considered the recognition of the inherent dignity of all members of the human family, and their equal and inalienable rights, as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world [8]. The universality and centrality of this value was highlighted in the Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone [9] issued on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. All religions recognize the centrality of human dignity and the universality of this fundamental value without any discrimination between people based on their religion, color, race and language. Religious texts consider that dignity is essentially linked to human nature, and do not differentiate between men and women, one religion and another, or between one color or race and another. [10]

[8] See The Preamble of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

[9] Punta del Este (Uruguay) Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere (2018).

[10] "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference." (Surah Al-Isra 70) "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:27)

21) This recognition of every human being's dignity requires that it be translated in practice in a way that preserves and protects this dignity from negative discrimination for racial, religious, gender, social or political purposes. Although the situation varies from one society to another, in some countries the most vulnerable groups that are subject to exclusion and marginalization include women, youth, refugees, and foreign workers. Some people also suffer from discrimination based on religion, race, language, color, or origin. The integration of people with special needs into public life still has a long way to go, despite some notable success stories, which have promoted their determination and valuable contributions. Inclusive citizenship presents us with the challenge of applying our theoretical respect for everyone as equal in humanity, and to lift, in practice, all forms and causes of discrimination that prevent people from enjoying their dignity and rights in their daily life.

D) Pluralism and inclusive national identity

22) Diversity in societies is manifested in different ethnic, racial, linguistic, cultural and religious forms, and constitutes a fundamental feature of each societies' culture and identity. The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity issued in 2001, described this diversity as "a source of exchange, innovation and creativity" and "as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature." [11] This is why the same Declaration considered that "cultural pluralism gives policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity" since in our increasingly diverse societies, it is essential to ensure harmonious interaction among people and groups with plural, varied and dynamic cultural identities as well as their willingness to live together. Policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace." [12]

23) Although in most countries there is a group that constitutes a numerical majority, with which a society's identity, culture, and traditions are closely associated, inclusive citizenship goes beyond the numerical approach of majorities and minorities. Together, groups of all sizes form a country's social fabric, its historical legacy and associated narratives, and the overall portrait of the common future of their sons and daughters. The existence of pluralism in every country is thus considered as a factor that enriches the general culture and the encompassing national identity.

[11] UNESCO, Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), Article 1.

[12] Ibid, Article 2.

24) Rather than viewing national identities and specific cultural identities as mutually exclusive, or as a self-contradicting duality, in which the assertion of one identity eliminates the other, inclusive citizenship recognizes the multiple identities of individuals - religious, cultural, or ethnic – as elements that interact with each other within the inclusive national identity. This model of citizenship is not based on a monolithic ideology that assimilates citizens into a rigid identity mold, but rather it is based on respect for freedoms and pluralism, and the promotion of a sense of belonging, partnership and integration within the same national community.

E) Comprehensive participation in public life

25) On the one hand, inclusive citizenship helps citizens overcome excessive individualism, which leads to a consumer-like relationship between citizens and the state. On the other hand, it helps overcome internal divisions and sectarian conflicts, especially in societies that have suffered from wars and civil conflicts. This requires transforming citizenship from a mere legal reality into citizenship-based acts, enhancing the ability of all citizens, especially young people who are eager to participate actively in civil and political life, to contribute voluntarily and creatively to achieving the common good. This is, in fact, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible." [13]

26) Inclusive citizenship thus highlights the need to enhance shared responsibility among all citizens from different religious and cultural affiliations, and encourage them to truly cooperate, across different components, denominations, and religions. This requires rejecting exclusionary policies and strengthening participatory politics among all components of society, especially numerical, ethnic, religious and cultural minorities, and those who have suffered or are still suffering from social or economic marginalization, extremism and terrorism. Thus, the participation of all in public life strengthens the unity of our societies, and increases the credibility of our religious statements of support for the poor and the oppressed.

[13] United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Article 29.

27) Civil society organizations, religious groups and institutions, alongside government institutions, play a crucial role in enhancing human development and serving the public good. The State, therefore, must not only protect the right of these institutions and entities to exist, but also cooperate with them and support their community work. These civil and religious organizations, groups and institutions should not constitute an impediment to citizens' affiliation with the state and the country in general. Rather they are expected, based on a shared system of values, to foster the cooperation among and the service for all citizens, and increase the sense of national belonging, in line with their own convictions and beliefs.

F) The inviolability of the human conscience and religious freedom

28) Inclusive citizenship strives to preserve the local heritage and social fabric, and promotes harmony and positive interaction between the various components of society. At the same time, it also guarantees respect for pluralism and individual freedoms, affirms the inviolability of human conscience and religious freedom and acts as an organizational framework for a sound and just relationship between individuals and groups.

29) The Document on Human Fraternity affirmed the interconnection between freedom and pluralism by stating "Freedom is a right of every person: each individual enjoys the freedom of belief, thought, expression and action. The pluralism and the diversity of religions, color, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings. This divine wisdom is the source from which the right to freedom of belief and the freedom to be different derives. Therefore, the fact that people are forced to adhere to a certain religion or culture must be rejected, as too the imposition of a cultural way of life that others do not accept." [14]

30) Religious freedom begins with the recognition of the freedom and sanctity of conscience [15], and the rejection of exclusivist or retributive tendencies and inquiry into people's conscience, which have produced conflict, extremism and terrorism that have harmed humanity. [16]

[14] His Holiness Pope Francis and The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayyeb, Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, (2019).

[15] Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

[16] See Al-Azhar Statement on Basic Freedoms (2012).

The conscience constitutes the internal private sphere of every person who has the right to choose the options, attitudes and beliefs they deem appropriate for themselves and achieves their best interest [17]. It is in fact not permissible, under any circumstance, to impose beliefs and attitudes on others [18], or to exert pressure or resort to any form of psychological, social or economic co-optation to approach and apprehend them. Nor is it permissible to justify any attack against others in any way because of their choices.

31) Religious freedom also includes the right to the expression of faith, the right to interpret it, and the right to practice individual or collective rituals. This requires that religious groups have the appropriate means necessary for these rituals and activities, including buildings, which are to be designed and managed according to their traditions. This also includes the creation of associations, institutions and civil society initiatives that are based upon the religious spirit that informs them, with respect for public order.

G) The culture of dialogue and respect of difference

32) The world suffers from conflicts of identity which increase racism, populism, extremism, discrimination and grievance. Some deviations in religious discourse or hate speech contribute to amplifying the fear of others, and lead to confinement within closed groups and to isolation from society. It is unacceptable to see such an increase in racist and takfiri (exclusivist) ideologies that are conducive to hatred and violence. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights addressed this issue in 2012 by developing "The Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence". [19]

33) Laws alone are not sufficient to confront hate speech and the violence resulting from it. It should also be faced with awareness, knowledge and an open culture. Religions have called for openness to difference and the development of mutual knowledge between people through dialogue, in order to break the chains of ignorance and prejudices upon which false judgments and stereotypes are built. Therefore, it is our common responsibility to promote constructive dialogue, rational debate and criticism, moving away from practices that nurture rancor, hatred and revenge among people.

[17] See: Declaration of the World Council of Churches on "Religious Freedom" (1948) and the Second Vatican Council document "Dignitatis Humanae" Declaration on Religious Freedom (1965).

[18] (There shall be no compulsion in the religion). (Surah Al-Baqara: 256)

[19] OHCHR, The Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence (2012).

34) While hate speech undermines the security of individuals and the stability of societies, a mature freedom can turn differences of opinion into an opportunity for dialogue, interaction and mutual enrichment. Freedom of thought, religion, belief and expression cannot be used as a pretext for moral or physical violence against entire peoples and groups. Freedom does not give people the right to attack others, or their symbols and holy shrines. There is a great difference between honesty and insolence, between criticism and aggression, and between difference of opinions and defamation of others and the distortion of their opinions.

Therefore, inclusive citizenship should constitute a space for breaking down barriers between citizens, enhancing dialogue among them and building partnerships across their multiple personal affiliations. Citizens will thus be able to break the barriers of fear which are imprisoning them in the position of defending their rights only, and instead stand in solidarity with others and defend the rights of everyone based on common universal principles and values.

Recommendations

35) We realize that this dialogue on Inclusive Citizenship constitutes a long-term path for developing and growing our societies, promoting living together, ending conflicts and achieving reconciliation and sustainable peace within them. It is also a call for cooperation between all active and influential stakeholders with the aim of reaching these desired goals. As members of this group, we are committed to harnessing all of our institutions' capacities for that purpose, building partnerships with all the sectors concerned, especially with government institutions, religious leaders and institutions, civil society organizations, educational institutions, the media, the business sector, and governments, so that we can all work together on the following three main themes: developing discourse and promoting public awareness, capacity building and developing partnerships, joint advocacy and policy development.

A) Developing the narrative and promoting public awareness

1. Raise awareness of the culture of citizenship and diversity, through educational, media and other programs and initiatives, linking them to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.
2. Develop educational policies, curricula and resources to be in line with the principles and values of inclusive citizenship, and enhance cooperation between states and regional and international institutions active in this field.
3. Review religious discourse and religious education programs and make sure that they cover accurate and fair knowledge of the "other" as they define themselves, shared values, and the culture of dialogue, respect and cooperation between people of faiths.
4. Develop media literature and content to ensure freedom of expression, guarantee respect for diversity in religions and beliefs, and put an end to hate speech and incendiary rhetoric; and promote the concept of inclusive citizenship through media-advertising campaigns, highlighting societal models through which a national culture inclusive of the various components of the nation is manifested.
5. Cooperate in confronting extremist rhetoric within the framework of common strategies, and help people to overcome the grievance mentality through clear paths of transitional justice, memory healing, and sustainable reconciliation.

6. Support the collective initiatives of civil society institutions and grassroots organizations that promote respect for religious and cultural diversity, and contribute to dismantling the fear and hate associated with identity politics.

B) Capacity building and developing partnerships

7. Train civil society and religious and educational institutions leaders and activists, and deploy resources to enhance awareness of the concept of inclusive citizenship and stimulate collaboration and partnership between their institutions to serve peace and common good.

8. Strengthen the capacities of media figures and invite them to adhere to a code of conduct that respects the principles and values of inclusive citizenship, and reject hate speech and incendiary narratives.

9. Develop the capabilities of traditional and digital media so as to become a platform for disseminating the concepts and values contained in this report, and cooperate with public and private media outlets to enhance their role in promoting respect for religious and cultural diversity and confronting stereotypes and prejudices among public opinion.

10. Support dialogue, cooperation, and cross-sectarian and interfaith partnerships between religious institutions working in the humanitarian and social fields and cooperate with civil society in order to contribute together as partners to serve the underprivileged, promote integral human development and achieve the common good.

11. Promote cooperation between religious, civil, and governmental institutions to combat extremism and violence perpetrated in the name of religion.

C) Joint advocacy and policy development

12. Advocate for the guarantee of all rights and freedoms, especially religious freedom and inviolability of conscience, for everyone, and abolish all kinds of discrimination from laws.

13. Lay the foundations of inclusive citizenship in the formulation of public policies and their relevant activities and create national councils for living together that implement motivational initiatives in this field.

14. Recognize the cultural rights of citizens and diverse communities within the country, including the use of their indigenous languages; and protect the material and immaterial heritage of these groups, preserve their collective oral memory, and the architectural and urban heritage as monuments of the universal cultural identity. [20]

15. Develop comprehensive and inclusive strategies to ensure the effective participation of everyone in public life and decision-making, especially youth and numerical minorities.

16. Cooperate to develop legal and practical frameworks to empower women, promote their contributions in the different aspects of social, economic and national life, and to foster their roles and participation in public life.

17. Encourage and help the private sector and companies to adopt policies based on respect for diversity, religious freedom, and the inclusion of people with special needs within the workplace.

18. Ensure the joint support for marginalized groups and victims of violence in all its forms, and work to find solutions to their issues, especially with regard to the displaced, refugees and missing persons due to conflicts and wars.

[20] See: The Universal Declaration of Human Cultural Rights (1998), the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), and the Islamic Declaration on Cultural Rights (2014).



(Left to right): Alastair King-Smith, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office; Philip Parham, British Ambassador, UAE; John Casson - British Ambassador Egypt; Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief; Sally Axworthy - British Ambassador, Holy See; Alison Hilliard, Wilton Park; Simon Collis, British Ambassador, Saudi Arabia; Nicholas Hopton, British Ambassador, Iran and Sabin Khan, The Home Office at the Vatican, 2 February 2018



Dr Nayla Tabbara, President of Adyan; Alison Hilliard, Wilton Park and Professor Fadi Daou, Adyan The Vatican, 2 February 2018

Quotes from our Inclusive Citizenship Dialogues



"This should be seen as a continuation of the Marrakesh Declaration which will make a positive contribution to promote peaceful co-existence in the world."

Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah
President, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies
and Chair of the Fatwa Council of the United Arab Emirates

"Engaging in this process has the encouragement and blessing of the four Presidents of the MECC... This is a positive narrative of religious pluralism. This document embodies what I have been dreaming of for years. The real change is being able to institutionalise this thinking. If it succeeds it will be a real renaissance for the Arab world."



Dr Michel Abs
Secretary General, Middle East
Council of Churches (MECC)

"We take this opportunity to reiterate our unwavering support to the idea of the Charter of Inclusive Citizenship. It will help further consolidate the values of peace, love and harmony in our societies and strengthen our bonds of fraternity, God willing."

Shaykh Muhammad bin Abdul al-Karim Al-Issa,
Secretary General of the Muslim World League



Quotes from our Inclusive Citizenship Dialogues



"This difficult journey is bridging religious and doctrinal differences. We cannot think mono-chromatically anymore. We have to think of how we walk with each other and how our presence in each other's lives change each other...we have to think how our presence in each other's lives enriches each other... this is an ethos, a way of life and a lifeline to those who feel that they may be forgotten and who don't understand how to deal with each other."

Archbishop Angaelos
Archbishop of London, The Coptic Orthodox Diocese of London

There is a new urgency and requirement for work on inclusive citizenship because of COVID-19 but the need has always been there in the Arab world, urging us to work together as religious communities for progress and peace. Through this work we could be a model for the rest of the world in building inclusive citizenship."



Sheikh Sami Abilmona, Head of Cultural and Interreligious dialogue Committee at the Druze National Council and Secretary General, Al Irfan Unitarian Druze Foundation



"COVID-19 has not changed the world, but it has exposed pre-existing inequalities and injustices and amplified social and economic unrest. And there are people who stand ready to exploit these weaknesses to sow hatred, to erode generations of coexistence and inclusive citizenship. To protect the vulnerable members of our societies, we must build shared ownership of the ideas of inclusive citizenship. The true hard work lies ahead."

Faisal Bin Muammar
Secretary General of KAICIID, the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue

Quotes from our Inclusive Citizenship Dialogues

"This might help us in overcoming the current crisis and the past problems and contribute to deepening the Christian presence in the Arab world. Engaging in this process has the blessing of Pope Francis with the hope that this will build on the Fraternity Document of 2019."

Dr Souraya Bechealany
former Secretary General of the Middle East
Council of Churches



"The word world is crying now for inclusive citizenship. It is needed more than ever before- it's a cure for discrimination and racism."

Archbishop Mouneer Hanna Anis
Archbishop of the Episcopal / Anglican
Province of Alexandria and Diocesan
Bishop of Egypt



"This work has paved the way for a different conversation which puts religion in the right place with a right understanding against the backdrop of the current global situation and COVID19."

André Azoulay
Counsellor to His Majesty the King of Morocco
Court of King of Morocco

Quotes from our Inclusive Citizenship Dialogues

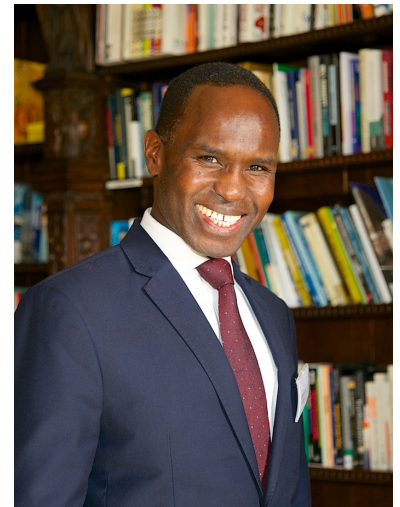


"COVID is not just a health challenge but also a citizenship challenge. When we talk about ethnic or religious minorities, they are being impacted by COVID in difficult ways. There are so many problems and our world needs good news to share and this dialogue is great good news to share."

Rev Professor Fadi Daou
Co-founder, Adyan Foundation

"This document is very important - it is a unique document: it is the first of its kind to discuss inclusive citizenship in the Middle East and in the Arab world. The significance of it also comes from the contribution of all of you and the diverse religious actors and personalities working together in this process. That is a first of its kind.."

Dr Mohamed Elsanousi
Executive Director, Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers; Trustee and Inter-religious Faith Advisor, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies



"You're making history. This is not just a document for ourselves but for the whole Arab world. This work is an opportunity to create a new initiative with an open heart."

Dr Ali Al Nuaimi
Chairman, Hedayah International Centre of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism and Chairman of The World Council of Muslim Communities



Alison Hilliard, Wilton Park and His Excellency Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies signing a Memorandum of Understanding between their two organisations to host dialogue on Inclusive Citizenship, Wiston House, March 2019




Dr Sayyid Jawad Al-Khoei and Reverend Professor Fadi Daou at the Wilton Park Consortium Working Group Meeting, Abu Dhabi, September 2019



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