



London Declaration on Islam and World Peace

Adopted in London on 9th April 2016 after the London Conference on Islam and World Peace organised by the Muslim Association of Nigeria UK in collaboration with Muslim Council of Britain, Islam Channel, Council of Nigerian Muslim Organisations and other UK Islamic Organisations at the London Muslim Centre Whitechapel

HAVING FULLY deliberated on the issue of global peace from Islamic perspectives, the London Conference on Islam and World Peace hereby issues this Declaration at the end of the conference to serve as a formal call for the promotion of world peace in accordance with Islamic tenets globally.

Preamble

THE CONFERENCE RECALLS the preamble of its concept document stating that:

WHEREAS Islam is today a widespread global religion professed by an estimated 1.6 billion adherents spread across every region of the modern world; and

WHEREAS Muslims strongly believe, as emphasised by the Qur'an, that Islam is a religion of peace (Q2:208), that Allah (God) invites to peace (Q10:25) and that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent by God as a messenger of peace and mercy to the world and to all humanity (Q21:107); and

WHEREAS life is the greatest treasure and gift of God to humanity and that Islam emphasises the sanctity of life (Q5:32), prohibits mischief and disorder on earth (Q7:56), and enjoins justice and kindness to all (Q16:90); and

CONSIDERING the lack of global peace today and that different parts of the world, especially Muslim-majority countries, are afflicted with serious conflicts and warfare that have adversely affected the lives of millions of innocent people, including women and young children; and

CONSIDERING that some Muslim-majority countries have been confronted by conflict and warfare for so long that young children and adolescent youths in those countries have not known anything in their lifetime except a life surrounded by warfare and wanton destruction of life and property; and

CONSIDERING that there have been many unjustified wars and acts of aggression perpetuated by both state and non-state actors against innocent people in different parts of the world in the last century and still continuing in this century; and

CONSIDERING that many abominable acts of aggression and terrorism have been perpetuated by so-called "Islamist" terrorist groups callously and erroneously in the name of Islam, based on their misrepresentation of Islamic teachings on *jihād* and warfare; and

CONSCIOUS of the Qur'anic confirmation that God created humanity from a single pair of male and female and made humanity into nations and tribes so that they may know

each other and co-exist peacefully with each other and not for conflict or self-destruction (Q49:13); and

CONSCIOUS of the Qur'anic injunctions that Muslims should incline to peace and kindness and deal equitably with humanity generally, particularly with those who do not wage war against them or drive them out of their homes (Q60:7-9); and

CONSCIOUS of the Qur'anic injunctions of no compulsion in religion (Q2:256) and of human cooperation in righteousness and not in evil (Q5:2); and

CONSCIOUS of the obligation of Islamic organisations to promote peaceful coexistence amongst humanity and heedful of the Qur'anic duty of Muslims to enjoin what is right and denounce what is evil (Q3:104).

THE CONFERENCE HEREBY RESTATES its main objectives as:

- i. To stimulate a wake-up call to the world generally, and to Muslims in particular, on the need for humanity to avoid quick recourse to aggression or warfare in human relations but rather to seek to address their disagreements through pacific resolutions of disputes. It is high time that the true strength of nations and communities is recognised on the ability to settle disagreements and disputes peacefully rather than the ability to wage war and cause disorder on earth.
- ii. To provide a platform for collective discussion and reflection about the general peaceful message of Islam, the need for contextual understanding of particular Qur'anic provisions on warfare, and the role of Islam and Muslims in contributing to the realisation of a sustainable peaceful world.
- iii. To provide a platform for bringing together Muslim leaders and Islamic organisations in the UK to discuss and collectively denounce and condemn the atrocities and un-Islamic acts of aggression and terrorism being committed by so-called "Islamist" terrorist groups erroneously in the name of Islam in different parts of the world today.
- iv. To advocate and collectively call for an end to all ongoing conflicts and warfare in different parts of the world, especially in Muslim-majority countries as enjoined by Q49:9-10.

Declaration

THE CONFERENCE NOW CONSCIOUSLY DECLARES as follows:

1. There is currently a lot of misunderstanding, misinformation and misrepresentation about Islam generally and about *jihād* specifically amongst many Muslims and most non-Muslims globally, which needs to be corrected through proper education and enlightenment.
2. There is the need for proper holistic understanding of Islamic principles, through seeking and disseminating of adequate knowledge from appropriate and authentic Islamic sources by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The media has both a moral and professional duty to depart from negative sensationalism to objective reportages about Islam.
3. Islam is a religion of submission to God, service to humanity and promotion of peace and human welfare. Accordingly, Islam enjoins good reasoning and prohibits harm or arbitrary reciprocation of harm. Any interpretation of Islamic injunctions that

contradicts good reasoning or encourages arbitrary reciprocation of harm must be subjected to further scrutiny within the context of the higher objectives of the *Shari'ah*, which is human welfare.

4. While the Qur'an states that Islam is the religion brought by all the Prophets sent by God to humanity and therefore the religion recognised by Him, it also acknowledges the freedom of everyone to follow their own convictions. Q2:256 clearly states that there is no compulsion in religion.
5. The concept of *jihād* in Islam should be properly understood as the positive exertion of all efforts to do what is right and denounce what is evil. It is clear within the context of the Qur'anic provisions on warfare that the use of force is only recognised for self-defence or justifiable pre-emption, similar to the scope of its recognition in modern international law.
6. Peace is a necessary condition for fulfilling the purpose of human beings as servants of God on earth, as taught by all the Prophets. Islam further acknowledges that justice, love and tolerance are necessary conditions for sustainable peace amongst humanity.
7. The example of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in his relations with non-Muslims, particularly as embodied in the Charter of Madinah adopted in the 1st Year of the *Hijrah* (around 622CE), serves as a model of peaceful co-existence for all humanity.
8. The provision in Q49:13 ("O mankind, We created you all from a single pair of a male and female and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another [not that you may despise one another]; Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is he who is most righteous among you; and God has full knowledge and is well-acquainted with all things") serves as a reminder of the common ancestry of all human beings, and constitutes a fundamental framework for the realisation of sustainable peace globally, despite the racial, tribal and religious differences amongst mankind.
9. Islam is a religion of the middle path as stated in Q2:143 ("Thus have We made you a nation of the middle path that you may be witnesses over other nations and the Messenger a witness over yourselves..."), which abhors all forms of extremism in human relations. Extremism deflects the beauty, magnificence and appealing nature of Islam.

THUS, IN CONFORMITY WITH ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES:

10. The Conference strongly denounces the exploitation of Islam by extremist groups in the perpetuation of violence in different parts of the world today. Such perpetuation of violence by extremist groups can neither be done in the name of Islam nor on behalf of the overwhelming majority of Muslims globally.
11. The Conference calls on families, communities and states to pay urgent and adequate attention to both spiritual and social needs of youths in order to steer them away from extremism in protest against deprivation.
12. The Conference emphasises that Islam enjoins the protection of the dignity and well being of women both in times of peace and war, as well as the provision of adequate education for women to enable them play their full and proper roles in society.
13. The Conference strongly condemns suicide bombing and indiscriminate killing of the innocent, especially women and children. Such acts are a total violation of the compassionate teachings of Islam.

14. The Conference notes, with a strong sense of disapproval, the role of external forces in encouraging and supporting violence, wars and armed conflicts in different Muslim-majority states. Such negative interventions are not in the best interest of world peace and security and must henceforth be discouraged and avoided.
15. The Conference calls on the media to adopt a more objective and positive approach to its reportages about Islam and to desist from labelling crimes or atrocities committed by delinquent Muslims as “Islamic”, as the Qur’an clearly states that God does not enjoin anyone to commit evil or indecency (Q7:28).
16. The Conference participants and delegates commit themselves individually and collectively to the achievement of world peace and thereby uphold this declaration as a means of contributing to the promotion and realisation of world peace in accordance with Islamic tenets globally.
17. The Conference calls on all Muslim-majority states to individually and collectively take the lead and join hands with other states in stopping all ongoing armed conflicts in different parts of the world, particularly in the different parts of the Muslim world.
18. The Conference further calls on all Muslim-majority states to individually and collectively take the lead in promoting peaceful resolution of disputes that have led to armed conflicts in different parts of the world today, particularly in different parts of the Muslim world, and to henceforth strongly support and encourage the use of pacific means to settle all disputes in future instead of quick resort to armed conflicts.
19. The Conference calls on all Muslims individually and collectively to commit themselves to the achievement of world peace and to adopt and uphold this declaration as a common understanding for promoting and contributing to the realisation of world peace in accordance with Islamic tenets globally.
20. The Conference advocates global support for this declaration and encourages its wide dissemination and circulation to enable its general implementation globally.

Adopted unanimously by all delegates and participants at the London Conference on Islam and World Peace on Saturday, 9th April 2016 at the London Muslim Centre, Whitechapel