بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

ON OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM,

THE DIGNITY OF ALL HUMANITY, AND THE OBLIGATIONS

OF COVENANTAL PLURALISM

A Declaration on Faith, Common Ground, and the Common Good

Inspired by the Covenant of Medina (622 CE), the Hijra to Abyssinia (615 CE), the Amman Message (2004), A Common Word Between Us and You (2007), and the Marrakesh Declaration on the Rights of Religious Minorities (2016)

Preamble

We, as Muslim scholars, educators, and community leaders, speaking from within the great and merciful tradition of Islam, issue this declaration to our brothers and sisters in faith, to our fellow Abrahamic peoples — Jews and Christians — and to all humanity. We do so in a spirit of taqwa (God-consciousness), 'ilm (knowledge), and rahma (mercy), the last being the supreme divine attribute by which God describes Himself in the opening verse recited by every Muslim in every prayer: Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim — the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

We write at a moment when misunderstanding, violence, polarization, and the weaponization of religious identity threaten the fabric of human civilization. We write at a moment when some Muslims, misreading our tradition, have brought dishonor upon our faith through acts of terror, antisemitism, and supremacist ideology. We write to bear witness — not to missionize — that Islam, rightly understood through the Quran and the authenticated Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him), is a religion of flourishing, covenantal community, and universal mercy, not a religion of perpetual warfare, domination, or the degradation of those outside our community of faith.

This declaration draws its authority from the Word of God as revealed in the Holy Quran, the authenticated practice of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the constitutional precedent of the Covenant of Medina (Sahifat al-Madina), the historical example of the Hijra to Abyssinia, and the growing scholarly consensus of Muslim scholars across the globe who affirm that religious pluralism, human dignity, and covenantal hospitality are not concessions to modernity but the living heart of the Islamic tradition.

We speak to Muslims first. We ask ourselves the hardest questions. We acknowledge what has gone wrong within our institutions, our rhetoric, and our silence. And we commit, in the name of God, to leaving the world better than we found it — for our children, for our neighbors, and for all the children of Adam.

Article I. On Our Shared Abrahamic Origins and Our Common Future

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ

Say: O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you — that we will not worship except God. — Q 3:64

We affirm with conviction and gratitude that Islam stands in an unbroken line of divine revelation beginning with the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham), peace be upon him, whose submission to the One God is the foundation of our shared spiritual identity. We honor the Torah revealed to Musa (Moses), the Psalms given to Dawud (David), and the Gospel brought by 'Isa (Jesus), all of whom we revere as prophets of God. We affirm that the Children of Israel are a people chosen by God for a sacred covenant and entrusted with a divine mission of justice and witness. We affirm that Christians are a community of faith who have carried the message of love of God and love of neighbor across the centuries and to the ends of the earth.

The Quran does not ask us to see Jews and Christians as enemies. It asks us to see them as Ahl al-Kitab — People of the Book — recipients of prior divine revelation from the same God we worship. When the Quran says, 'Our God and your God is one' (Q 29:46), it is not making a concession but a theological declaration: the God of Muhammad is the God of Moses and the God of Jesus. Our traditions share a common origin, a common moral vision, and — we declare with confidence — a common future under the mercy of the One God.

The historic 2007 open letter A Common Word Between Us and You, endorsed by 138 Muslim scholars and addressed to Christian leaders worldwide, demonstrated that Islam's two great commandments — the love of God expressed through tawhid, and the love of neighbor expressed through the Prophet's ethical example — mirror the twin commandments Jesus identifies in the Gospel (Mark 12:29-31). This is not accommodation. This is recognition of the common ground on which Abrahamic civilization stands.

Article II. On the Dignity and Equal Worth of All Human Beings

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِيٓ آدَمَ

And We have certainly honored the children of Adam. — Q 17:70

The Quran's declaration that God has honored all the children of Adam — bani Adam — is categorical and unconditional. It makes no distinction of religion, ethnicity, nationality, or social standing. The classical scholar al-Alusi interpreted this verse to mean that every member of the human race, including the righteous and the sinner, is endowed with God-given dignity. This inherent dignity — karama insaniyya — is not a gift of the state or a privilege of the faithful. It belongs to every human being by virtue of creation alone.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) demonstrated this principle with his own body. When a funeral procession passed him — the funeral of a Jew — he stood. When companions noted that the deceased was Jewish, he replied: 'Was he not a human being?' (Sahih al-Bukhari 1312; Sahih Muslim 961). This authenticated hadith — agreed upon by the two most authoritative hadith collections in the Sunni tradition — is not a footnote. It is a prophetic standard for how Muslims are to treat all human life: with standing respect.

We therefore affirm that every human being — regardless of religion, race, gender, national origin, sexual identity, immigration status, or economic condition — is worthy of equal rights and equal dignity. We reject any theology, political philosophy, or community norm that assigns lesser worth to any category of human person. Karama is not earned. It is given by God at the moment of creation, and no human authority may revoke it. This conviction must govern our politics, our jurisprudence, our treatment of minorities in Muslim-majority countries, and our engagement with non-Muslims everywhere.

Article III. On Salvation and the Possibility of Divine Mercy for All

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَىٰ وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا

Indeed, those who believed and those who were Jews or Christians or Sabians — those who believed in God and the Last Day and did righteousness — will have their reward with their Lord. — Q 2:62

The Quran does not restrict divine mercy and the possibility of salvation to Muslims alone. Quran 2:62 — repeated in substance in 5:69 — addresses Jews, Christians, and Sabians with the same salvific criteria applicable to Muslims: genuine belief in God, genuine belief in the Day of Reckoning, and righteous deeds. This is not theological relativism. It is a recognition that God is the judge of hearts, and that the judge of hearts is not us.

The classical tradition and contemporary Muslim scholarship alike confirm that the diversity of religious paths is not accidental but divinely intended. The Quran declares: 'And if your Lord had willed, He could have made mankind one community; but they will not cease to differ — except those upon whom your Lord has bestowed mercy, and for that He created them' (Q 11:118-119). Commenting on Q 5:48 — 'Had God willed, He would have made you one community, but He intended to test you in what He has given you; so race to all that is good' — classical and contemporary scholars argue that religious diversity is not a problem to be solved but a necessary good through which humanity is called to moral competition and mutual challenge.

We do not claim the authority to determine who is saved. That authority belongs to God alone, Al-Ghaffar (the Forgiving), Al-Wadud (the Loving), Al-Rahman (the Compassionate). We commit to abandoning the theological chauvinism that assigns damnation to all who do not profess our exact creedal formulations, and we commit to trusting in the boundless mercy of the God we worship. Even the most doctrinally rigorous classical scholars — including al-Ghazali, Ibn 'Arabi, Ibn Taymiyya, and Rashid Rida — envisioned a God of mercy and justice whose Paradise was not sealed shut against all those outside the formal boundaries of Islam.

Article IV. On Witness, Not Mission: Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil

وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ

Let there arise from among you a group inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. — Q 3:104

We do not approach our neighbors in other faith traditions as targets for conversion. We approach them as partners in the shared human project of building a more just, more compassionate, and more beautiful world. The Quran's call to amr bil-ma'ruf wa-nahy 'an al-munkar — enjoining good and forbidding evil — is a call to constructive ethical presence in the world, not to coercive religious proselytism. Our mission is to be shuhada' 'ala al-nas — witnesses unto humanity (Q 2:143) — through the quality of our character, the justice of our institutions, the generosity of our hospitality, and the integrity of our conduct.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'Religion is sincere counsel' (Sahih Muslim 55). That counsel — nasihah — is first owed to God, then to His Book, then to His Messenger, then to the leaders of the Muslims, and then to all Muslims and indeed to all people. It is expressed not through force or manipulation but through honest engagement, kind words, and the example of lived virtue. The Islamic tradition has paid more meticulous concern to this moral tenet than perhaps any other culture in history, but that concern is fundamentally about internal moral accountability and civic virtue, not religious imperialism.

We therefore declare that Islam's vocation in a pluralist world is not to empty the synagogues and churches of their congregants, but to fill the world with the fruits of taqwa: justice, mercy, knowledge, beauty, and the relief of suffering. We invite others not to Islam but to goodness. And we trust that goodness, wherever it is found, reflects the light of the God in whom we believe.

Article V. On the Covenant of Medina and the Model of Covenantal Pluralism

When the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) arrived in the city of Yathrib in 622 CE — a city with a substantial and established Jewish population — he did not arrive as a conqueror demanding submission or conversion. He arrived as a refugee seeking refuge in a pre-existing, multi-religious civic community. What he established there was not a theocracy but a covenant: the Sahifat al-Madina (the Charter of Medina), which scholars from Watt to Hamidullah have recognized as among the most remarkable constitutional documents of the ancient world.

The Covenant of Medina bound together Muslim immigrants (Muhajirun), Medinan Muslims (Ansar), and multiple Jewish tribes in a single ummah — a single civic community — with shared obligations of defense, mutual protection, internal autonomy, and collective responsibility. Clause 25 declares explicitly: 'The Jews of Banu 'Awf are one community (umma) along with the believers — for the Jews their religion, and for the Muslims theirs.' The territory itself was declared sacred (haram) for all parties.

This covenant — made not with an abstract Other but with a concrete, named, present community of Jews who were partners and neighbors — is not a historical curiosity. It is a prophetic standard. It tells us that the first Muslim community, shaped directly by revelation and by the Prophet's own governance, chose pluralism and partnership over exclusion and domination. It tells us that the Islamic model of civic life is not the caliphate imagined by modern totalitarians but the covenant community of Medina: a polity in which religious difference is protected, civic obligation is shared, and justice belongs to everyone.

The Marrakesh Declaration (2016), in which 250 Muslim scholars and leaders gathered to affirm the rights of religious minorities under Islamic law, explicitly invoked the Charter of Medina as the foundation of an Islamic concept of equal citizenship. We endorse that invocation. We declare that covenantal pluralism — the commitment to building civic community across religious difference, bound by shared obligations of justice and mutual protection — is not a Western import into Islam. It is Islam's own gift to the world.

Article VI. On the Hijra to Abyssinia: Our Eternal Debt of Gratitude

Before Medina, before the Covenant, before the Hijra that marks the Muslim calendar — there was Abyssinia. In approximately 615 CE, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him),

watching his small community of followers being tortured and persecuted by the Quraysh of Mecca, directed them toward the Kingdom of Aksum in East Africa, ruled by the Christian king al-Najashi (the Negus). His words were simple and momentous: 'If you were to go to Abyssinia, for the king will not tolerate injustice and it is a friendly country.' The Prophet sent his persecuted community to a Christian king. Not to a Muslim refuge that did not yet exist. To a Christian king.

When the Quraysh sent ambassadors demanding the refugees' extradition, the Negus refused to render judgment without a hearing. He listened to the Muslims' defense. Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, speaking for the community, recited Surah Maryam — the Quran's account of the Virgin Mary and the birth of Jesus, honored in Islam as one of the great prophets of God. The Negus wept. He extended full protection to the Muslim refugees and returned the gifts the Quraysh had brought. This is one of the earliest recorded acts of Muslim-Christian dialogue in history: conducted by a Christian king of Africa, centered on shared reverence for Jesus and Mary, and resulting in the protection of a persecuted Muslim minority.

When the Negus died, the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed the absentee funeral prayer — the only time in recorded history he did so for anyone — and asked his companions: 'Seek forgiveness for your brother' (Sahih al-Bukhari 1263, 3877; Sahih Muslim 951). He called the Christian king of Abyssinia his brother. He prayed for his soul. He mourned his death. This is not incidental. This is prophetic theology embodied in prophetic practice.

We declare that the Hijra to Abyssinia creates an eternal obligation of reciprocity for the Muslim community. The Negus saved early Islam when it was most vulnerable. He asked nothing in return. He acted from justice, not calculation. In his example — and in the Prophet's response to it — we find our model: the Muslim community owes a debt of gratitude not only to the Negus but to the principle he embodied: that a just ruler protects the persecuted regardless of their religion, that human solidarity transcends sectarian identity, and that God's mercy works through people of every faith.

Article VII. On Antisemitism: Its Rejection and the Misuse of Sacred Texts

We state plainly and without qualification: antisemitism is a sin. It is incompatible with Islam. It contradicts the Quran's affirmation of the Children of Israel as a people of covenant, the Prophet's own documented relationships with Jewish neighbors and partners, and the

constitutional pluralism of the Covenant of Medina. Any Muslim who harbors hatred for Jews as a people, any Muslim institution that propagates anti-Jewish conspiracy theories, and any Muslim political movement that incorporates antisemitism into its program has betrayed the tradition it claims to represent.

We are aware that certain hadith texts have been weaponized to provide Islamic sanction for violence against Jews. Chief among these is the so-called 'gharqad tree' hadith, cited in Article 7 of the 1988 Hamas Charter and deployed by extremist preachers across the Muslim world to justify murder. We must speak with theological clarity about this text.

This hadith appears in Sahih Muslim 2922 in the Book of Tribulations (Kitab al-Fitan wa Ashrat al-Sa'ah) — the eschatological section of the collection — not in any section of legal rulings, ethical prescriptions, or normative commands. Its placement within the apocalyptic genre is not accidental. Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj and all classical hadith scholars understood fitan literature as a distinct genre subject to different interpretive rules. Hadith scholars applied significantly lower critical standards to apocalyptic texts than to legal chapters. The text is descriptive of eschatological events, not prescriptive of present-day ethical duty.

Moreover, the historical scholarship on Islamic civilization has established that what we recognize as modern antisemitism — the attribution of cosmic evil to Jews as a people — did not exist in the classical Islamic tradition. What circulates today as Islamic antisemitism first appeared among Muslims in the late nineteenth century, imported under European colonial influence and dressed in religious garb. Contemporary anti-Jewish hadith interpretation is not a return to Islamic tradition. It is a colonial-era distortion of the tradition.

We therefore solemnly reject the use of any hadith text — eschatological, apocalyptic, or otherwise — to justify, incite, or sanctify violence against Jews or any other people. We call on Muslim educational institutions, mosques, and media to remove antisemitic content from their curricula and platforms. And we call on Muslim scholars to do the scholarly work of contextualizing and critiquing the misuse of our textual tradition with the same rigor and honesty that Jewish and Christian scholars have applied to problematic passages in their own scriptures.

Article VIII. On Terrorism and Violence: An Absolute Rejection

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

Whoever kills a soul without [just cause]— it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. — Q 5:32

Islam forbids terrorism. This is not a novel ruling issued under pressure from Western governments. It is the plain teaching of the Quran and the authenticated Sunnah, faithfully understood. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was sent 'as a mercy to all the worlds' (Q 21:107). He is not the patron saint of suicide bombers and mass murderers. He is the Mercy of God to creation.

The Amman Message (2004-2005), issued by His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan and endorsed by over 500 Muslim scholars from 50 countries, established the strongest consensus in contemporary Islam: it forbade takfir (declaring fellow Muslims apostates) without just cause, established the validity of all eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence, and set clear preconditions for the legitimate exercise of religious authority. The Open Letter to al-Baghdadi (2014), signed by 126 Muslim scholars, provided a point-by-point theological refutation of ISIS ideology, condemning 24 specific acts and grounding the refutation in the same Quranic verse with which God sent the Prophet: mercy to all the worlds. Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri's 600-page fatwa (2010) declared terrorism to be not merely sinful but kufr — disbelief — under Islamic law.

We endorse all of these declarations without reservation. We add our voices to theirs. We state clearly that attacks on civilians, synagogues, churches, mosques, markets, schools, and places of public gathering — regardless of the alleged political grievance of the perpetrators — are forbidden by Islam, condemned by God, and a disgrace to the ummah. Those who commit such acts in the name of Islam do not represent Islam. They represent its desecration.

We call on Muslim communities, institutions, and leaders everywhere to make this condemnation loud, consistent, and unconditional — not as a response to political pressure but as a matter of Islamic conscience, owed first to God, then to the victims of violence, and then to the billions of Muslims whose reputation is tarnished by those who kill in their faith's name.

Article IX. On Rejecting Muslim Supremacism and Religious Chauvinism

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا

O humanity! We created you from male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. — Q 49:13

The Quran declares that the measure of human excellence before God is taqwa — God-consciousness, moral integrity, righteous character — not membership in the Muslim

ummah. This is not a liberal gloss applied to a text that says something else. The text is explicit: 'Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you' (Q 49:13). Nobility is righteousness. It is not ethnicity, not nationality, and not religious affiliation.

Muslim supremacism — the claim that Muslims are inherently superior human beings, that non-Muslims are fundamentally lesser persons, that the project of Islamic civilization is the domination of all other civilizations — is a heresy. It contradicts the Quranic affirmation of universal human dignity. It contradicts the prophetic example of standing for the Jewish funeral procession. It contradicts the covenantal pluralism of Medina. It contradicts the gratitude owed to the Christian Negus of Abyssinia. And it contradicts the plain meaning of Q 49:13.

The scholar Khaled Abou El Fadl has written with particular clarity about what he calls 'Muslim puritans' who imagine that God's perfection is fully attainable on earth and who claim a self-righteous perfectionism that easily slips into a pretense of supremacy. He insists that any valid Quranic interpretation must accord with general moral imperatives such as mercy, justice, and kindness. We agree. A theology that produces supremacism and hatred has misread its own scripture. We commit to reading ours with the care, humility, and mercy it demands.

We declare that celebrating the richness of other religious traditions, honoring the moral achievements of non-Muslim civilizations, learning from Jewish philosophers and Christian mystics and Hindu sages and Buddhist teachers, and building partnerships of justice with people of all faiths and no faith — all of this is not a betrayal of Islam but an expression of its deepest teaching: that diversity is the divine will, and that knowing one another across difference is among the noblest purposes of human life.

Article X. On the Orphan and the Wayfarer: Today's Refugees and Immigrants

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِي مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا

And they give food in spite of love for it to the poor, the orphan, and the captive.

— Q 76:8

The Quran returns repeatedly and insistently to the figure of the yatim — the orphan — and the ibn al-sabil — the wayfarer, the traveler cut off from resources and community, the one who is far from home. These figures appear in the Quran not as objects of pity but as moral tests. How we treat the orphan and the wayfarer is, the Quran says, how we treat religion itself: 'Do you see the one who denies the faith? It is he who drives away the orphan' (Q 107:1-3).

The concept of ibn al-sabil — 'the son of the road' — appears in seven Quranic verses and is enshrined in Q 9:60 as one of the eight obligatory categories of zakat recipients. Supporting the stranded traveler is not discretionary charity in Islam. It is a binding religious obligation, a pillar of the obligatory almsgiving that sustains Muslim community life. In the classical fiqh tradition, ibn al-sabil was understood to encompass anyone who finds themselves in need far from their resources and community — including those fleeing persecution, famine, or violence. In our contemporary world, the yatim is the child in a refugee camp. The ibn al-sabil is the asylum seeker at the border. The captive is the detained migrant. These Quranic categories are not historical relics. They are descriptions of living people who are, right now, testing our faith.

The Islamic tradition developed a rich jurisprudential framework for refugee protection through the institution of aman (safe conduct), grounded in Q 9:6: 'If any of the polytheists seeks your protection, grant him protection so that he may hear the word of God. Then deliver him to his place of safety.' Classical scholars established that aman was irrevocable once granted and that the principle of non-refoulement — not returning someone to a place where they face death — was an Islamic legal requirement centuries before the 1951 Geneva Convention. The right to asylum in Islamic tradition is not a humanitarian concession. It is a religious duty.

We therefore declare that Muslim-majority nations and Muslim-majority communities bear a particular obligation — grounded in Quran, Sunnah, and the living memory of our own history as a refugee people — to serve as places of welcome, protection, and integration for those fleeing political persecution, religious violence, economic oppression, and environmental catastrophe. This obligation is not contingent on the religion of the refugee, the politics of the host government, or the strain on social services. It is contingent on the fear of God and the love of God's creation.

Article XI. On the Ansar: Muslim Lands as Places of Refuge

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّأُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ

Those who, before them, had homes and had adopted the faith, love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their hearts of what the emigrants were given but give them preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. — Q 59:9

The Ansar of Medina — the Helpers — provide the most detailed and inspiring Quranic model for what it means to welcome the stranger. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his persecuted companions arrived in Medina as refugees from Mecca, the Ansar did not merely

tolerate their presence. They shared their homes, their wealth, and their social standing. The Quran commemorates this with a word that elevates generous hospitality to the highest level of Islamic virtue: ithar — selfless preference for others over oneself, even when one is in need.

The Prophet institutionalized this welcome through mu'akhat — brotherhood — pairing each Muhajir (immigrant) with an Ansari (helper) in a bond of reciprocal obligation. Sa'd ibn al-Rabi' offered to divide his property in half for his brother 'Abdurrahman ibn 'Awf. When 'Abdurrahman declined, asking only to be shown the marketplace, the Prophet praised both responses: the generosity of the helper and the dignity of the one helped. The model integrates generous hosting with respect for human agency and self-determination — a model far more sophisticated and humane than either indifferent neglect or patronizing charity.

The Quran tells us that one Ansari family extinguished their lamp so that a guest would not see they were going hungry — preferring their guest's comfort to their own (Sahih al-Bukhari). The Prophet declared: 'Love for the Ansar is a sign of faith, and hatred for them is a sign of hypocrisy' (Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, multiple narrations). We declare that love for the Ansar today means imitating the Ansar today. It means Muslim-majority nations and Muslim-majority communities organizing themselves to be places of genuine welcome, legal protection, and human flourishing for those who have been driven from their homes.

This includes refugees fleeing war and political persecution, but it also includes those fleeing the violence of poverty and the persecution of economic exclusion. The Quran makes no such distinction. The captive is listed alongside the poor and the orphan. The wayfarer is listed alongside the needy and the enslaved. Our obligation extends to all who are in need and far from safety — regardless of their religion, their politics, or the administrative category the United Nations assigns them.

Article XII. On the Quran as a Guide for Human Flourishing

وَلِكُلٍّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ

For each [community] there is a direction toward which it faces. So race toward all that is good. — Q 2:148

The Quran was revealed as a guide for human flourishing. It was not revealed as a manual for perpetual warfare, a blueprint for religious domination, or a justification for the subjugation of those who believe differently. The Quran's own self-description is instructive: it is huda

(guidance), rahma (mercy), shifa' (healing), and nur (light). It is described as a message to al-'alamin — to all the worlds (Q 21:107), not to a narrow religious elite.

The Quran's major themes — the unity and sovereignty of God, the creation of humanity as God's vicegerent on earth, the requirements of justice and moral accountability, the warning against exploitation and arrogance, and the promise of divine mercy — constitute a coherent ethical vision for human civilization, not a sectarian rulebook for Muslim domination. Early Muslim exegetes, reading the Quran in its full context, consistently retrieved principles of moderation and pluralism that later, more polemically motivated interpreters obscured.

We affirm that the Quran's call to 'race toward all that is good' (Q 2:148) and 'compete in doing what is good' (Q 5:48) is a call to humanity as a whole — to Muslims, Jews, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, secular humanists, and all people of conscience. The race toward goodness is not a zero-sum competition in which one community's moral achievement diminishes another's. It is the shared project of human civilization, in which all communities are invited to bring their gifts, their traditions, their wisdom, and their love of God's creation.

We therefore reject readings of the Quran that weaponize its verses about conflict, taken from specific historical contexts, to justify permanent hostility toward all non-Muslims. We reject the claim that the 'verse of the sword' (Q 9:5) abrogates the Quran's hundreds of verses affirming mercy, justice, and coexistence. We embrace the scholarly consensus that contextual, historical, and thematic reading of the Quran produces not a religion of war but a religion of covenantal commitment to the flourishing of all God's creatures.

Article XIII. On the Moral Obligation of Each Generation

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'The best among you are those who are most beneficial to others' (al-Tabarani; graded hasan by al-Albani). He said: 'None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself' (Sahih al-Bukhari 13; Sahih Muslim 45) — and the scholars note that in some narrations, the word used is not 'brother' in the religious sense but neighbor, encompassing all human beings. He said: 'The world is a green and pleasant pasture, and God has made you stewards (khulafa') of it, and He is watching how you act' (Sahih Muslim 2742).

Stewardship. We are trustees, not owners. We have inherited a world from those who came before us, and we are obligated to hand it forward, improved, to those who come after. This is

the meaning of khilafa — the Quranic concept of humanity as God's vicegerent on earth (Q 2:30). It is not a license for domination. It is a responsibility for care. The Quran's great recurring concern with the orphan, the poor, the wayfarer, the slave, and the marginalized is not a concern for charity alone. It is a structural concern: who are the people our society systematically fails? What are we doing about it?

We believe each generation of Muslims is called to ask that question with fresh eyes and to answer it with the full resources of the tradition — its Quran, its Prophetic example, its jurisprudential heritage, its mystical depth, and its capacity for ijtihad (independent scholarly reasoning) in response to new challenges. The refugees of our century, the climate disasters of our century, the digital alienation of our century, the resurgence of ethnic nationalism and religious hatred in our century — these are the challenges our generation has been given. The tradition does not give us ready-made answers to all of them. But it gives us the moral framework, the theological resources, and the prophetic example to develop those answers with wisdom, courage, and compassion.

We conclude where we began: with the Name of God, Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim. The God of Islam is not primarily a God of punishment, domination, or Muslim triumphalism. The God of Islam is the God whose mercy encompasses all things (Q 7:156) — whose compassion precedes His judgment, whose love for creation preceded creation itself. To worship that God authentically is to embody that mercy in the world. To care for the orphan and the wayfarer. To honor the dignity of those who believe differently. To stand for Jewish funeral processions. To pray for Christian kings who sheltered us when we were most vulnerable. To build covenants with our neighbors that protect the weak, bind the community, and make room for every faith to practice its own path.

This is the Islam we inherit. This is the Islam we intend to pass on. This is the Islam through which, God willing, we will leave the world better than we found it.

وَاللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

God is predominant in His affair, but most people do not know.

— Q 12:21