



GLOBAL INTERFAITH COALITION CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE AND ADMINISTRATION OF AID IN YEMEN

A Statement by the United Religions Initiative, The Charter of Compassion,
and The Parliament of the World's Religions

Yemen is a nation in crisis. The impoverished country is facing a humanitarian crisis of mammoth proportions, including a devastating famine, in an ongoing civil war that is exacerbated by a scourge of religious violence. There is no time to spare in working to assist more than 3 million Yemenis who are displaced within the country, and over 280,000 who have sought refuge in other countries.

We, the United Religions Initiative, the Charter for Compassion, and the Parliament of the World's Religions, a coalition of three global interfaith organizations, call for immediate action that must include the cooperation of the entire international community—including the United States, the United Nations, and the wider global community. This initiative must use every diplomatic and non-violent means possible to enact an immediate cease-fire in the civil war between the Yemen government and the Houthis rebels and to call on the allies of the conflicting parties to stop all arms shipments to their Yemeni partners.

The international community must also find the means to prevent the harassment, detention, and execution of members of religious minorities, with a special protection provided immediately to members of the Baha'i faith who are now being persecuted by the Houthis in Yemen.

Steps toward the goals of peace in Yemen will include:

- Stopping all arms deliveries
- Halting attacks on aid workers and civilians
- Ending attacks on hospitals and clinics
- Allowing humanitarian goods, especially food, water, medical supplies, and basic needs, to enter the country without restrictions
- Allowing schools to reopen so children can continue their studies
- Pursuing a political solution to the conflict.

Interfaith and humanitarian organizations stand ready to assist fourteen million people—

half of Yemen's population—who are enduring a deadly famine, as this crisis worsens daily. Aid workers from religious and humanitarian organizations, including the United Religions Initiative (URI) and the Charter of Compassion, are unable to administer food, water, shelter, and health care. Due to these restrictions, an estimated 50,000 children died in 2017, an average of 130 every day.

This unconscionable devastation must end for the Yemeni people. Let each person of faith and conscience relay this message to all authorities in his or her region, through organized campaigns, faith communities, and political action:

- We call upon the United Nations Security Council to seek an immediate cease-fire so access to aid can be established.
- We call on the parties to the conflict to reduce their involvement in the conflict and begin negotiations for a permanent resolution of violence, religious persecution, and the civil war.
- We call on faith communities and interfaith movements to join in advocacy for the restoration of peace and the building of a unified, conflict-free, and productive nation.

Faith communities and interfaith movements across the globe hold a special responsibility to uphold the teachings of each and all traditions, and should seek the support of governments to demand that immediate actions be taken. Starvation, sectarian violence, and religious persecution will no longer flourish in a world that ensures compassion—the universal teaching of each cultural and faith-based moral tradition—forms the basis of all global policy.



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