



## **EIGHTH DOHA CONFERENCE ON INTERFAITH DIALOGUE**

**October 19-21, 2010**

**DOHA, QATAR**

### **DECLARATION**

Over 220 participants from 58 countries - Jews, Christians and Muslims - met for the Eighth Doha Conference on Interfaith Dialogue. They acknowledged the generous hospitality of HH Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa al-Thani and of the State and people of Qatar, and paid tribute to the organizers of the conference, the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Qatar University. The Minister of Justice, HE Mr. Hassan Bin Abdulla Al Ghanim, at the opening session of the conference welcomed the participants and spoke for the need to make and to follow up concrete recommendations on the theme of the conference **“Raising the New Generation with a Foundation of Values and Tradition: Religious Perspectives.”**

The Conference addressed three main themes: the role of the family, the role of schools and media, and the role of places of worship.

## ***1. The Family: the Heart of Raising and Sustaining the Next Generation***

Families have a special responsibility and opportunity for an education which will encourage tolerance and respect for neighbors and strangers. While the family can be a great blessing, concern was expressed about the vulnerability of many children who lack family support. There is a great need for children to look beyond their own needs and to replace selfish competition with compassion for others. Children are idealists by nature and are repelled by violence – whether domestic or political.

**THE CONFERENCE CALLS UPON FAITH COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT THE FAMILY AS A FUNDAMENTAL UNIT IN SOCIETY AND AS THE PLACE WHERE CHILDREN FIRST LEARN TO PRACTICE DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION.**

## ***2. The Role of Educational, Social and Media Institutions***

Schools, social institutions and the media can play a vital role in preparing young people for local and global responsibilities. Any form of discrimination or prejudice must be challenged. All three faith communities, Jewish, Christian and Muslim, have experiences of being victimized or ridiculed, it is therefore very important that ignorance be overcome and that differences be respected. Educational and media institutions should allow young people to search for truth and to make their own choices. Together with the great technological advances in the field of media comes great opportunity for the dissemination of values, as well as the great danger of the misuse of media for the degradation of the lives of young people.

**THE CONFERENCE CALLS UPON FAITH COMMUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE SCHOOLS, SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE**



**MEDIA TO DEVELOP CURRICULA, SOCIAL PROJECTS AND MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS WHICH PROMOTE SENSITIVITY TO OTHER RELIGIONS AND CULTURES AND THE RESPECT OF DIFFERENCES.**

***3. Places of Worship: Supporting and Influencing the Next Generation***

As well as the importance of the family, of schools, social institutions and the media, it was seen that places of worship can provide many good influences in the upbringing of children and young people. However it was also recognized that places of worship might be misused to provoke exclusivism and enmity. Group discussions addressed issues such as: "Religious Upbringing and Contemporary Challenges in a Globalized Era", "How to Restore the Active Role of Worship for the Next Generation", and "The Role of Worship in Implanting Religious Principles."

**THE CONFERENCE CALLS UPON FAITH COMMUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE PLACES OF WORSHIP TO PREPARE YOUNG PEOPLE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY, FOR IMPLEMENTING VALUES OF COMPASSION AND COOPERATION.**

The concluding session was enriched by the contribution of a group of students from Qatar and the Netherlands on the theme "**A Youth Perspective on Interfaith Dialogue and the Role of Religion in Raising Generations.**" This contribution by young people fulfilled a wish expressed made at many points during the conference to listen to the experiences, both positive and negative, of young people who will themselves take responsibility to build a world with more justice and peace.