

WORLD FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

UNITED THROUGH COMMON VALUES, ENRICHED BY CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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“TOWARDS A WORLD WITHOUT DIVIDING LINES”

Today, the world's cultures are more than ever required to sustain dialogue and enhance coexistence in such a way as to benefit one another; while casting away the causes of contention and disdain, on the basis of the universal values and principles that should be promoted and instilled in peoples' minds and acts as a common heritage of humanity. This dialogue's contribution to the path of human civilization is indispensable, given its role in consolidating cooperation, coexistence, peace, love, tolerance and cross-cultural bonds among peoples and nations. Dialogue among civilizations should build on the points of convergence not divergence, within the framework of fair judgement and respect for the Other, without any distortion of the image of others, or disrespect for them and their religions, beliefs, religious symbols, or transgression on their cultural and civilizational specificities.

As that worrisome challenge has risen up the political agenda, the notion of 'intercultural dialogue' has emerged as a simple and clear description of the requirement of the moment. The risk is the perpetual division of society and the international community into various versions of a collectivised 'self' and 'other', defined along lines of religion, skin colour, language or nationality, or some combination of these. And the solution must entail a breaking down of such stereotyped identities through genuine talking, and listening, by individuals, NGOs, governments and transgovernmental organisations.

Intercultural dialogue has a capacity to transcend dividing lines because it has the following features, which would be elaborated: it is founded upon universal norms; it offers an alternative vision of our common humanity, and it directly engages in the cultural arena in which such tensions are manifested.

Key questions

- Globalization and its impacts to intercultural relations
- New world order: Global culture and cultural diplomacy
- Multiculturalism and Trans-culturalism in the Global agenda.
- The role of International Organizations in cross-cultural relations.