



Resolution on promoting solidarity and respect among the diverse people, cultures and nations of the world

- Recognizing the widespread social isolation, economic hardship, despair, fear and anger triggered by the COVID-19 crisis in societies across the globe;
- Humbled by an awareness of our collective responsibility to this and future generations, and realizing that our actions today will shape the future, for good or ill;
- Realizing that some of the most profound advances in the human condition emerged in response to severe crises, including the horrors of pandemic, war and grave historical injustices, such as genocide and slavery, whose consequences continue to haunt us to the present day;
- Affirming that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) represents a significant contribution to the development of shared civilizational values that may unite the diverse people, nations and cultures of the world;
- Recalling that Western humanism and Christian democracy played a vital role in rebuilding Europe after the Second World War and in establishing the European Community;
- Lauding the historic role of St. Pope John XXIII, Jules Isaac, Jacques Maritain, John Courtney Murray and other spiritual and intellectual luminaries in shaping the Second Vatican Council, including its teaching on religious freedom (*Dignitatis humanae*) and on relations between different religious communities (*Nostrae aetate*);
- Acknowledging the U.S. Department of State's *Report of the Commission on Unalienable Rights* and its re-affirmation of the spirit and substance of fundamental human rights, including those articulated by UDHR;
- Recognizing that the universal values and aspirations expressed in these documents have long been articulated and embraced by the world's great cultural, religious and ethical traditions;
- Noting that the 6th-century BCE *Tao Te Ching* conveys a profound apprehension of the "Way" and how it is expressed through virtue, including humility, mercy and justice;
- Acknowledging that Ashoka's Edicts, created in 3rd-century BCE India, sprang from the aspiration to develop a society characterized by *dharma*, including universal compassion, justice and respect for the inherent dignity of all human beings;
- Recognizing that the foundational texts of the Humanitarian Islam movement represent a comprehensive affirmation of these universal values from within the Islamic tradition, including the principle of *rahmah* (universal love and compassion);
- Recalling the *Document on Human Fraternity*, signed by Pope Francis and Shaykh Ahmed el-Tayyeb of al-Azhar, which urges human beings to live a dignified and virtuous life by embracing a spirit of universal brotherhood and treating others with love and respect;



- Considering that these teachings originated among diverse cultures over thousands of years; embody the collective wisdom of humanity; reflect its aspiration to live in dignity and freedom; and underscore the need for societies to embrace universal ethics and humanitarian values if they are to avoid repeating the cataclysms of the past;
- Discerning that hatred of others—whether based upon ethnic, religious or ideological “tribalism”—is inimical to virtue and noble character, which represent the only secure foundation upon which to build a peaceful and prosperous global civilization;
- Realizing that scientific, technological and economic progress have brought civilization to our present cross-roads, with greater opportunity for advancement—or mass destruction—than ever before;
- Anticipating that the 21st century may witness the emergence of a truly global civilization, which offers an unprecedented opportunity for people of every faith and nation to cooperate in building a better life for themselves and their children;
- Concluding that in order to fulfill the promise of a just and noble civilization, we must promote solidarity and respect among the diverse people, cultures and nations of the world, so that the innate human will to dominate others—and the threat of tyranny posed by the nexus of dogmatism, political and economic power, and technology—do not lead, instead, to the dystopian future anticipated by George Orwell in his novel *1984*, with its memorable image of “a boot stamping on a human face—forever”;

The CDI states the following:

- We call upon governments and civil society institutions to join in promoting solidarity and respect among the diverse people, cultures and nations of the world;
- We note that political and ideological polarization tends to create a false dichotomy between “conserving” and “progressing,” when in fact these principles are intrinsically symbiotic by nature and essential to human flourishing;
- We urge opinion leaders in the fields of religion, education, popular culture, government, business and the media to advocate and promote the spirit of cooperation rather than conflict, within and between civilizations;
- We recommend that dialogue among the world’s diverse peoples, cultures and religions employ the principle of “the highest common denominator,” founded upon the noblest aspirations of every civilization;
- We resolve to build and bequeath to future generations a global civilization whose constituent elements retain their distinctive characteristics. To emerge and flourish, such a civilization must respect the equal rights and dignity of every human being and embody the principle of “harmony and unity amid diversity,” as expressed in the mottos of the European Union (*In varietate concordia*) and the Republic of Indonesia (*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*).

Executive Committee Video Conference, October 1, 2020.