

# Statement from the G20 Interfaith Summit 2014

We, representatives of many of the religious communities of G20 nations, have come together to express our commitment to peace and equality in a world facing economic and political challenges. We offer the best of our diverse traditions in the service of furthering harmony between nations in order that the lives of all people are enriched and their dignity respected. It is in this spirit that we offer these reflections to the leaders who have gathered for the G20 Summit in Brisbane.

We follow in the steps of religious leaders who have contributed to previous G20 Summits and continue their work of reflection on the global agendas that are before the world's most powerful nations. These reflections contain insights and hopes along with encouragement to leaders as they discuss issues and make decisions that affect all peoples and nations.

Each of our religious traditions deeply holds widely-shared commitments to the work of freedom, justice and human rights.

We affirm:

- The importance of freedom of religious belief and its manifestations as a fundamental human right;
- The importance of our interfaith relations as a source of strength that assists in the development of a framework for sustainable economic gains;
- That spiritual values help to build sustainable economic development; The interconnectedness of spiritual values and economic development in the pursuit of a stable and just society.

## **Promoting stronger economic growth and employment outcomes**

We continue to call for the careful management and regulation of the global financial systems for which the leaders of G20 nations are largely responsible. The creation of jobs and strengthening growth should continue to be done in the spirit of a shared humanity and the equality of all people.

Employment outcomes should respect the desire of all to have a secure job with reasonable conditions and fair rates of remuneration. Those seeking

work should not be exploited or taken for granted.

We urge wealthy nations to respond ethically when making decisions about the use of resources from developing nations. This includes respecting the wishes of nations to receive a fair price for their goods in order that all can benefit rather than the wealthy few.

We encourage efforts to end corruption within the leadership of nations and businesses through the development of more open and transparent practices and regulations.

Job markets need to be open and inclusive where people feel they can contribute to the economic growth of their nation and community. For example, young people should have access to better quality and more productive jobs. At the same time the experience and expertise of older people in the workforce should be recognized.

Women have a crucial role to play as leaders and agents of change and constitute a vital source of untapped potential for the economic well-being of all peoples and nations. We continue to encourage the promotion of women to active leadership roles and acknowledge their important contribution to community development.

Spiritual development assists in the economic well being of all nations. Diverse religious beliefs and practices should be allowed to grow and flourish in an atmosphere where worship and religious observances and traditions can occur openly and without hindrance.

## **Building Global Economic Resilience**

The G20 nations are commended for their efforts in tackling the financial crisis of 2008 and putting the world economy on the path to recovery. We endorse the decision made at the 2014 G20 Leaders Summit in Brisbane: “to support development and inclusive growth, and to help reduce inequality and poverty”.

We encourage these efforts but ask that the recovery be coordinated in an ethical and just manner built on trust and transparency. This, we believe, will lead to sound and sustainable growth that is both beneficial and resilient.

We call on the nations to invest wisely in a manner that will bring growth and stability to their people. Good leadership is essential at all levels of society and so we pledge to work with and assist political leaders in the vital task of

economic development and building resilience in order to achieve a sustainable and durable future.

The environment is very fragile. Sustained exploitation of resources and the increase in industrialisation have contributed to global climate change and the degradation of the environment. In the pursuit of economic resilience we encourage the G20 nations to continue the development of environmental measures that protect both climate and societies. Our faith traditions command us to care for the environment and its inhabitants and so we offer our insights, ideas and understandings to assist in this task.

## **Eliminating hunger and poverty**

Hunger and poverty inhibit the growth of nations and communities and prevent the establishment of resilient economies. Past statements from G8 and G20 religious leaders' gatherings have urged the world leaders to focus on the root causes of global hunger and poverty. We add our encouragement to their call while supporting the creation of local initiatives that produce long term outcomes.

Included in this call is the encouragement to continue the reform of trade policies to create just economic and fiscal systems. This reformation includes the elimination of systems that allow corruption and violence to flourish, leading to the degradation of the earth and its peoples, and producing conflicts and food insecurity.

Women and children continue to suffer most in crises. This is reflected in the ways women and children have been violated and neglected in recent global conflicts. We encourage the promotion of women into leadership roles and to act as agents of change to promote a sustainable civil society, which provides schooling and healthcare for all.

## **Our Commitment**

This statement reflects the core values of love, cooperation, honesty, respect and self discipline that deeply resonate within each of our religious traditions. We commit ourselves to promoting these values through education, policy and practice. This includes promoting respect between all people. We also commit ourselves to enact, support and live out these values while being a voice for the poor, marginalised and those in society who are vulnerable or at risk.