

THE
**CHARTER OF
BUILDING
BRIDGES**
BETWEEN
**ISLAMIC
SCHOOLS**
OF THOUGHT
AND SECTS



المؤتمـر الدولـي
بـنـاء الجـسـور بـيـن
المـذاهـب الإـسـلامـية

The Global Conference For Building Bridges
Between Islamic Schools of Thought and Sects



رابطـة العـالمـة الإـسـلامـية

MUSLIM WORLD LEAGUE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Based on the principle of Islam, which calls for the strengthening of Islamic brotherhood, and in line with the contents of the Makkah Charter endorsed by the Ummah's muftis and scholars on the twenty-fourth of the holy month of Ramadan in the year 1440 AH, corresponding to the twenty-ninth of May 2019, distinguished scholars from various Islamic sects and components gathered at the conference of this charter. Meeting near the unifying Qibla and the Sacred House of Allah, under the banner of Islam - the message of mercy, justice, and peace, and the religion of tolerance, moderation, and balance - they expressed their pride in their religion as both law and path. They affirmed their belief in Allah Almighty as their Lord and the only one worthy of worship, and in Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) as the final prophet and messenger, adhering to the words of Allah Almighty: "Truly, this, your Ummah [Sharia or religion (Islamic Monotheism)] is one religion, and I am your Lord, therefore worship Me (Alone)."

They gathered, heeding the call for harmony and unity, fully aware of the current duty to remind everyone of the concept of One Nation. They recognized that today, more than ever, there is an urgent need to consolidate their ranks, harmonize their efforts through their shared values that bridge their differences, unify their fragmented community, and reconcile their hearts. This gathering aimed to reconcile the differences among their schools of thought and sects by focusing on the fundamental principles and overarching values of Islam, along with its definitive rulings and legislation. Seeking to preserve their rights and dignity, the Ummah strives for unity by adhering to what Allah Almighty has commanded: "And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute (with one another) lest you lose courage and your strength departs". They are aware of the unfortunate repercussions reported by the Ummah, which can only be resolved, with God's help, by achieving true Islamic brotherhood. This requires a full understanding of the ethics of disagreement and communication, which encompasses being cautious and addressing the risks associated with categorization and exclusion, understanding the harm caused by defamation

and projection, and rejecting the dissemination of misinformation and the practice of labeling someone as a disbeliever. These issues have led to confusion, division, enmity, and significant corruption.

They gathered to address the stereotypes associated with inter-sectarian conflict that misrepresent the essence of their religion. Such stereotypes have persuaded narrow-minded individuals who fail to appreciate Allah's way of creating diversity and multiplicity among people. This misunderstanding undermines the wisdom and ethical guidelines prescribed by Islam, detracting from a comprehensive understanding of Sharia, and the principles of brotherhood and compassion central to the faith. Acknowledging the potential damage to the unifying spirit of Islam, as well as the common objective of preserving its reputation and peaceful essence, the conferees shared experiences detailing the pain and tragedies that result from overstepping these boundaries. These actions not only hinder the Ummah from fulfilling its pivotal role but also detract from its contribution to civilization.

The conferees agreed to move beyond unproductive arguments that resulted in insulting rhetoric, which in turn caused fragmentation and division within the Ummah, particularly regarding the narrowed perceptions of Islam's universality. They aim to bolster efforts towards unity, harmony, and cooperation. This charter outlines their commitment, explaining how their diverse sects can coexist, guided by the following principles:

1. Muslims form one nation; they worship one God, recite one book, follow one Prophet, and share one Direction (Qibla) regardless of their location. They are united under the name of Islam—by the grace of God. This name, chosen by Allah Almighty, cannot be replaced: "It is He (Allah) Who has named you Muslims." There is no place for extraneous names and descriptions that divide rather than unite, diverge rather than bring closer, except those that explain the curriculum and catalyze Islamic Action, provided they neither replace nor compete with the name of

Islam. This includes rejecting the alternatives chosen by extremists that harm the unity of the Ummah.

2. A Muslim is anyone who testifies to the oneness of Allah Almighty—there is no god but Him—in divinity, and to His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) as the messenger and the seal of prophecy, adheres to the firm rope of Allah, believes in the Sharia’s rulings and the religion’s constants, acts according to them, and does not knowingly and intentionally commit or believe in what Muslims unanimously declare as disbelief.
3. The message of Islam is divine in its source, monotheistic in its belief, enlightened in its purposes, humane in its values, wise in its legislation, and beneficial for all; Allah Almighty said: “And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as mercy for the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists).” Thus, Muslims are called to reclaim their civilizational role, contributing to the building of a more inclusive and beneficial future that ensures sustainable security and peace.
4. The facts of Islam are derived from Revelation, as represented by the Holy Quran and what has been authentically transmitted from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or unanimously agreed upon by the Ummah. Furthermore, the independent reasoning (Ijtihad) of scholars, stemming from their knowledge and faith, is held in respect, reverence, and considered beneficial. In the face of diversity and disagreement, Muslims are to adhere to known ethics and rules.
5. Islam represents the final message from Allah to His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), and no one, regardless of their knowledge and righteousness, can alter anything within Islam. Allah Almighty stated: “say: ‘Bring us a Quran other than this or change it.’ Say (O Muhammad) ‘It is not for me to change it on my own accord; I only follow that which is revealed to me. Verily, I fear the torment of a Great Day (i.e., the Day of Resurrection) if I were to disobey my Lord.’”

6. Achieving the objectives of the legislation involves preserving the five necessities: religion as the basis of Islamic identity, the protection of oneself (encompassing dignity, security, life), the care for the mind to maintain societal balance, the sacredness of honor to protect societal values, and the preservation of wealth from harm and corruption. Considering the modern era's national states, a sixth necessity arises: safeguarding the homeland from any harm to its identity, security, achievements, or interests.
7. The formation of "the Muslim moderate character" is the responsibility of scholars, jurists, and their institutions, particularly those tasked with elucidating Islam's truths and virtues, promoting its moderate and exemplary qualities, and correcting misconceptions.
8. The diversity of schools of thought, sects, and ideologies among Muslims is a manifestation of divine will, emphasizing the inevitability of diversity as a part of God's laws. This diversity, rooted in methodological differences and varying conditions, requires thoughtful engagement and caution against divisiveness. The commonalities among Islamic schools of thought, particularly the Two Declarations of Faith, outweigh their differences, fostering Islamic brotherhood stronger than ideological diversities. Muslims should always seek and follow the truth.
9. Islamic schools of thought and sects emerged within the Muslim community through systematic foundations and scientific efforts, grounded in respect for core principles. The duty lies in maintaining these schools' origins in Islam and their constructive contributions without disrupting their positive roles, deviating from correctness, mistrusting their proponents, or misusing their diversity.
10. The religious and cultural unity of Muslims is a profound duty, and striving to achieve it is a noble endeavor that necessitates reinforcing the Islamic commonalities that underpin this unity in its broadest terms and major issues.

11. Muslims from diverse backgrounds are partners in building their distinguished civilization, facing contemporary challenges, and collectively aspiring to a future enriched with brotherhood and harmony. In this future, commonalities override divisions and conflicts, elevating high values to foster understanding, coexistence, and cooperation.
12. The events and lessons of history should inspire future generations to replicate successes and avoid past mistakes. It is neither legally nor logically acceptable to dredge up historical debates or differences among schools of thought to undermine unity, brotherhood, and cooperation within the Ummah.
13. Islamic commonalities are well-established principles that unite the Ummah, reflecting unity, harmony, and shared responsibilities. Understanding these deeply enhances resilience against extremism and conflicts among different schools of thought.
14. The necessity of holding regular, effective, and productive dialogue forums among Islamic sects to strengthen their brotherly bonds, goodwill, persistence, and to address challenges and obstacles effectively.
15. The main sources of tragedies have been the slogans of partisanship and extremism, leading to conflicts, historical tumults, and fostering animosities. These behaviors, fueled by marginalization, weaken the bonds of brotherhood and the noble objectives of Islam, much to the pleasure of Islam's adversaries and other malevolent forces.
16. A Muslim is defined by the utterance and adherence to the Two Declarations of Faith, believing in Islam's principles. It is impermissible to label anyone a disbeliever without incontrovertible evidence, as acknowledged by knowledgeable and faithful individuals.
17. The acts of declaring disbelief (Takfir), denouncing innovation (bid'ah), and spreading misinformation are governed by strict rules and require precise evidence. Such judgments are reserved for institutional bodies equipped

with knowledge, moderation, and justice, and must be supported by Islamic jurisprudence as agreed upon by the knowledgeable and faithful.

18. Cooperation among diverse Muslim communities is crucial for achieving integration and enhancing the Ummah's presence and influence, both within national communities and internationally, within the framework of their national systems.
19. Muslims unite in supporting just causes at both Islamic and international levels, including the steadfastness of the Palestinian people against atrocities, their right to an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the preservation of Jerusalem's historical and Islamic identity.
20. Protecting the components of Islamic identity in non-Islamic countries is essential, especially in seeking recognition of their rights within civil constitutions. Scholars should emphasize the importance of optimal coexistence, caution against extremism, and advise against adhering to directives unsuitable for their circumstances, as decreed by Sharia.
21. The family, as society's nucleus, is vital for educating and guiding the young, safeguarding them from harm, and instilling Islamic values of brotherhood, understanding, harmony, and cooperation.
22. Educational efficiency plays a critical role in family building, shaping young minds, and guiding them towards a promising future under Allah's guidance. This includes the efficiency of teachers and the integrity of the curriculum at all educational levels, without gender discrimination, as Islam encourages learning for all.
23. Girls, within their legitimate roles, significantly contribute to realizing the Ummah's aspirations, particularly in nurturing well-educated families, underscoring the family's centrality in society and as a source of education.
24. Islamic media discourse aims to foster brotherhood and cooperation, raise awareness, correct misconceptions within Islam, and counter offensive campaigns, while urging Muslims, especially in non-Islamic countries,

to accurately represent their faith and shoulder their responsibilities in depicting true Islam.

25. Misuse of traditional and new media escalates disputes and fosters enmity within Islamic societies. Media messages should focus on constructive topics and dialogues that promote Islamic brotherhood and knowledge exchange without arrogance or defamation.
26. Warning against sedition, its causes, and instigators is crucial, as is condemning incitement that undermines Islamic brotherhood. Allah Almighty said: "The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion)." And the Prophet (Peace and blessings be upon him) said: "become the slaves of Allah, and be brothers to one another".
27. Conflicts among Muslims, fueled by extremism or disrespect for their jurisprudence, serve no purpose and please only adversaries. Such actions are immoral, damaging individuals, sects, the reputation of the religion, and peace.
28. An annual conference to reaffirm the vision, mission, goals, and values of this meeting is proposed to enhance commitment to this charter. Next year, "The Second Conference for Building Bridges Between Islamic Schools of Thought and Sects," will be held that aims to discuss recent developments in the Islamic arena, with God's help.

For the purpose of facilitating communication between Islamic sects, a joint coordinating committee will be established, named 'The Coordinating Committee between Islamic Schools of Thought and Sects.' The General Secretariat of the Muslim World League will outline the committee's system, chairmanship, members, and secretariat in consultation with senior Islamic figures from various sects. These proposals are to be approved during the next conference.

The attendees of this conference pledge to uphold the contents of this charter and strive to embed its principles within their scientific academies and national communities, without prejudice to applicable regulations and international laws. Furthermore, they call on all scholarly bodies, community figures, and national institutions to support the charter.

They extend their gratitude to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, and to His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, Crown Prince—may Allah protect them—for the significant efforts exerted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in unifying the Ummah and promoting cooperation among them. This is in recognition of the Kingdom's pioneering Islamic role and the honor of being the focal point for Muslims worldwide, including the service of the Two Holy Mosques.

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