

Statement of the World Council of *Religions for Peace*

Shared Sacred Flourishing: A New Vision for Global Transformation

July 29, 2025 | World Council Meeting

We, the World Council of *Religions for Peace*, gathered in Istanbul, at this pivotal moment in human history to affirm our commitment to a transformative vision that addresses the perils and promises facing our world. As we witness unprecedented global crises—with over 800 million people living in extreme poverty, climate records shattered year after year, and armed conflicts claiming lives and displacing millions—we are reminded that conventional approaches to development and peace are no longer sufficient.

In this context, the launch of *Shared Sacred Worldview* represents the fullest expression of our mission as *Religions for Peace*. For over 50 years, we have championed a profoundly relational vision of peace—through themes of Common Healing, Action for Common Living, Advancing Shared Security, Welcoming the Other, and Advancing Shared Well-Being. Today, we make explicit what has always been at the heart of our work: the recognition that lasting, just peace, authentic development, and solidarity economy must be grounded in the Sacred.

Our prayers and our fervent commitment in this moment are with the people of Gaza, urgently calling for the end of senseless killing and the starvation of children; for the protection of child health; for the release of prisoners, hostages and detainees; for humanitarian corridors to be opened to allow the immediate delivery of food, drinking water, medical supplies, and other critical aid; and for the protection of places of worship. Our hearts go out to those suffering in the war in Ukraine, and we call for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire. We stand with the people of Sudan, Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and all communities affected by conflict and war.

A Shared Sacred Worldview for Our Time

We affirm that the dominant materialistic and reductionist worldview that has shaped modern development discourse is fundamentally inadequate. By excluding the Sacred from our understanding of human flourishing, this worldview has contributed to the very crises we now face—environmental degradation, wars, social fragmentation, and spiritual emptiness.

In contrast, our Shared Sacred Worldview (SSW) recognises that:

- The Sacred is the ultimate foundation of all reality;
- People are inherently relational beings, grounded in the Sacred;
- Society is a relational whole where individuals and institutions serve the common good;
- The Earth and its web of life are expressions of the Sacred;
- The commitment to honour diversity of religions and beliefs is essential;
- Modern Science reveals the fundamental interconnectedness of reality.

How the Shared Sacred Worldview Solves Global Problems

The SSW offers a unique and powerful lens through which we can address the multifaceted crises of our time:

- The SSW emphasises the **inherent dignity and interconnectedness of all beings**, rooted in the Sacred. By recognising the divine spark in every individual, the SSW fosters profound respect for difference and an unwavering commitment to non-violent resolution of disputes and conflicts. Multi-religious initiatives grounded in the SSW can facilitate grassroots forgiveness and reconciliation at all levels.
- The SSW champions **solidarity and subsidiarity**. From a sacred perspective, the current debt burdens are not merely financial issues but **moral crises that violate principles of justice and compassion**. The SSW inspires calls for **strategic debt cancellation to free up funds for human flourishing**, coupled with **transparent spending oversight** to ensure appropriate implementation.
- The SSW expands the definition of "development" beyond purely material metrics. It integrates the crucial dimension of the Sacred, acknowledging that **human beings are whole persons with spiritual needs, cultural identities, and relational connections** that must be nurtured for true flourishing. It champions an inclusive approach, grounded in freedom of conscience, thought and belief and ensuring no one is left behind, particularly marginalised communities.
- The SSW provides a robust moral framework for navigating the complexities of Artificial Intelligence. It insists that **AI development and deployment must be guided by moral and ethical principles of human dignity, compassion, and shared well-being**. This worldview advocates for transparency, accountability, fairness, and the protection of privacy in all AI applications. It calls for **AI to be a tool for human flourishing**, not for surveillance, discrimination, alienation and further wealth concentration, or autonomous warfare.

Our Commitment to Action

In embracing a Shared Sacred Worldview, we commit ourselves to transformative action at every level for a Shared Sacred Flourishing for all.

At the Global Level: We will advocate for development frameworks that explicitly recognise the role of the Sacred in human flourishing, complementing, and enriching the UN Sustainable Development Goals with dimensions of spiritual and moral agency essential for their realisation.

At the Regional and National Levels: We will mobilise our Interreligious Councils, Interfaith Youth Networks, and Women of Faith Networks to implement multi-religious initiatives, grounded in the Shared Sacred Worldview, for peacebuilding, forgiveness, reconciliation, and environmental stewardship.

At the Grassroots Level: We will engage religious communities in advancing the Shared Sacred Worldview through concrete acts of service, advocacy for justice, and the cultivation of "ecosystems of sacred hospitality" that welcome all people that reflects the virtues of mercy, compassion, and love.

In Leadership Development: We will continue to equip religious leaders—especially women of faith and religious youth—with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to bring alive the notion of a Shared Sacred Flourishing across our global movement and beyond.

Our Call to Action

United as one global movement, we pledge to work tirelessly for the realisation of Shared Sacred Flourishing. Through our "Different Faiths-Common Action," we will demonstrate that another world is possible—a world grounded in the Sacred, characterised by justice and equity, and flourishing in peace.

To governments, international organisations, civil society, and all people of goodwill, we issue this call: Join us in embracing a vision of development and peace that honours the full depth of human dignity and our interconnectedness with all life.

The time for half-measures has passed. In this "development emergency," as described by UN Secretary-General António Guterres, we offer the wisdom of our religious and belief traditions combined with the best insights of modern science as a pathway toward a Shared Sacred Flourishing.

We echo once more our legacy and commitment of over five decades: different faiths, common action. Gathered here in Istanbul as the World Council of *Religions for Peace*, may our efforts bear fruit in the healing of our world and the flourishing for all.