

# Religions for Peace

A Statement from the *Religions for Peace* Executive Committee

## *Religions for Peace* calls for Dialogue for Peace and Respect for International Law in the Middle East

**31 March 2026, New York, NY:** Religious leaders around the world stand in solidarity with all civilians caught in the crossfire in the wake of the escalating violence across the Middle East. We emphasise the absolute necessity of prioritising human well-being, respect for international law, and the preservation of our shared environment and global order. We are gravely saddened by the continued conflicts, violence and resultant suffering in the region.

The *Religions for Peace* fraternity is profoundly alarmed by the widening scope of this tragedy. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states must remain inviolate as per the United Nations Charter.

The Middle East continues to be an on-going flashpoint for instability, strife and, potentially, a global conflagration. We are witnessing a cycle of violence that threatens not only millions of lives but also the stability of the global community and the fragile ecosystems of the region and the entire planet.

The conflict's global impacts require urgent action: the region is an important source of energy for the global economy. Destruction and disruption of this infrastructure are already having a devastating impact in the cost of energy across the globe—putting fragile economies at risk and exacerbating poverty.

All parties engaged in hostilities must immediately seek to contain its spread. We call for an urgent de-escalation to prevent a regional catastrophe—which would have irreversible consequences for humanity and the planet. Sustained de-escalation is imperative to creating the conditions for a ceasefire where possible.

### **An Urgent Call for Containment and Protection**

Religious leaders call on the world's leaders to engage constructively—and urgently—to achieve these ends:

- **Immediate De-escalation:** All parties must take urgent, concrete steps to reduce hostilities, prevent further civilian fatalities, injuries and hardships, and stabilize the situation on the ground. Such measures are essential to enable humanitarian operations and to open pathways toward cessation of hostilities where conditions permit.
- **Minimise Human Harm:** The protection of civilians is a sacred duty. Any military action must strictly comply with international humanitarian law.

- **Safeguard Energy Infrastructure:** Energy infrastructure across the region must be spared any further destruction—the consequences fall disproportionately on the world’s vulnerable and impoverished.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** We call on all parties to recognise that modern warfare inflicts profound scars on the earth. The destruction of vital infrastructure and ecosystems constitutes a secondary war against future generations.
- **Uphold International Order:** Unilateral decisions and actions that impinge on sovereignty of states without justification and without a UN Security Council resolution erode multilateral frameworks and weaken the security of all nations. At the core of the current conflict is the question of development of nuclear weapons, a matter covered by several international treaties and conventions. These legal instruments must guide all parties—with the overarching goal of a more peaceful world.
- **Inclusive Dialogue and Root-Cause Reconciliation:** Peace cannot be imposed through bombs and airstrikes; it must be cultivated through justice. We call for an inclusive dialogue that brings together diverse voices to address long-standing security concerns. Such a process must be meaningful, contributing to public trust, accountability and the restoration of human dignity, and should be pursued in parallel with efforts to reduce violence and cessation of all hostile actions including instigation of instability.

### **Our Unwavering Commitment**

Let there be a turning point—from the precipice of regional war to a commitment to peace, harmonious co-existence and healing. The rubric of dominance and force must be discarded. We stand in solidarity with those who have endured violence, displacement, and loss.

We stand on the bedrock of universal peace and the safeguarding of the common good—to build a world of dialogue not war; justice not harm; and the true unfolding of shared sacred flourishing.

As religious leaders and people of faith, we reaffirm the sacred value of every human life and our profound responsibility to build a world of shared sacred flourishing where every individual can thrive in peace and dignity. We invite people of all backgrounds to join in fervent prayer and action for the Middle East—that the power of compassion may transcend boundaries and that peace, grounded in law and justice, may finally prevail, including through a ceasefire when conditions allow and are sustained through credible dialogue and international support.