

# **Faith for Rights: A Call to Dignity, Justice and Peace in the Middle East**

## **A multifaith statement grounded in the 18 Commitments of the UN “Faith for Rights” framework**

In times of profound suffering and conflict, faith-based communities have a sacred duty to uphold human dignity, seek justice, protect the vulnerable, and promote peace. We, as people of faith and conscience, commit ourselves to the shared ethical and spiritual principles articulated in the [“Faith for Rights”](#) framework, and apply them now to the crisis in the Middle East.

We do so without apportioning blame, but with full recognition of:

- the devastation of war,
- the threat to civilian life,
- the manipulation of sacred spaces,
- the horrors of terrorism and atrocity crimes,
- and the urgent need for a peaceful, secure, and just future for all peoples in the region.

### **1. Human Dignity, Freedom of Belief, and Basic Humanitarian Needs (Commitments I & IV)**

We affirm that all people—Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Druze or otherwise—have the right to live in dignity and to exercise their freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This includes access to basic humanitarian needs, such as food, clean water, medical care and protection from violence, as guaranteed by the Geneva Conventions. These rights must be upheld in both Israel and the Palestinian Territories, without discrimination or political obstruction. Denial of these essentials undermines the human dignity we are religiously and morally bound to uphold.

### **2. Rejecting Violence and Standing Against Suffering (Commitments II & III)**

We unequivocally reject all forms of violence—whether acts of terrorism, the targeting of civilians, hostage-taking or the use of human shields. We are deeply concerned about the rising number of civilian casualties, especially in the context of urban warfare, where densely populated areas increase the risk of harm to non-combatants. While we do not make unverified accusations of indiscriminate attacks, the scale and impact of aerial and ground bombing and firing of rockets in and into civilian zones require urgent review and accountability. All parties must take the utmost care to minimize harm to civilians, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

We further call for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, whose continued detention is a grave violation of international humanitarian principles. Their safe return must be prioritized. We urge the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to be granted full access to all hostages, and to ensure that their release is conducted in accordance with the Geneva Conventions, without harassment, coercion or harm.

### **3. Protecting the Vulnerable and Preventing Displacement (Commitment V)**

We are deeply concerned about the vulnerability of civilians—especially children, women, minorities and displaced persons. We call for a clear prohibition of permanent population displacement, forced relocation and targeting of civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, places of worship and schools. The preservation of communities, homes and cultural identity is essential to restoring stability and dignity. We affirm the right to safe resettlement and the rebuilding of communities—including those in Gaza, as well as in northern and southern Israel, who were attacked and displaced during and in the aftermath of the 7 October 2023 attacks. This is a vital step toward long-term recovery, security and coexistence.

#### **4. Humanitarian Assistance and the Right to Rebuild (Commitment XI)**

The right to receive and deliver humanitarian assistance must be respected. Civilians in Gaza and southern Israel must receive food, medicine, shelter and protection without obstruction. We call for international cooperation to enable the reconstruction of homes, hospitals and civil infrastructure, with full transparency and community engagement.

#### **5. Accountability and Justice for Atrocity Crimes (Commitments VI & VII)**

We support independent investigations into all alleged atrocity crimes, including war crimes and crimes against humanity. Accountability must be pursued without political bias, grounded in international law, and focused on restoring justice for victims on all sides.

#### **6. Building Inclusive Civilian Governance and Ending Violent Extremism (Commitments VIII & X)**

We affirm the urgent need to replace violent extremist actors with legitimate, rights-respecting civilian governance. We also call for the equal rights and full respect of all citizens and non-citizens, especially minorities, in Israel and neighbouring states. A just society must be built on the foundations of dignity, inclusion and the rule of law.

#### **7. Ending Hate Speech and Incitement to Violence (Commitment IX)**

We unequivocally denounce all forms of incitement to hatred, violence, or dehumanization—whether through political rhetoric, religious sermons, media, or education. In light of the alarming global surge in antisemitic, anti-Muslim, and other forms of hate speech and violence, we reaffirm our commitment to speak out and act decisively against such expressions. We call on all religious, political and civil society leaders to foster a language of empathy, respect, and reconciliation, both in the Middle East and around the world. Hate has no place in any society.

#### **8. Normalization, Security, and National Self-Determination (Commitments XII–XIV)**

We support efforts toward the normalization of relations between peoples and states in the Middle East, based on:

- Security for all, free from terror and retaliation;
- National self-determination for Palestinians, through nonviolent, democratic institutions;
- Israel's right to exist in peace and security, alongside its neighbors.

Sustainable peace depends on mutual recognition and coexistence, not zero-sum politics.

#### **9. Oversight, Rebuilding and External Support (Commitments XV–XVIII)**

We encourage the international community to:

- Provide humanitarian and civil reconstruction aid to Gaza and affected areas in Israel;
- Support transitional oversight mechanisms to prevent corruption, rearmament and abuse;
- Promote faith-based peacebuilding, digital literacy, peer-to-peer learning and education that fosters pluralism and resilience.

#### **10. Conclusion: A Call to Conscience and Collaboration**

We call on faith leaders, governments, civil society and people of goodwill everywhere to uphold the 18 Commitments on “Faith for Rights” as a moral compass in these dark times. We must rise beyond despair, move beyond division, and walk together toward a peace based not only on security and sovereignty, but also on human dignity, moral courage and shared humanity.

*Statement issued on 28 May 2025 by the tetrarchy of the [“Faith for Rights” commUNity of practices](#).*