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PEGASUS

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CAUX ROUND TABLE FOR MORAL CAPITALISM
NETWORK LOOKING AT BUSINESS ABOVE THE CLUTTER AND CONFETTI



Pegasus

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Introduction

This issue of Pegasus reports on something of possible great consequence which came our way somewhat by accident. In our work on gaining a deeper understanding of what values can support principles for ethical government, we learned about covenants which the Prophet Muhammad made with Christian communities to respect and protect the Christian faith.

These covenants have been overlooked for centuries. We don't know why but the terms of the covenants align with our understanding of the moral sense which is our heritage as human persons.

To learn more, our Chairman Emeritus Lord Daniel Brennan and I convened a round table discussion in Rome with the warmly welcomed assistance of Archbishop Silvano Tomasi, Secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development at the Vatican and scholars from the College of Islamic Studies, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar. We were honored that former Turkish Prime Minister Ahmed Davutoglu joined us by conference call along with Bishop Bawai Soro of the Chaldean Christians in Iraq, representing his Patriarch Cardinal Sako. The Cardinal also sent us a letter expressing his keen interest in the covenants.

This issue brings you the proceedings of our discussion, part of a recent concurring opinion of Justice Asif Saeed Khan Khosa of the Pakistan Supreme Court on the contemporary authority of one of the Prophet's covenants for today's Muslims. His opinion includes the text of the Prophet's covenant with the Monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai.

We also include the text of the Prophet's covenant with the Christians of Najran, a city in what is now Yemen.

Finally, our Editor Richard Broderick reports on his interviews with several of our Islamic colleagues.

Stephen B. Young
Global Executive Director
Caux Round Table for Moral Capitalism

PROCEEDINGS

Round Table on Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with Christian Communities

January 19, 2019

Sisters of Maria Bambini

Rome, Italy

Texts exist which contain provisions of six covenants the Prophet Muhammad made with Christian communities. The texts are: a covenant with the monks of the Monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai; a covenant with the Christians of Najran; a covenant with the Christians of Egypt; a covenant with the Armenian Christians; a covenant with unspecified Christians of 4AH (625AD); and a covenant with the Christians of Assyria.

Since human nature does not change, history provides lessons on a wide range of human behaviors and motivations worthy of study to enhance our skills in governance of our various communities.

There is nearly complete consistency of the terms of each covenant with the others. A Hadith alludes to the Prophet's practice of making covenants with groups through his governors in Yemen, which process suggests that an administrative template may have been used in doing so.

In common, the six covenants ('ahd) pledge protection to Christians so that bishops and monks will not be removed, pilgrims not disturbed and churches not destroyed. Christians will enjoy special tax privileges and shall not fight in wars but Muslims shall defend them. Christian women will be respected and not forced to convert upon marriage to a Muslim. Muslims who act contrary to this pledge of Allah and His Messenger will be cast out of the alliance between Allah and His Messenger.

A term of the covenants, which is also reflected in a Hadith of the Prophet, holds that the Prophet will be the foe on Judgment Day of any who break the covenant. Such a commitment is also included in other covenants given to Jews and Magi.

However, to enjoy rights and privileges promised by the covenants, Christians must not aid the enemies of Muslims.

The provisions of the covenants are parallel to several verses in the Qur'an. One is Ayah 22:40 which says: "And were it not that Allah checks the people, some by means of others,

there would have been demolished monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which the name of Allah is much mentioned.” Another is Ayah 3:84 which says: “Say: we believe in God, and that which was revealed unto us, and that which was revealed unto Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which was bestowed upon Moses and Jesus and the prophets from their Lord; We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered.”

The protections pledged by the covenants are also reflected in the Constitution of Medina, promulgated by the Prophet in 1AH (622AD), which has the following affirmations:

16. The protection of God [as extended by the Mu'minūn] is unvarying, [and hence] the least of them is entitled to grant protection that is binding for all of them.

43. God guarantees the most righteous fulfillment of this [treaty].

50. The protected neighbor is like oneself, as long as he does not cause damage or act sinfully.

53. God guarantees the truest and most righteous fulfillment of the clauses of this treaty.

In brief, the six covenants considered at the round table are a pledge or commitment emanating from God (Allah) and promulgated through his Prophet Muhammad to protect Christian churches, communities and individuals.

The covenants reflect the asymmetry of power between the party which makes the commitment to protect and the party which receives the benefits of such protection.

As such, these covenants have a character not unlike the Ten Commandments which came from God and reached the Israelites through Moses whereby God promised his protection to those who abided by his requirements. The Quran says: “And when Moses returned to his people, angry and disappointed, he said, "What an awful thing you did in my absence. Did you forsake the commandments of your Lord so hastily?” (7:50)

The Covenants include the names of those companions of the Prophet who testified to the making of the pledge or the giving of the command to protect specific Christian communities, giving additional assurance that the promise of protection will be upheld by Muslims.

The *Universal History* of John Bar Penkaye, written in 67 AH/687 AD, explicitly refers to a pledge given by the Prophet to the Christians and implicitly to other religious communities.

The terms of the covenants are also consistent with Muslim practices after the life of the Prophet, especially the covenant of the Caliph ‘Umar with the Christians of Jerusalem and of his generals Khalid ibn al-Walid when he entered Damascus and ‘Amr ibn al-‘As when he entered Alexandria. The Catholicos Isho‘yahb III (d. 659 AD) described how Muslims are supporters of Churches and monasteries. After an earthquake in 679AD, the Caliph Mu‘awiya rebuilt the Church of Edessa as would be necessary under the standard terms of the Prophet’s covenants with Christians. A "Charter of Protection" was granted to the Nestorian Christians (today's Chaldeans and Assyrian Christians) in AD 1138 by one of the Abbasid Caliphs in Baghdad. The Millet System of the Ottoman Caliphs provided minority communities with autonomy and religious freedom.

The Fatimid Caliphs and then the Ottomans endorsed and abided by the covenant with the Monastery of St. Catherine as is indicated by documents kept with various Christian communities that were living under Ottoman rule. The original Covenant with the Monastery was taken back to Istanbul by Sultan Selim in 1517 and a record of it was made by Feridun Bey, Head of the Chancery, in his Munsha’at al-Salatin. The Monks of the Monastery were given a replica that conformed to the original. Numerous copies of the Sinai Covenant were made in Arabic and Ottoman Turkish to be distributed to Christian communities living within the Ottoman Empire.

Most recently, a November 2018 concurring opinion from a justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan held that the terms of the Covenant with the Monastery of St. Catherine are binding on today’s global Muslim community.

The provisions of the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with Christian communities impact Muslim/Christian relations at this time, the intensity and justification of radicalism among Muslims today – in Muslim societies and among Muslims living in Europe, America, Canada and Australia - and set forth principles for community to community relations for our global world.

It would be important to review each covenant to document as much as possible its historicity. But the general framework used in all the covenants provides a most coherent, general approach to Muslim/Christian relations. Principles for autonomous communities living in mutually respectful interrelationship can be extracted from the commonalities in the terms found in the six covenants.

These principles are:

1. Universal values: pluralism, dignity of the human person, free choice, justice and co-operation.
2. Recognition of communities as autonomous.
3. Respect for binding legal frameworks.
4. Fulfillment of obligations of the covenants by communities and individuals, not just by state formalities.
5. Co-existence that all communities are created by God to get to know one another. (cf. Qur'an 49:13)
6. Protection of the vulnerable.

The covenants are not a new discovery but they may provide new inspiration as an overlooked source of practice authorized by God. The same obligations as set forth in the covenants can be derived from the different existing schools of Fiqh. Study of the covenants opens a new, easily understood and refreshing perspective on the gifts of God to humankind. The principles of the covenants can be a renewed expression of ancient ethical principles to be taught and practiced to build, for our time, a new global culture respecting religious orderliness.

The covenants also indicate that the Clash of Civilizations thesis about an irreconcilable divide between the Muslim world and the Christian West (which is now more and more secular) is false. The covenants of the Prophet point the way to building a global culture of cooperation, not conflict.

For Muslims today, the principles inherent in the pledge of Allah as Protector of faith and good deeds will encourage Muslims to supplement a legalistic interpretation of their heritage with an ethical approach calling for just stewardship of all that is created by God.

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The next steps in application of the covenants at this time are:

1. Scholarly study.
2. A response from Christians to the ethics of the covenants in reciprocity of co-existence.
3. Pastoral use of the covenants in churches and mosques.

Respectfully submitted,

Lord Daniel Brennan, Chairman Emeritus, Caux Round Table for Moral Capitalism

Stephen B. Young, Global Executive Director, Caux Round Table for Moral Capitalism



IN THE SUPREME COURT OF PAKISTAN (APPELLATE JURISDICTION)

PRESENT:

MR. JUSTICE MIAN SAQIB NISAR, HCJ
MR. JUSTICE ASIF SAEED KHAN KHOSA
MR. JUSTICE MAZHAR ALAM KHAN MIANKHEL

CRIMINAL APPEAL NO.39-L OF 2015

(Against the judgment dated 16.10.2014 of the Lahore High Court, Lahore passed in
Crl.A.No.2509/2010 and M.R.No.614/2010)

Mst. Asia Bibi ...Appellant(s) VERSUS The State etc. ...Respondent(s)

For the appellant(s): Mr. Saif-ul-Malook, ASC

For the State: Mr. Zubair Ahmed Farooq, Addl.P.G.

For the complainant: Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Chaudhry,

Date of hearing: 8.10.2018

JUDGMENT

I agree and have appended a separate concurring opinion.

Asif Saeed Khan Khosa

Judge

(http://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/web/user_files/File/Crl.A. 39 L 2015.pdf at Page 54)

24. In view of the glaring contradictions in the evidence produced by the prosecution it has appeared to me to be equally plausible that due to the quarrel taking place between the appellant and her Muslim coworkers at the spot without any offending word having been uttered by the appellant the quarrel was reported by the Muslim ladies to others who then, after deliberating over the matter for five long days, had decided to go after the appellant with a false allegation regarding commission of blasphemy. If that were so then the Muslim witnesses in Criminal Appeal No.39-L of 2015 this case had violated a covenant of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with those professing the Christian faith.

In his book The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World (published by Angelico Press on 01.09.2013) John A. Morrow has referred to and reproduced many covenants entered into by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with people of the Christian faith and one of such covenants is called the Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with the Monks of Mount Sinai.

It is reported that in or around the year 628 A.D. a delegation from St. Catherine's Monastery, the world's oldest monastery located at the foot of Mount Sinai in Egypt, came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), requested for his protection and he responded by granting them a charter of rights.

That charter, also known as The Promise to St. Catherine, was translated from Arabic to English language by Dr. A. Zahoor and Dr. Z. Haq as follows:

“This is a message from Muhammad ibn Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity; near and far, we are with them. Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by God! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims' houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God's covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily; they are my allies and have my secure charter against all that they hate. No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day (end of the world).”

The promise made was eternal and universal and was not limited to St. Catherine alone. The rights conferred by the charter are inalienable and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) had declared that Christians, all of them, were his allies and he equated ill treatment of Christians with violating God's covenant. It is noticeable that the charter imposed no conditions on Christians for enjoying its privileges and it was enough that they were Christians. They were not required to alter their beliefs, they did not have to make any payments and they did not have any obligations. The charter was of rights without any duties and it clearly protected the right to property, freedom of religion, freedom of work, and security of person.

THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF NAJRAN

[By the Prophet Muhammad]
[Translated by John Andrew Morrow in 2013]
[Exordium]

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

A covenant of protection granted by Allah and His Messenger to the People of the Book, the Christians, who belong to the religion of Najran or any other Christian sect.

It has been written by Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah to all of humanity, as a guarantee of protection on the part of Allah and His Messenger, and made it binding upon the Muslims who will come after him, which they have to be aware of, recognize as authentic, believe in it, and preserve it in their favor.

It is forbidden for any man, whether he is a governor or holder of authority, to revoke it or infringe upon it.

The Believers must not charge them with other conditions than those which are included in this document.

He who preserves it, respects it, and abides by its dictates, will have fulfilled his obligations and will have adhered by the covenant of the Messenger of Allah.

He, however, who breaks it, opposes it or changes it, will carry his crime on his head for he will have betrayed the Covenant of Allah, broken his faith, resisted His Authority and contravened the will of His Messenger: he will thus be an imposter in the eyes of Allah. For protection is obligatory in Allah's religion and the covenant confirmed. He who does not abide by this covenant will have violated his sacred obligations, and he who violates his sacred obligations is unfaithful and will be rejected by Allah and by all sincere Believers.

The reason for which the Christians have been found worthy of this covenant of protection from Allah, His Messenger, and the Believers, is because it is a right they have earned, to which every Muslim is bound, to obtain this covenant established in their favor by the men of this Religion, and which obliges every Muslim to respect it, to defend it, to conserve it, to protect it perpetually, and to live up to it.

Verily, the people who followed the ancient religions and the ancient Books expressed hostility towards Allah and His Messenger and loathed them by denying the mission of the Prophet which Allah, the Most High, has clearly proclaimed in His Book. This demonstrates the crookedness of their breasts, the wickedness of their intentions, and the hardness of their hearts. They themselves prepared the burden of the crime they bore while hiding the one which Allah wanted to impose upon them, by proclaiming it instead of hiding it and by testifying instead of denying it.

These people acted in opposition to the obligation that was imposed upon them, did not observe it as they should have, did not follow the clearly marked paths, and agreed only to show their hostility towards Allah and His Messenger, to attack them, and to persuade people by means of imposture and false arguments, that Allah could not have sent him to humanity to proclaim, to preach, and to call to Allah by His Permission, to be a shining lamp, and to promise Paradise to those who obeyed him and portend fire for those who disobeyed him.

They exceeded the bounds of opposition by inciting others to do what they themselves would never have dared to do: to deny his revelation, to reject his mission, and to seek, through cunning, to make him succumb to pitfalls.

They targeted the Prophet of Allah and decided to kill him. They reinforced the Party of the Polytheists of the Tribe of Quraysh as well as others in order to fight him, to dispute his doctrine, to force it back, and to contradict it.

For this reason, they deserved to be deprived of the Alliance of Allah and His Protection. Their behavior during the days of Hunayn, the battles against the Bani Qaynuqah, the tribe of Qurayzah and Nadir, is well-known. Their leaders lent support to the inhabitants of Mecca, the enemies of Allah, against the Messenger of Allah, and supported them, by means of troops and weapons, against the Prophet, out of hatred for the Believers.

Among other words of praise which Allah has bestowed upon them in His Book and His Revelations, after having been convinced of the hardness of heart of the Jews, He recognizes their inclination and affection towards the Believers: Certainly you will find, He says, the most violent of people in enmity for those who believe (to be) the Jews and those who are polytheists, and you will certainly find the nearest in friendship to those who believe (to be) those who say: ‘We are Christians;’ this is because there are priests and monks among them and because they do not behave proudly. And when they hear what has been revealed to the messenger you will see their eyes overflowing with tears on account of the truth that they recognize; they say: ‘Our Lord! We believe, so write us down with the witnesses (of truth). And why should we not believe in God and what has come down to us of the truth? And we hope to be admitted by our Lord among those who are upright and do good?’ [5:82-83]

In fact, some Christians, who were worthy of trust and who knew the divine religion, helped us to proclaim this religion and came to the help of Allah and His Messenger, by preaching to men according to His Will and to help him accomplish his mission.

The Sayyid ‘Absiso, Ibn Hijrah, Ibrahim the monk, and ‘Isa the Bishop, came to see me, accompanied by forty horsemen from Najran along with others who, like them, profess the Christian religion in the lands of Arabia as well as foreign lands. I informed them of my mission and asked them to help reinforce it, to proclaim it, and to assist it.

And since the cause of Allah appeared evident to them, they did not turn back on their steps nor did they turn their backs. On the contrary, they drew close, remained firm, consented, assisted, confirmed, made generous promises, gave good advice, and assured me by means of oaths and covenants that they would support the truth which I brought and that they would repel those who refused and contradicted it.

After they rejoined their co-religionists, they did not break their covenant nor did they change their opinion. On the contrary, they observed what they had promised to me when they left me and I learned, to my great pleasure, that they proved their devotion, united to wage war against the Jews, and that they came to an understanding with the People of the Vocation, to publicize the cause of Allah, to support it, and to defend its apostles, and that they had debunked the evidence which the Jews had relied upon in order to deny and hinder my mission and my word. The Christians sought to prop up my action and waged war against those who hated my doctrine and who wanted to rebut it, alter it, repudiate it, change it, and overturn it.

All of the Arab chiefs, all of the leading Muslims, and all the People of the Vocation, from around the world sent me letters expressing the fondness of Christians towards my cause, their zeal to push back the incursions made along the fortified borderlines of their region, their determination to observe the treaty which they contracted with me when they met with me and which I granted them. For, truly, the bishops and the monks showed an unshakable loyalty in their attachment to my cause and the devotion of their persons to confirm and support the spread of my mission.

I want my mission to be spread. I ask them to join together in support of this goal against those who would deny and reject aspects of my doctrine, who would want to destroy and ruin it, by blaming them and abasing them.

They acted according to my instructions and abased them. They worked so hard to bring them to confess to the truth with submission, to respond to the call of Allah, by will or by force, allowing them to be drawn (into Islam) as conquered people. The Christians acted this way in observance of the treaties contracted between them and me, in order that they fail not to fulfill the obligations to which they had committed themselves during their meeting with me and through a spirit of zeal to support my cause and to make my mission known. They were different in their faithful devotion from the Jews, the Qurayshites, and the other polytheists. They demonstrated no desire for worldly gain for which the Jews seek and yearn by practicing usury, looking for money, and selling the law of God for a miserable price. Woe to those who work for such a gain. Woe to those for what they write, and woe to them for what they gain by such means.

As such, the Jews and the polytheists of Quraysh along with others deserved to be treated as the enemies of Allah and His Messenger due to their treacherous plans, their enmity, the plots they devised (against me), and the fierce, intermittent war they waged in support of my enemies. Thus did they become the enemies of Allah, His Messenger, and the good Believers.

The Christians, however, behaved in the very opposite way. They respected my alliance. They recognized my rights. They fulfilled the promises that they had made during our meeting. They assisted the lieutenants that I had sent to the frontiers. They earned my concern and my affection by fulfilling the obligations that I had contracted with them spontaneously in the name of all of the Muslims spread from East to West, my protection during my life and after my passing, when Allah will make me die. So long as Islam will spread and my true mission and faith will grow, this covenant will be obligatory for all Believers and Muslims, so long as water fills the ocean floor, rain falls from the sky, the earth produces plants, the stars

shine in the firmament, and the dawn appears to the traveler nor will it be permitted for anyone to break this treaty, alter it, add to it, delete from it, for such additions infringe upon my covenant and suppressions weaken my protection.

This covenant, which I wish to accord myself, binds me. Anyone from my ummah who, after me, breaks this Covenant of Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He, the Proof of Allah will be raised against him, and Allah is sufficient as a Witness.

What drives me to act this way is that three people (from Seyyid Ghassani) asked me for a document that would act as a safe-conduit, a treaty which recognized their fidelity to their promises towards the Muslims and to the treaty which I voluntarily concluded with them. I wanted that the details of the alliance be ratified in the eyes of whoever follows in my path in all Arab regions, and that I and those of my vocation be bound to abstain from responsibility over those who called themselves Christians and who follow any of the different Christian sects and that this treaty be inviolable, solemn, and obligatory for all Muslims and Believers.

I therefore called the leaders of the Muslims and my main Companions and having stood surety to the demand of the Christians, I prepared this document, which Muslims, whether or not they detain power, are obliged to preserve from generation to generation, to carry out my orders in order to abide by the obligation of loyalty and respect towards those who requested this covenant of me, and to be faithful to the obligations which I have contracted, so that they not be reproached for having disobeyed my order.

The people, as well, must abstain from harming them, and abide by the covenant that I have made with them so that they can enter along with me by the gates of faithfulness, and contribute to the good that I have done to those who have earned it for having supported my mission and enraged the deniers and the skeptics.

In order that there be no proof on the part of those who are the object of this covenant against the partisans of Islam, if these were to act against the content of this document, failing to recognize the rights that they have earned from me and which they deserved to obtain.

Finally, this covenant reminds [Believers] to be benevolent; encourages good will; commands charity; deters evil; and is the path of sincerity and the way which leads to justice, Allah willing.

The Covenant of the Prophet with the Christians of Najran

In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

This document has been provided by Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib, the Messenger of Allah to all of humanity, who was sent to preach and to warn, who has been entrusted the Trust of Allah among His Creatures so that human beings would have no pretext before Allah, after his messengers and manifestation, before this Powerful and Wise Being.

To Sayyid Ibn Harith ibn Ka‘b, his co-religionists, and all those who profess the Christian religion, be they in East or West, in close regions or faraway regions, be they Arabs or foreigners, known or unknown.

This document which has been prepared constitutes an authoritative contract, an authentic certificate established on the basis of convention and justice, as well as an inviolable pact. Whoever abides by this edict, shows his attachment to Islam, will be worthy of the best that Islam has to offer. On the contrary, any man who destroys it, breaks the pact which it contains, alters it, disobeys my commandments, will have violated the pact of Allah, transgresses his alliance, and disdained his treaty. He will merit his malediction, whether he is a sovereign authority or someone else.

I commit myself to an alliance and a pledge with them on behalf of Allah and I place them under the safeguard of His Prophets, His Elect, His Saints, the Muslims and the Believers, the first of them and the last of them. Such is my alliance and pact with them.

I proclaim, once again, the obligations that Allah imposed on the Children of Israel to obey Him, to follow His Law, and to respect His Divine Alliance. I hereby declare that my horsemen, my foot-soldiers, my armies, my resources, and my Muslim partisans will protect the Christians as far away as they may be located, whether they inhabit the lands which border my empire, in any region, close or far, in times of peace as much as in times of war. I commit myself to support them, to place their persons under my protection, as well as their churches, chapels, oratories, the monasteries of their monks, the residences of their anchorites, wherever they are found, be they in the mountains or the valleys, caves or inhabited regions, in the plains or in the desert.

I will protect their religion and their Church wherever they are found, be it on earth or at sea, in the West or in the East, with utmost vigilance on my part, the People of my House, and the Muslims as a whole.

I place them under my protection. I make a pact with them. I commit myself to protect them from any harm or damage; to exempt them for any requisitions or any onerous obligations and to protect them myself, by means of my assistants, my followers and my nation against every enemy who targets me and them.

Having authority over them, I must govern them, protecting them from all damage and ensuring that nothing happens to them that does not happen to me and my Companions who, along with me, defend the cause of Islam.

I forbid any conquerors of the faith to rule over them during their invasions or to oblige them to pay taxes unless they themselves willingly consent. Never should any Christian be subjected to tyranny or oppression in this matter.

It is not permitted to remove a bishop from his bishopric, a monk from his monastic life, or anchorite from his vocation as a hermit. Nor is it permitted to destroy any part of their churches, to take parts of their buildings to construct mosques or the homes of Muslims. Whoever does such a thing will have violated the pact of Allah, disobeyed his Messenger, and become estranged from the Divine Alliance.

It is not permitted to impose a capitation or any kind of tax on monks or bishops nor on any of those who, by devotion, wear woolen clothing or live alone in the mountains or in other regions devoid of human habitation.

Let there be a limit set of four dirhams per year that all other Christians who are not clerics, monks, or hermits need to pay. Otherwise, let them provide one outfit of stripped material or one embroidered turban from Yemen. This is to help Muslims and to contribute to the growth of the Public Treasury. Were cloth difficult for them, they should provide its equivalent price, if they themselves willingly consent.

May the capitation of the Christians who have income, who own land, who engage in an important amount of commerce by land or by sea, who exploit mines for precious stones, gold and silver, who are wealthy, not surpass, as a whole, twelve dirhams per year, so long as they are inhabitants of these countries and are residents there.

May nothing similar be demanded of travelers, who are not residents of the country or wayfarers whose country of residence is unknown.

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There shall be no land tax with capitation for others than those who own land as with the other occupants of inherited properties over which the ruler has a right. They will pay taxes as other pay them without, however, the charges unjustly exceeding the measure of their means. As for the labor force which the owners spend upon to cultivate these lands, to render them fertile, and to harvest them, they are not to be taxed excessively. Let them pay in the same fashion that was imposed on other similar tributaries.

The men who belong to our alliance will not be obliged to go to war with the Muslims in order to combat their enemies, to attack them, and to seize them. Indeed, the members of the alliance will not engage in war. It is precisely to discharge them of this obligation that this pact has been granted to them as well as to assure them the help and protection on the part of the Muslims. No Christian is to be constrained to provide equipment to a single Muslims, in money, in arm or in horses, in the event of a war in which the Believers attack their enemies, unless they contribute to the cause freely. Whoever does so, and contributes spontaneously, will be the object of praise, reward, and gratitude, and his help will not be forgotten.

No Christian will be made Muslim by force: And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better [29:46]. They must be covered by the wing of mercy. Repel every harm that could reach them wherever they may find themselves and in any country in which they are.

If a Christian were to commit a crime or an offense, Muslims must provide him with help, defense, and protection. They should pardon his offense and encourage his victim to reconcile with him, urging him to pardon him or to receive compensation in return. The Muslims must not abandon the Christians, neglect them, and leave them without help and assistance since I have made this pact with them on behalf of Allah to ensure that whatever good befell Muslims it would befall them as well and that whatever harm befell Muslims would befall them as well. In virtue of this pact, they have obtained inviolable rights to enjoy our protection, to be protected from any infringement of their rights, so that they will be bound to the Muslims both in good and bad fortune.

Christians must not be subjected to suffer, by abuse, on the subject of marriages which they do not desire. Muslims should not take Christian girls in marriage against the will of their parents nor should they oppress their families in the event that they refused their offers of engagement and marriage. Such marriages should not take place without their desire and agreement and without their approval and consent.

If a Muslim takes a Christian woman as a wife, he must respect her Christian beliefs. He will give her freedom to listen to her [clerical] superiors as she desires and to follow the path of her own religion. Whoever, despite this order, forces his wife to act contrary to her religion in any aspect whatsoever he will have broken the alliance of Allah and will enter into open rebellion against the pact of His Messenger and Allah will count him among the impostors. If the Christians approach you seeking the help and assistance of the Muslims in order to repair their churches and their convents or to arrange matters pertaining to their affairs and religion, these must help and support them. However, they must not do so with the aim of receiving any reward. On the contrary, they should do so to restore that religion, out of faithfulness to the pact of the Messenger of Allah, by pure donation, and as a meritorious act before Allah and His Messenger.

In matters of war between them and their enemies, the Muslims will not employ any Christian as a messenger, scout, guide or spy or for any other duty of war. Whoever obliges one of them to do such a thing will harm the rights of Allah, will be a rebel against His Messenger, and will cast himself out of His Alliance. Nothing is permitted to a Muslim [with regard to the Christians] outside of obeying these edicts which Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah, the Messenger of Allah, has passed in favor of the religion of the Christians.

He is also placing conditions [upon the Christians] and I demand that they promise to fulfill and satisfy them as commands their religion, among which, among other things, none of them may act as a scout, spy, either overtly or covertly, on behalf of an enemy of war, against a Muslim. None of them will shelter the enemies of the Muslims in their homes from which they could await the moment to launch an attack. May these enemies [of the Muslims] never be allowed to halt in their regions, be it in their villages, their oratories, or in any other place belonging to their co-religionists. They must not provide any support to the enemies of war of the Muslims by furnishing them with weapons, horses, men, or anything else, nor must they treat them well. They must host for three days and three nights any Muslims who halt among them, with their animals. They must offer them, wherever they are found, and wherever they are going, the same food with which they live themselves without, however, being obliged to endure other annoying or onerous burdens.

If a Muslim needs to hide in one of their homes or oratories, they must grant him hospitality, guide him help, and provide him with their food during the entire time he will be among them, making every effort to keep him concealed and to prevent the enemy from finding him, while providing for all of his needs.

Whoever contravenes or alters the ordinances of this edict will be cast out of the alliance between Allah and His Messenger.

May everyone abide by the treaties and alliances which have been contracted with the monks, and which I have contracted myself, and every other commitment that each prophet has made with his nation, to assure them safeguard and faithful protection, and to serve them as a guarantee.

This must not be violated or altered until the hour of the Resurrection, Allah-willing. This document, by Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah which contains the covenant he concluded with the Christians and which includes the conditions imposed upon these latter, has been witnessed by:

‘Atiq ibn Abi Quhafa

‘Umar ibn al-Khattab

‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan

‘Ali ibn Abi Talib

Abu Dharr

Abu al-Darda

Abu Hurayrah

‘Abd Allah ibn Mas‘ud

al-‘Abbas ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib

al-Fadl ibn al-‘Abbas

al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwam

Talhah ibn ‘Ubayd Allah

Sa‘d ibn Mu‘adh

Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubadah

Thumama ibn Qays

Zayd ibn Thabit and his son ‘Abd Allah

Hurqus ibn Zuhayr

Zayd ibn Arqam

Usamah ibn Zayd

‘Umar ibn Mazh’un ‘Ammar

Mus’ah ibn al-Zubayr ibn Jubayr

Abu al-Ghalia

‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘As

Abu Hudhayfa

Ka‘b ibn Malik

Hasan ibn Thabit

Ja‘far ibn Abi Talib

[Written by Mu‘awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan]

The Muslim View by Richard Broderick

Among the Muslims who attended the conference in Rome, many are scholars who study and research the covenants, while many teach in other fields. All are connected by the deep conviction that the understanding and dissemination of the covenants would help to dispel the often-antagonistic relations that infect the relationship between Muslims on the one hand and Christians and Jews on the other.

To them, the covenants reveal an Islam that openly calls for peaceful relations between the three religious communities. It is an Islam that is egalitarian in its regard for all People of the Book.

Ibrahim Zein, for example, is a faculty member at Hamad Bin Khalafu University (HBKU) in Qatar where he directs the schools Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad Project. He describes the project as an enterprise that will have “deliverables of which will be a number of publications and books” while also engaging in “public advocacy” of the values highlighted in the covenants.

“We [the Islamic world] have a beautiful heritage that should govern our relationships among communities around the world,” he says.

Among other topics, the project, he says, is looking at the history of the covenants and their relationship to other historical documents like the Constitution of Medina, created by Muhammad and his early followers that instructs Muslims to treat the Jewish and Christian communities in that city with respect and to defend them and their religious centers against attack.

Another attendee at the Vatican is Ahmed El Wakil, a research assistant who is the main researcher working with Zein on the Covenants Project. To him, the most compelling need is to present the findings of scholars like Zein to the “outside world.”

“The advantage to doing this work within an academic setting is that it is not just a personal effort,” he observes. “Others have looked at the same evidence and may have come up with different conclusions but all in an environment of objective inquiry.”

His experience at the Vatican conference represented, to him, the perfect environment in which to explore the topic. “I presented my own findings and my own conclusions to the group,” he explains. “Not everyone agreed with everything I said, but there was no question

that we were there in a spirit of pluralism and living together and making a better world. The general consensus was that the spirit of co-existence in the documents was valid and present in the spirit of Islam.”

Halim Rane is Associate Professor in the study of Islam-West Relations at Griffith University in Queensland, Australia. While teaching one of his courses he came upon the covenants and began to explore their implications for radicalism and extremism in the Muslim world. “In the West,” he points out, “we are uncomfortable addressing religious beliefs. The covenants give us an opportunity of saying, ‘Here is a text dating back to the days of Muhammad and it says Christians and Jews and their churches and synagogues should be protected by Muslims.’”

Rane believes that Ahmed El Wakil learned of his interest in the covenants and arranged for him to be invited to the conference. Rane was happy to go. “If the Catholic Church is now pruning this work, I was very glad to be invited.”

The meeting was, according to Rane, very congenial. Representatives from the Vatican didn’t seem to have much question about whether the covenants were authentic. There was discussion about anomalies that can be found between individual covenants and how these might relate to the time each was written and who witnessed the composition.

He points out that the goals of the covenants – to inspire peace and mutual respect among religious communities in the Middle East – governed the Muslim world for about a century after the Prophet’s death. At that point they were superseded by the Pact of Umar, a treaty of controversial origins that laid out the rights of Christian and Jews as subjects of Muslim rule. Even so, the ideas of the covenants never disappeared from the Muslim world and were revived by the Ottoman regime that came to power in the 14th Century.

“From our point of view,” says Ibrahim Zein, “we do not see any values in these documents that would contradict any of the teachings of Islam. Fair-minded Muslims would agree that Muhammad wrote the covenants for Christians and Jews. If we could promote this spirit in our post-colonial world it would be very helpful. But shared memory has been repressed and needs to be revived in order to generate mutual trust.”

The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad

Halim Rane, Griffith University

The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad were written after his migration in 622 to Yathrib (Medina) from Mecca, where he and his companions endured intense persecution that ranged from public ridicule to physical assault and torture as well as the ostracism of Muhammad's clan. Some of those who became Muslims in Mecca were forced to seek refuge across the Red Sea under the protection of the Christian Axum Empire in Abyssinia (Ethiopia). One should not understate the Prophet Muhammad's close relations and connections with Christians, including monks with whom he met on journeys made as a young man and his wife Khadija's cousin whom he consulted upon receiving the very first revelation of the Quran in 610.

After the migration from Mecca to Medina, Muhammad received a revelation permitting Muslims, for the first time, to defend themselves against the aggression of the Meccan polytheists:

Permission [to fight] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged. And indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory. [They are] those who have been evicted from their homes without right only because they say, 'Our Lord is Allah.' And were it not that Allah checks the people, some by means of others, there would have been demolished monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which the name of Allah is much mentioned. And Allah will surely support those who support Him. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might (Quran, 22:39-40).

The second of these two verses is very significant as it calls on Muslims to also defend Christian and Jewish places of worship indicating that Islam was not intended to be exclusivist but to defend the right of diverse faith communities to peacefully coexist. The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad provide an even more detailed expression of the Quranic protection of monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques (Quran 22:40).

When the Prophet Muhammad migrated from Mecca and settled in Medina he formalized his already strong, peaceful and respectful relations with fellow monotheists. He wrote a Charter of Medina outlining the rights and responsibilities of the city's various Arab and Jewish tribes, which stated all belong to a single community (ummah). The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad are an extension of his pledge, in the name of Allah, to protect the rights of Christian, Jewish and other monotheistic communities and defend their right to live in peace and security. monotheistic communities and defend their right to live in peace

and security. Examples of which include the Covenant with the Monks of St Catherine Monastery in Mount Sinai and the Covenant with the Christians of Najran (Morrow 2013; El-Wakil 2016). The original of the former was dictated by the Prophet Muhammad and written down by his most trusted companion, cousin and son-in-law, Ali bin Abi Talib (d. 661) in the second year following the migration (around 624). The document also includes a list of 22 witnesses from among his most prominent companions. Historical records suggest that the original was taken from Egypt to Istanbul by the Ottoman Sultan Salim I in 1517.

The Quran and Covenants clearly establish that the original Islam of the Prophet Muhammad accepted religious pluralism and cultural diversity and established peace as the normative basis of relations between communities. From the writings of the first Christians that lived under Muslim rule, following the conquests of the Near East after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (d. 632), we find Syriac texts such as the letters of the East Syrian catholicos Ishoyahb III (d. 659). In a letter to another bishop, Ishoyahb states of the Arab conquerors:

Not only, as you know, do they not oppose Christianity. Rather, they are givers of praise to our faith, givers of honor to our Lord's priests and holy ones, and givers of aid to churches and monasteries (cited in Penn 2015, p. 60).

Such provisions are consistent with the letter and spirit of the Covenants. Although we find that within a few decades there seems of be an erosion of adherence to the Covenants, some Muslim scholars at least retained knowledge of them. For instance, a well-known Maliki jurist, Shahab Ad-Deen Al-Qarafi (d. 1285), stated in his book Al-Furuq:

The covenant of protection imposes upon us certain obligations toward ahl adh-dhimmah. They are our neighbors, under our shelter and protection upon the guarantee of Allah, His Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) and the religion of Islam. Whoever violates these obligations against anyone of them, by damaging his reputation, or by doing him some injury, has breached the Covenant of Allah, His Messenger, and his conduct run counters to the teachings of Islam.

However, non-Muslims under Muslim rule have been subjected to discrimination and violations of rights in the name of Islam (Ye'or 1985) based on documents and interpretations of legal scholars from the classical period. For instance, the 14th century scholar of Shafi'i jurisprudence, Ahmad ibn Naqib al-Misri (d. 1367) states in his famous manual of Islamic law in the section on "Non-Muslim Subjects of the Islamic State" that non-Muslims are to be distinguished from Muslims in dress, wearing a wide cloth belt

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The Holy See

APOSTOLIC JOURNEY OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO THE UNITED ARAB
EMIRATES

(3-5 FEBRUARY 2019)

A DOCUMENT ON HUMAN FRATERNITY FOR WORLD PEACE AND LIVING

INTRODUCTION

Faith leads a believer to see in the other a brother or sister to be supported and loved. Through faith in God, who has created the universe, creatures and all human beings (equal on account of his mercy), believers are called to express this human fraternity by safeguarding creation and the entire universe and supporting all persons, especially the poorest and those most in need.

This transcendental value served as the starting point for several meetings characterized by a friendly and fraternal atmosphere where we shared the joys, sorrows and problems of our contemporary world. We did this by considering scientific and technical progress, therapeutic achievements, the digital era, the mass media and communications. We reflected also on the level of poverty, conflict and suffering of so many brothers and sisters in different parts of the world as a consequence of the arms race, social injustice, corruption, inequality, moral decline, terrorism, discrimination, extremism and many other causes.

From our fraternal and open discussions, and from the meeting that expressed profound hope in a bright future for all human beings, the idea of this Document on Human Fraternity was conceived. It is a text that has been given honest and serious thought so as to be a joint declaration of good and heartfelt aspirations. It is a document that invites all persons who have faith in God and faith in human fraternity to unite and work together so that it may serve as a guide for future generations to advance a culture of mutual respect in the awareness of the great divine grace that makes all human beings brothers and sisters.

DOCUMENT

In the name of God who has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and who has called them to live together as brothers and sisters, to fill the earth and make known the values of goodness, love and peace;

In the name of innocent human life that God has forbidden to kill, affirming that whoever kills a person is like one who kills the whole of humanity, and that whoever saves a person is like one who saves the whole of humanity;

In the name of the poor, the destitute, the marginalized and those most in need whom God has commanded us to help as a duty required of all persons, especially the wealthy and of means;

In the name of orphans, widows, refugees and those exiled from their homes and their countries; in the name of all victims of wars, persecution and injustice; in the name of the weak, those who live in fear, prisoners of war and those tortured in any part of the world, without distinction;

In the name of peoples who have lost their security, peace, and the possibility of living together, becoming victims of destruction, calamity and war;

In the name of human fraternity that embraces all human beings, unites them and renders them equal;

In the name of this fraternity torn apart by policies of extremism and division, by systems of unrestrained profit or by hateful ideological tendencies that manipulate the actions and the future of men and women;

In the name of freedom, that God has given to all human beings creating them free and distinguishing them by this gift;

In the name of justice and mercy, the foundations of prosperity and the cornerstone of faith;

In the name of all persons of good will present in every part of the world;

In the name of God and of everything stated thus far; Al-Azhar al-Sharif and the Muslims of the East and West, together with the Catholic Church and the Catholics of the East and

West, declare the adoption of a culture of dialogue as the path; mutual cooperation as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard.

We, who believe in God and in the final meeting with Him and His judgment, on the basis of our religious and moral responsibility, and through this Document, call upon ourselves, upon the leaders of the world as well as the architects of international policy and world economy, to work strenuously to spread the culture of tolerance and of living together in peace; to intervene at the earliest opportunity to stop the shedding of innocent blood and bring an end to wars, conflicts, environmental decay and the moral and cultural decline that the world is presently experiencing.

We call upon intellectuals, philosophers, religious figures, artists, media professionals and men and women of culture in every part of the world, to rediscover the values of peace, justice, goodness, beauty, human fraternity and coexistence in order to confirm the importance of these values as anchors of salvation for all, and to promote them everywhere.

This Declaration, setting out from a profound consideration of our contemporary reality, valuing its successes and in solidarity with its suffering, disasters and calamities, believes firmly that among the most important causes of the crises of the modern world are a desensitized human conscience, a distancing from religious values and a prevailing individualism accompanied by materialistic philosophies that deify the human person and introduce worldly and material values in place of supreme and transcendental principles.

While recognizing the positive steps taken by our modern civilization in the fields of science, technology, medicine, industry and welfare, especially in developed countries, we wish to emphasize that, associated with such historic advancements, great and valued as they are, there exists both a moral deterioration that influences international action and a weakening of spiritual values and responsibility. All this contributes to a general feeling of frustration, isolation and desperation leading many to fall either into a vortex of atheistic, agnostic or religious extremism, or into blind and fanatic extremism, which ultimately encourage forms of dependency and individual or collective self-destruction.

History shows that religious extremism, national extremism and also intolerance have produced in the world, be it in the East or West, what might be referred to as signs of a “third world war being fought piecemeal”. In several parts of the world and in many tragic circumstances these signs have begun to be painfully apparent, as in those situations where the precise number of victims, widows and orphans is unknown. We see, in addition, other regions preparing to become theatres of new conflicts, with outbreaks of tension and a

build-up of arms and ammunition, and all this in a global context overshadowed by uncertainty, disillusionment, fear of the future, and controlled by narrow-minded economic interests.

We likewise affirm that major political crises, situations of injustice and lack of equitable distribution of natural resources – which only a rich minority benefit from, to the detriment of the majority of the peoples of the earth – have generated, and continue to generate, vast numbers of poor, infirm and deceased persons. This leads to catastrophic crises that various countries have fallen victim to despite their natural resources and the resourcefulness of young people which characterize these nations. In the face of such crises that result in the deaths of millions of children – wasted away from poverty and hunger – there is an unacceptable silence on the international level.

It is clear in this context how the family as the fundamental nucleus of society and humanity is essential in bringing children into the world, raising them, educating them, and providing them with solid moral formation and domestic security. To attack the institution of the family, to regard it with contempt or to doubt its important role, is one of the most threatening evils of our era.

We affirm also the importance of awakening religious awareness and the need to revive this awareness in the hearts of new generations through sound education and an adherence to moral values and upright religious teachings. In this way we can confront tendencies that are individualistic, selfish, conflicting, and also address radicalism and blind extremism in all its forms and expressions.

The first and most important aim of religions is to believe in God, to honour Him and to invite all men and women to believe that this universe depends on a God who governs it. He is the Creator who has formed us with His divine wisdom and has granted us the gift of life to protect it. It is a gift that no one has the right to take away, threaten or manipulate to suit oneself. Indeed, everyone must safeguard this gift of life from its beginning up to its natural end. We therefore condemn all those practices that are a threat to life such as genocide, acts of terrorism, forced displacement, human trafficking, abortion and euthanasia. We likewise condemn the policies that promote these practices.

Moreover, we resolutely declare that religions must never incite war, hateful attitudes, hostility and extremism, nor must they incite violence or the shedding of blood. These tragic realities are the consequence of a deviation from religious teachings. They result from a political manipulation of religions and from interpretations made by religious groups who,

in the course of history, have taken advantage of the power of religious sentiment in the hearts of men and women in order to make them act in a way that has nothing to do with the truth of religion. This is done for the purpose of achieving objectives that are political, economic, worldly and short-sighted. We thus call upon all concerned to stop using religions to incite hatred, violence, extremism and blind fanaticism, and to refrain from using the name of God to justify acts of murder, exile, terrorism and oppression. We ask this on the basis of our common belief in God who did not create men and women to be killed or to fight one another, nor to be tortured or humiliated in their lives and circumstances. God, the Almighty, has no need to be defended by anyone and does not want His name to be used to terrorize people.

This Document, in accordance with previous International Documents that have emphasized the importance of the role of religions in the construction of world peace, upholds the following:

- The firm conviction that authentic teachings of religions invite us to remain rooted in the values of peace; to defend the values of mutual understanding, human fraternity and harmonious coexistence; to re-establish wisdom, justice and love; and to reawaken religious awareness among young people so that future generations may be protected from the realm of materialistic thinking and from dangerous policies of unbridled greed and indifference that are based on the law of force and not on the force of law;
- Freedom is a right of every person: each individual enjoys the freedom of belief, thought, expression and action. The pluralism and the diversity of religions, colour, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings. This divine wisdom is the source from which the right to freedom of belief and the freedom to be different derives. Therefore, the fact that people are forced to adhere to a certain religion or culture must be rejected, as too the imposition of a cultural way of life that others do not accept;
- Justice based on mercy is the path to follow in order to achieve a dignified life to which every human being has a right;
- Dialogue, understanding and the widespread promotion of a culture of tolerance, acceptance of others and of living together peacefully would contribute significantly to reducing many economic, social, political and environmental problems that weigh so heavily on a large part of humanity;
- Dialogue among believers means coming together in the vast space of spiritual, human and shared social values and, from here, transmitting the highest moral virtues that religions aim for. It also means avoiding unproductive discussions;

- The protection of places of worship – synagogues, churches and mosques – is a duty guaranteed by religions, human values, laws and international agreements. Every attempt to attack places of worship or threaten them by violent assaults, bombings or destruction, is a deviation from the teachings of religions as well as a clear violation of international law;
- Terrorism is deplorable and threatens the security of people, be they in the East or the West, the North or the South, and disseminates panic, terror and pessimism, but this is not due to religion, even when terrorists instrumentalize it. It is due, rather, to an accumulation of incorrect interpretations of religious texts and to policies linked to hunger, poverty, injustice, oppression and pride. This is why it is so necessary to stop supporting terrorist movements fueled by financing, the provision of weapons and strategy, and by attempts to justify these movements even using the media. All these must be regarded as international crimes that threaten security and world peace. Such terrorism must be condemned in all its forms and expressions;
- The concept of citizenship is based on the equality of rights and duties, under which all enjoy justice. It is therefore crucial to establish in our societies the concept of full citizenship and reject the discriminatory use of the term minorities which engenders feelings of isolation and inferiority. Its misuse paves the way for hostility and discord; it undoes any successes and takes away the religious and civil rights of some citizens who are thus discriminated against;
- Good relations between East and West are indisputably necessary for both. They must not be neglected, so that each can be enriched by the other's culture through fruitful exchange and dialogue. The West can discover in the East remedies for those spiritual and religious maladies that are caused by a prevailing materialism. And the East can find in the West many elements that can help free it from weakness, division, conflict and scientific, technical and cultural decline. It is important to pay attention to religious, cultural and historical differences that are a vital component in shaping the character, culture and civilization of the East. It is likewise important to reinforce the bond of fundamental human rights in order to help ensure a dignified life for all the men and women of East and West, avoiding the politics of double standards;
- It is an essential requirement to recognize the right of women to education and employment, and to recognize their freedom to exercise their own political rights. Moreover, efforts must be made to free women from historical and social conditioning that runs contrary to the principles of their faith and dignity. It is also necessary to protect women from sexual exploitation and from being treated as merchandise or objects of pleasure or financial gain. Accordingly, an end must be brought to all those inhuman and vulgar practices that denigrate the dignity of women. Efforts must be made to modify those laws that prevent women from fully enjoying their rights;

- The protection of the fundamental rights of children to grow up in a family environment, to receive nutrition, education and support, are duties of the family and society. Such duties must be guaranteed and protected so that they are not overlooked or denied to any child in any part of the world. All those practices that violate the dignity and rights of children must be denounced. It is equally important to be vigilant against the dangers that they are exposed to, particularly in the digital world, and to consider as a crime the trafficking of their innocence and all violations of their youth;
- The protection of the rights of the elderly, the weak, the disabled, and the oppressed is a religious and social obligation that must be guaranteed and defended through strict legislation and the implementation of the relevant international agreements.

To this end, by mutual cooperation, the Catholic Church and Al-Azhar announce and pledge to convey this Document to authorities, influential leaders, persons of religion all over the world, appropriate regional and international organizations, organizations within civil society, religious institutions and leading thinkers. They further pledge to make known the principles contained in this Declaration at all regional and international levels, while requesting that these principles be translated into policies, decisions, legislative texts, courses of study and materials to be circulated.

Al-Azhar and the Catholic Church ask that this Document become the object of research and reflection in all schools, universities and institutes of formation, thus helping to educate new generations to bring goodness and peace to others, and to be defenders everywhere of the rights of the oppressed and of the least of our brothers and sisters.

In conclusion, our aspiration is that:

this Declaration may constitute an invitation to reconciliation and fraternity among all believers, indeed among believers and non-believers, and among all people of good will;

this Declaration may be an appeal to every upright conscience that rejects deplorable violence and blind extremism; an appeal to those who cherish the values of tolerance and fraternity that are promoted and encouraged by religions;

this Declaration may be a witness to the greatness of faith in God that unites divided hearts and elevates the human soul;

this Declaration may be a sign of the closeness between East and West, between North and South, and between all who believe that God has created us to understand one another, cooperate with one another and live as brothers and sisters who love one another.

This is what we hope and seek to achieve with the aim of finding a universal peace that all can enjoy in this life.

Abu Dhabi, 4 february 2019

His Holiness
Pope Francis

The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar
Ahmad Al-Tayyeb



Moral Capitalism In the Real World

Under the terms of moral capitalism as we understand them, when all is said and done, the values of customers drive market results. When power of one sort or another is used to thwart consumer demand and in refusal to deliver what customers want, the system starts to creak and then breaks down.

Often, we see this law of human nature working with illicit goods and services – those which the state prohibits on pain of punishment but which consumers still take risks to buy. Think of heroin, cocaine, fentanyl, prostitution and gambling.

Last year in the food industry, we can see the impact on corporate decision-making of consumer preferences:

Sales growth in same-store sales for Starbucks in the U.S. has been declining. The company faces competition from new market entrants and new customer preferences for coffee drinks. There has been a shift away from hot coffee leading to the offering of cold drinks in cans and bottles which are also available in retail food stores. The availability of so much coffee has decreased traffic to Starbucks stores in the afternoons when potential customers are “coffeed out.”

McDonalds is stripping artificial ingredients out of more food it sells to win over customers who don’t want to ingest preservatives.

In the U.S. again, AB InBev faces declining sales of its mass produced beers Budweiser and Bud Light as customers gravitate with their purchases toward new craft beers. U.S. drinkers, for the first time, are more likely to choose wine or cocktails over beer.

Famous consumer food companies, makers of packaged foods, are no longer the providers of household staples. Accordingly, their share prices are dropping along with their sales.

General Mills, for example, paid \$8 billion to buy a pet food company, Blue Buffalo. General Mills sales in North America dropped for yogurt, Betty Crocker baking products and snacks. Sales of breakfast cereals are not growing much at all, as Americans turn away from sugary breakfasts.

In Europe, Nestle is putting more emphasis on nutrition, pet care, coffee and water while shedding other businesses, such as Gerber Life Insurance and its U.S. confectionary arm.

Proctor & Gamble, Kraft Heinz Co, Campbell Soup, Unilever and Kimberly Clark all have rethought and resized their businesses. J.M. Smucker sold its U.S. baking business.

Big brands have yet to master the sales opportunities provided by home voice-search assistance like Alexa. They reached out to customers by buying shelf space in big retailers like Walmart and Costco and spent billions in brand advertising.

The lesson here is an old one in corporate social responsibility: companies take care of their owners financially by first taking care of their stakeholders – like customers.



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