

Chaldean leader calls for 'dismantling' of ideology that justifies Islamist violence

Baghdad, Jan. 17, 2015

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Religious and national components in Iraq are authentic ingredients; they are deep like the roots of the country rather than being communities descended from another planet. These components, which are seen as minorities were once the majority, and contributed greatly to the building of both the Iraqi and Islamic culture. These communities are today marginalized, and have been dealt with harshly and in a brutal way. This happened in many cities of Iraq, and finally in Mosul and the towns of the Nineveh Plain. No more Christians are actually there, not a single one. All this led them to seek emigration

Traditionally and historically, we have side by side with respect; we shared bread and salt, sweet and bitter, but today we wonder why this immoral and uncivilized phenomenon is happening?!!

Sure, religious extremism and violence are seriously impacting this attack; obviously we can't put blame, for this on one billion, six hundred million Muslims and make them responsible for this excommunicating thought

Dear Sisters and Brothers, the fact is that the biggest threat is not only terrorism of ISIS or any other terrorist organization. It is the "takfiri" (expiatory) way of thinking diffused by its preachers and promoters... It is as well exploited in some of the competing forces of power under the cover of religion.

This thought is the biggest threat that Iraqi people are enduring, as well as the peoples of the region; however, the religious minorities are the principal victims.

As we see in your honorable organization an excellent element qualified to spread the civilized culture of respecting diversity, therefore we call, through you the audience, upon our fellow Muslims to take the initiative and lead a campaign of rejecting any sectarian discrimination.

We urge them to take part in a joint Islamic project having as its target the dismantling of this ideology in a radical way. We suggest this to be implemented through the following ways:

1. Building an open and enlightened Islamic opinion by thoroughly reviewing the texts adopted in the teaching of religion and history, as well as the ethic of its teaching methods.
2. Adopting the appropriate interpretation of the texts; closing the door to those who are influencing the mentality of young people to use violence in the name of religion. This would be accompanied by revising the religious predicts in mosques. In all this, adopting a centrist-moderate speech that is directed towards humanitarian, national and spiritual solidarity among all human beings as children of the same homeland and humankind.
3. To promote a civilized culture of acceptance and acknowledging others as a brothers, co-citizens and full partners; all rejection and eradication of others should be removed. However, it is necessary to acknowledge that this process will take time and will require healing the memory.

It is of utmost importance that religious authorities and political leaders address the culture of hatred and all forms of violence that destroy human life and violate human dignity. It is a difficult task indeed! But it is not impossible if everyone cooperates in the promotion of a culture of peace and confidence. Everyone would overcome the fear of convergence and build bridges between citizens.

The media networks should be urged to provide information that respects religions. Media networks must not harm religious symbols and thus insult the religious followers. Let us all promote an open culture that dispels prejudices and strengthens confidence and brilliancy.

At this point, there is no other future for us than living together in peace, harmony and cooperation.