

Manifesto for Peace in the Middle East

We, **240 representatives of the Focolare Movement gathered in Madrid**, residents along the Mediterranean basin, together with some leaders from Western Europe and at the global level, express our sorrow and concern over the persistent armed conflicts devastating the Middle East and other regions of the world. The voices of those suffering from barbarity and destruction echo a history of violence that seems destined to continue; these are individuals with the right to live and develop free from geopolitical and military interests.

Human history teaches us that without empathy, forgiveness, and justice, lasting peace cannot be achieved. For this reason, we make the following manifesto public:

Commitment to Peace

- **We reaffirm** our personal and collective commitment to unity and universal fraternity as a guarantee of peace. We believe that harmony is urgent and requires mutual recognition, respect, justice, sincere dialogue, and cooperation among individuals, groups, and peoples.
- **Our daily experience** of embracing cultural diversity, different ways of living, and personal histories carried forward despite wounds gives us the strength to shout: enough of war!
- **We condemn** all forms of violence, injustice, and oppression that harm the dignity of individuals and peoples, perpetuating the suffering of countless innocent beings.

Multiplying Micro-Actions for Peace

In the field of diplomacy, the need for a micro-foundation of international relations is becoming increasingly evident, as a country's foreign policy is rooted in the decisions, actions, and interactions that ordinary citizens carry out daily.

The politics of peace demand a paradigm shift, **requiring peace to be placed at the centre of all economic, social, educational, health policies**, etc., as only then can it become a global and impactful undertaking.

Therefore, aware that the macro level is built on the micro level and with the responsibility not to leave governments alone, as they seem unable to alleviate the suffering of entire peoples, we commit to:

- **Establishing** alliances and collaborations among Mediterranean populations.
- **Strengthening** networks of solidarity to support, first and foremost, the victims of war.
- **Promoting** educational programmes to reduce intercultural and intergenerational divides and **instil in new generations a culture of peace, inclusion, and non-violence**.
- **Encouraging** local and global initiatives that promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

A Call to the International Community

It is urgent to transition from intergovernmental policies to planetary policies that respect human beings and the environment, **with responsibility towards future generations**. Therefore, we urge political leaders and international organisations to:

- **Redouble** diplomatic efforts to immediately end hostilities.
- Urgently **reduce** arms production and trade to halt the escalation of conflicts.
- **Provide** effective humanitarian assistance to affected populations.
- **Establish** just mechanisms for peace and reconstruction in devastated regions.

Joining Forces for a Better Future

Aware of the immense challenge, we know that our daily actions, though small, contain seeds of hope for fostering a culture of fraternity. Confident that, together with other individuals, groups, and institutions, it will be possible to alleviate suffering and open new paths of reconciliation.

If we live in an era of a **fragmented world war**, we want to dream of a **world peace built piece by piece**.

*240 representatives of the Focolare Movement from Mediterranean populations
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