

In the name of God

14 January 2015

Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon
Secretary General of the United Nations

Dear Sir,

Like you and hundreds of millions of people throughout the world, I too am saddened by and strongly condemn the deplorable terrorist attacks in Paris and similar worrying incidents that have occurred prior to and since then, which are all examples of the unfortunate and inhumane consequences of terrorism and extremism in the East and West. But more than mere condemnation of these events is expected from the United Nations, international organizations, governments, civil organizations, and the world's leaders and elite.

Mr. Ban Ki-moon,

In today's world, violence and extremism has created a burning inferno that is devouring people of all faiths, nations and creeds throughout the world. But unfortunately what is sometimes done in the name of combating terrorism and violence does not contribute to the solution but instead adds fuel to this raging fire. Terrorism and violence has various roots that must be addressed and the world brought back from the abyss of "extremism".

Mr. Secretary General,

In September 2001, New York's Twin Towers collapsed in a heinous act of terrorism that highlighted the threat of "terrorism" which existed prior to that as well. The Islamic Republic of Iran issued a condemnation in the first moments following the attacks and sought the solution in "Dialogue amongst Civilizations" and an "Alliance for Peace". But others believed that the solution for uprooting this fateful phenomenon lay in assembling a coalition for a "Global War on Terrorism", which was believed to be led by the likes of Al-

Qaeda. But if this method was effective why are we witnessing increasing waves of terrorism throughout the world? The likes of which we have seen from the Eastern-most point of the world to its Western-most point, in Paris, in Iraq and Syria, in Palestine and Lebanon, in Afghanistan and Pakistan, in Nigeria and Myanmar. This has placed everyone in a chokehold whether they are Shia, Sunni, Yazidi, Christian, or Jewish, whether they are religious scholars, intellectuals, politicians, children, old or young.

Today it is not only at Middle East, Asia, Africa and South America that are seeing insecurity but also in the heart of European and North American countries no one is safe. We must accept that in today's interconnected world, we either have security everywhere or nowhere is safe.

If the voice of dialogue, peace and tolerance that echoed through the United Nations at a sensitive historic time and was welcomed by all was taken seriously and we sought to identify the root causes of this phenomenon through practical and enforceable solutions and the United Nations and international organizations could compel politicians to abide by the necessities for establishing peace and civil organizations, intellectuals and scholars took significant steps on this path, we would not be seeing such a bitter situation today.

If the calls for an "Alliance for Peace based on Justice" in 2001 and subsequent to that the passing of the proposal for "Dialogue among Civilizations" was not lost in the commotion of war, blood, revenge and troop deployments after the September 11th attacks which shed more blood than those heinous attacks and if global decisions were made with reference to the advice of well-wishers, would we still be witnessing such bitter days?

Your Excellency,

Not only based on religious teachings and moral principles but also based on scientific findings and even political experience, poverty, deprivation, oppression, occupation, displacement, repression and worse of all humiliation that is done by corrupt regimes and expansionist powers have all played a role in bringing about this fateful phenomenon. If instead of tolerance and love, hatred and violence becomes the norm and those with more power apply more violence and support violent groups that are in line with their perceived interests, will it not be the vicious cycle of violence, oppression and humiliation on one hand and terrorism and extremism on the other hand that will be perpetuated?

When millions of people have their land occupied and the cries of the oppressed and displaced victims is drowned out by the manic cheers of the oppressive and murderous occupiers and many powers instead of punishing the occupier, humiliate the displaced victim, then a profile of a killer is made and stateless terrorism can recruit soldiers from even amongst Westerns. Terrorism, extremism and marginalization do not have good and bad versions. We cannot ignore the worrisome discrimination that results from applying double standards.

Mr. Secretary General,

Moses (PBUH) was the prophet of dignity and confronting the Pharaohs and Jesus (PBUH) was the prophet of love, kindness and humanity and Muhammad (PBUH) was the prophet of mercy and liberty. Have we asked isn't occupation and oppression in the name of Moses, humiliation and embarking on new crusades in the name of Jesus, and beheading innocent people and enslaving women and terrorizing and slaughtering people in the name of Muhammad not only a crime against humanity but also a grave insult to these holy prophets?

Mr. Ban Ki-moon,

The kind souls that support freedom, justice and human rights everywhere for all faiths and creeds and those against discrimination and imposition and those who believe everyone should have access to resources and rights and dignity are not few, but their voices are not heard! We must devise practical solutions so that these voices are better heard. The time has come that international organizations collaborates with all world leaders, governments and civil organizations to identify the various causes of this grave situation and look for ways of combating it in an unbiased and realistic manner.

Your Excellency,

I know what has taken shape over a long time and has resulted in discrimination, injustice and backwardness of nations and the establishment of unjust international structures and eventually violence and extremism cannot be resolved by dialogue and recommendations or quickly and at once. I know that fanaticism and ignorance amongst movements that have transformed their backwardness and humiliation into hatred and have made violence and terror a means for claiming their rights and have unfortunately given their despicable and inhumane actions a holy guise and in this way they betray humanity and divine values, cannot be stopped with advice and even declarations or demonstrations. I also know and experience has proven that resorting to force and violence to destroy these movements is not effective and only serves to deepen the

resentment of these misguided groups and even sometimes helps them play the victim and attract and recruit more humiliated people.

I know that the worrisome waves of Islamophobia that has led to anger and hatred amongst some sections of public opinion against Islam and Muslims and has justified any insult to things held sacred to people and nations on the one hand and legitimizing the repressive actions against oppressed people, especially Muslims, on the other and also Westophobia which is caused by not making a distinction between the colonial aspects of Western policies outside its national borders and the civilizational and cultural aspects of the West that has had, at least for the Westerners themselves, positive achievements and this cannot be easily resolved with moral and political recommendations. But we cannot ignore our experience and practical efforts. Attracting the real attention of the world and thought leaders and acting without undue emotionality is a global and human responsibility. Finding the roots of the bitter reality of the situation we are in which sees violence and extremism, whether perpetuated by states or political or ideological movements which rears its ugly head in the form terrorism as only one of its tangible and fearsome manifestations, is the first step in finding a solution that if presented will no doubt be welcomed by the world's public opinion and all peace-lovers and this will lead to the gradual isolation of extremists and their eventual disappearance from the international scene, God willing.

In my own limited capacity I suggest that the United Nations take bold steps in this direction and call scholars, intellectuals, politicians, governments and civil organizations to expedient action with the aim of achieving a “***Historic Reconciliation***” which is one of the important objectives of the dialogue of cultures and civilizations. The Foundation of Dialogue among Civilizations is also ready to share its experience and cooperate with peace-loving scholars of the world to help raise the voice of dialogue and peace as best it can to bring about a World Against Violence and Extremism.

Mr. Secretary General,

Let's not allow the world and humanity live under fear, insecurity and danger. We must come to the defense of faith, freedom, justice, morality, dialogue and peace.

Seyyed Mohammad KHATAMI
Founder and President of FDC