



**The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco
to the United Nations
New York**

**CONCEPT NOTE
HIGH LEVEL VIDEO CONFERENCE
THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN ADDRESSING
THE MULTIPLE CHALLENGES OF COVID-19
May 12th, 2020 (10AM-12:00 PM)**

I. BACKGROUND:

The United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, launched on April 11th, 2020 a Special Appeal to Jewish, Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders in order to join forces, work for peace, and focus on the world's common battle to defeat COVID-19. His visionary message was echoed worldwide and was positively conveyed during these unprecedented times.

The message of the Secretary General speaks to the various challenges of humanity and addresses the multidimensional consequences of COVID19. This pandemic exacerbates other existing and persisting global issues. Unless these challenges are addressed in a coherent and a holistic manner, they will undermine efforts for peace and international security, political stability in many regions, exacerbate tension in conflict and fragile areas, affect social harmony, jeopardize development hard won gains, endanger the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and compromise climate change actions etc.

Moreover, the subsequent and vibrant Appeals of the Secretary General on these critical and interrelated issues were a warning call on the magnitude of the COVID-19 global phenomenon. They were a call for accelerating multilateral demarches and courageous approaches aiming at harmonizing actions in response to the pandemic and its interconnected global impacts.

For these reasons, it is imperative to catalyze cooperation between the various actors of the international community among the Member States, UN system, Religious Leaders and financial institutions etc...

The role of Religious Leaders is particularly important in preserving human fraternity and making societies more inclusive, cohesive and united especially in trouble times. Their voices can help raise universal awareness about the multifaceted challenges facing the international community. They can spread messages of hope, optimism, and solidarity and have the ability to galvanize international consciousness and collective responsibility not only to fight this pandemic, but also to emerge stronger in the post-COVID era.

It is rightly that the UN Secretary General has declared in July 2017 that: "it is vital that Religious Leaders from all confessions show genuine leadership". It is the very spirit of this virtual conference.

II. INTERVENTIONS & KEY ANALYSIS QUESTIONS:

The Conference will consist of an opening Session by the Secretary General, the President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco. It will be followed by interventions from eminent Religious Leaders of the three monotheistic religions, as well as from the high representatives of UNAOC and UNSAPG, and interactive discussion with Member States.

This conference will touch upon the following questions:

- * **How can Religious Leaders play an active role to relay the multidimensional calls of the SG to tackle the severe and global consequences of COVID-19?**
- * **What kind of spiritual interconnections of global dimension can Religious Leaders integrate in global efforts, in response to the complex challenges during this period of pandemic?**
- * **How can they preserve the multilateral mobilization and the unity momentum amid COVID-19, in order to build the foundations of a better, solidary and resilient world in the post COVID-19 era?**

PROGRAM

I. OPENING SESSION:

- ✓ **H.E. Mr. Omar HILAIE**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations
- ✓ **H.E. Mr. António GUTERRES**, Secretary-General of the United Nations
- ✓ **H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad BANDE**, President of the General Assembly of the United Nations

II. HIGH LEVEL PANEL INTERVENTIONS:

- ✓ **His Eminence, Cardinal Miguel Ángel AYUSO GUIXOT**, Bishop of the Catholic Church, President of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, from the Holy See, Rome
- ✓ **Rabbi Arthur SCHNEIER**, Senior Rabbi of New York City's Park East Synagogue, Founder and President of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, Member of High Level Group and Ambassador to the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
- ✓ **H.E. Pr. Ahmed ABBADI**, Secretary General of the Rabita Mohammadia of Oulémas of the Kingdom of Morocco, from Rabat
- ✓ **H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel MORATINOS**, High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)
- ✓ **H.E. Mr. Adama DIENG**, UN Secretary-General's Special Advisor for the Prevention of Genocide (UNSGAPG)

III. INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION:

- ✓ Remarks/Questions by UN Member States (**max 2 min each**)
- ✓ Remarks by the distinguished panelists

IV. CLOSING REMARKS:

- ✓ **H.E. Mr. Omar HILAIE**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations.

THIS HIGH LEVEL PANEL DISCUSSION WILL BE MODERATED BY

Mrs. Melissa FLEMING

Under-Secretary General for Global Communications

Please fill up the registration form attached and send it back to bouchikhi.hanaa.un@gmail.com
Phone 646-541-0179, by **Monday 11 May 2020 (9am)**

**Details on accessing the meeting virtually will be provided in due time
to all registered participants**