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Declaration Adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Dialogue among Religions and Civilizations: Migration and the Challenge of Integration through Dialogue among Religions and Cultures (November 3rd – 5th 2016 – Bitola, the Republic of Macedonia)

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DECLARATION

adopted at the FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON DIALOGUE AMONG RELIGIONS AND CIVILIZATIONS

Migration and the Challenge of Integration through Dialogue among Religions and Cultures

(November 3rd – 5th 2016 – Bitola, the Republic of Macedonia)

Affirming our dedication to the goals and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Global Agenda of the United Nations on the Dialogue among Civilizations;

Dedicating ourselves to the promotion of inter-human, inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue as a priority issue, continuing the initiatives of the First Regional Summit of Presidents of Southeast European Countries on Dialogue among Civilizations, organized under the auspices of President Boris Trajkovski and UNESCO in Ohrid in 2003, the First, Second and Third World Conferences on Dialogue among Religions and Civilizations in cooperation with UNESCO held in Ohrid in 2007 and 2010, and in Skopje in 2013;

Committed to make the twenty-first century the century of human rights, equality and freedom and to promote the religious and cultural diversity as a foundation for peace and prosperity in global terms;

Recognizing the tremendous changes in world communities, civil society, war and post-war situations impacting children and adult populations, internet and social media during the last decade.

Devoted to universal equality, justice and dignity, we, the participants at the Fourth World Conference on Dialogue among Religions and Civilizations entitled *Migration and the Challenge of Integration through Dialogue among Religions and Cultures*, hereby, solemnly adopt the following:

DECLARATION

Pursuant to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principles of all religions, all people are born free and equal in regards to their dignity and rights. We are obliged to work together in order to preserve and respect the cultural differences and integrity and to encourage growing participation in the current cooperation processes.

We, the participants at the Fourth World Conference on Dialogue among Religions and Civilizations gathered here in Bitola, characterized by many languages, cultures, religions, and faiths, share the conviction that the dialogue among religions and cultures and the better-managed migration may promote closer relations among migrants on one hand and transit and final destination countries on the other hand.

We are aware that the fundamental causes leading to migration are armed conflicts, wars,

environmental factors and social behavior, poverty and underdevelopment overburdened by demographic and economic imbalances, whereas the migration trends are mainly towards the developed western countries which are either transit countries or countries of the final destination.

Today, we are witnesses that the human mobility has increased to that extent that a great number of people live in a country that is different from their country of origin. Migrants are present in all countries worldwide.

We highlight the necessity of working together in the spirit of mutual partnership and for the purpose of better management of migrations in our respective countries in a comprehensive and integrated manner for more effective protection of the migrants' rights, particularly the migrant women and children.

We underline that the religious and cultural diversity are to be regarded as heritage and an advantage, and that the diverse cultural and religious traditions contain creative potential and are an instrument for mutual understanding and respect.

We are fully dedicated to promoting equal opportunities for all, freed from prejudice based on religion, ideology, ethnicity, race or gender discrimination, and are fully dedicated to enhancing dialogue, tolerance and respect, while preserving freedom and dignity for all people, without any exception.

We appeal to guaranteeing religious and cultural rights, as well as to preserving equality of all ethnic groups in each and every country in the interest of protecting the stability and sustainable development of any society.

We shall continue to promote inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue that builds understanding, good will, and good relations among religions, faiths and cultures, and encourages peace and security, aiming to contribute to effectively dealing with the challenges encountered by the migrants.

We appeal to efficient protection of the migrants and permanent preservation and promotion of the inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue.

We highlight that the successful integration of migrants presupposes not only integration in social activities but in religious communities as well. The provision of religious and cultural tolerance is a precondition for their successful integration.

We highlight the importance of maintaining social cohesion in conditions when we are encountering ever more pronounced diversity and sensitization of the younger generations with reference to religious respect, and in particular bearing in mind that migrants coming from a country with one religion encounter serious difficulties in the integration process in countries with a different religion.

We emphasize that the obstacles pertaining to the integration of migrants from different religions do not disappear even when indifference to religious issues and processes exists.

We support the respective policies and regulatory frameworks on a national and global level for the purpose of more successful management of challenges posed by the contemporary

migration processes.

We encourage the stabilization of the regions which are in poverty and conflicts by providing necessary economic and political support.

We acknowledge that the strengthening of our cooperation and adherence to our common goals and different obligations requires a continuous high-level of support, as well as a continuous dialogue on a global level.

We are convinced that the dialogue among religions and civilizations may contribute to diminishing the challenges posed by the integration of migrants;

We appeal to increased interaction and partnership among governments and religious communities aimed at resolving and diminishing the challenges regarding the integration of migrants, and in the interest of peace and development.

We express our solidarity with the people who strive for dignity and freedom and acknowledge the sacrifices they make in the continual struggle against racism, intolerance, injustice and repression. Additionally, we commit ourselves to protect future generations from such infringements of human rights and endeavor to provide freedom and dignity for all humans.

We, the participants at the Fourth World Conference on Dialogue among Religions and Civilizations, characterized by many languages, cultures, religions, and faiths, share the conviction that this initiative shall provide a solid platform for promoting peace, tolerance, development and human dignity.

Bitola, Macedonia, 5 November, 2016