

## Statement of Principles on Eliminating Racism in all its Forms

August 2020

The following Statement of Principles frames ongoing conversations and actions of the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) and [working groups](#) that address global agendas, in opposing racism and promoting human dignity and equity. During the global COVID 19 pandemic of 2020, the brutal murder of African American George Floyd while in police custody in Minneapolis sparked a heightened awareness of the scourge of racism and unleashed a planet wide wave of outrage and revulsion.

The G20 Interfaith Forum Association (IF20), a network of religiously linked institutions and experts active since 2014, provides a regular platform for religious voices to engage with the G20 process in framing global policy initiatives. We cannot speak for religious communities but the IF20 has earned credibility over time as an organization that can help channel distinctive religious insights into G20 policy formation processes. Our mandate obliges us to bring faith and public policies together. The exercise of that mandate demands a recognition that racism, far from an isolated issue, infects every aspect of human endeavor and planetary existence.

Therefore, the IF20:

- 1- Recognizes that all humanity shares one planetary home. We have no option but to learn how to share our common space in equity and harmony. In this Age of the Anthropocene, this cannot be reduced to aspiration. It is life and death. As faith communities, we are in accord with many traditions that “the earth is the Lord’s”, and therefore sacred.
- 2- Recognizes that humanity is one family. The evidence of anthropology and the witness of many of our sacred texts conclude that all people share a common ancestry. We are all related. Our common heritage forbids that any might claim a racial pre-eminence over another.
- 3- Insists that no human being is more human than any other, in accordance with the 1963 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (A/RES/18/1904) which “solemnly affirms the necessity of speedily eliminating racial discrimination throughout the world in all its forms and manifestations and securing understanding of and respect for the human dignity of human persons, convinced that any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous and that there is no justification for racial discrimination in theory and in practice anywhere.”<sup>1</sup>
- 4- Reconfirms our commitment and support of all international instruments outlawing racism in all its forms, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, among others.
- 5- Pledges to recognize, resist, and repudiate racism in all its forms and expressions. Insists that human beings are always subjects, never objects. People are never to be commodified or instrumentalized, but cherished. As people of faith, we affirm the precious worth of every life as an obvious consequence of divine love and compassion.

- 6- Deplores personal acts of racism in both word and action, and the systemic and often subtle racism in local, regional, and global societies. Racism based on the alleged inferiority of any given people group is insidious and multifaceted. It is personal and collective. It is systemic and structural. It is institutional and has been used as a tool to socialize people into racist behaviors and ways of relating to others through inferiority or superiority complex, patronizing attitudes that are demeaning to human dignity. We note that racism in its sometimes less obvious forms can include phenomena in the kind of ethnic, antisemitic, Islamophobic or other religious distinctions which do not depend on visible differences.
- 7- Looks to the G20 and like global institutions, organizations and communities to provide leadership dedicated to the elimination of racism and the promotion of equity among all manner and conditions of people and peoples.
- 8- Further pledges to recognize, expose, and eradicate racism, and to promote equity, for example, by encouraging governments to create review mechanisms aimed at dismantling structural and institutional racism.
- 9- Eschews racism for political gain whether in practice or as an instrument of propaganda by any-political, civil, or faith-based agency.
- 10- Commits to honoring the universal principle enshrined in one form of expression or another in all our religious and spiritual traditions and affirmed in principle by secularists and humanists: “do unto others as you would be done by”.

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly Resolution 2106 (XX), *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, New York, 21 December 1965, para. 5-6, available from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cerd.aspx>.