

The Human Rights Centre,
University of Essex, UK
and
The Tandem Project,
Minnesota, USA

a conference

**Freedom of
Religion and Belief
and
The UN Year for
Tolerance**

18 - 20 September 1995

**The Barbican Centre
City of London**

HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

The Human Rights Centre was founded in 1989 by members of the departments of law, government, philosophy, sociology and economics. This interdisciplinary Centre is an expansion of the Centre for International Human Rights Law which was established in 1983. The Centre aims to give a focus in Britain for research and teaching in the study of human rights. Whilst fostering a world wide outlook, the Centre has a special interest in human rights in Europe and the Commonwealth. It is distinctive in the emphasis it gives to the integration of human rights theory and practice and in its concern with international humanitarian law. The Centre has working relations with similar academic centres around the world.

For the future, the Centre is looking to finding a wider audience for its research, and is expanding its role as a key disseminator of human rights theory. The vision for the Centre is to take the debate about human rights in theory and practice to educationalists, opinion formers, policy makers and the general public, as well as to the students currently taught on its LLM and MA programmes.

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THE TANDEM PROJECT

The Tandem Project is a non-sectarian, non-profit human rights organisation founded in 1985 to promote, implement and monitor the 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. The Director is Michael M Roan. The organisation was established following the 1984 UN seminar on The Encouragement of Understanding, Tolerance and Respect in Matters Relating to Religion or Belief.

Four international conferences have been organised by The Tandem Project on ways to implement the 1981 Declaration. Numerous programmes and activities have been launched as a result of these conferences, including the First Arcot Krishnaswami Lecture by Professor Theo van Boven. The Tandem Project founded the Nobel Peace Prize Forum in 1989, an annual seminar for faculty, students and the general public sponsored by the Norwegian Nobel Institute.

The Tandem Project, with support from Hamline University School of Law, is launching a new programme, Religion or Belief Information Network (ROBIN), a global network of organisations and people engaged in promoting, implementing and monitoring the 1981 Declaration.

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DAY TWO

**FREEDOM OF
RELIGION AND
BELIEF**

08.00

Barbican Centre
Tuesday 19 September 1995

CURRENT STATUS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES:

Registration - Conference Reception Area, Barbican Centre

09.00

Chair - Professor Nigel Rodley, School of Law, University of Essex
UN Special Rapporteur on Torture

Freedom of Religion and Belief - The World Report Project
Professor Kevin Boyle,
Co-Editor, Freedom of Religion and Belief - A World Report

**Implementing the 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of All
Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or
Belief**

Professor Abdelfattah Amor, University of Tunis
UN Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance

10.00

Break

10.30

Monitoring the Freedom - Regional Overviews

Concurrent discussion groups on:
Africa; Americas; Asia/Pacific; Europe; Middle East

12.30

Lunch

14.00

Global Issues - Indicators of Intolerance

Chair - Françoise Hampson
Department of Law, University of Essex

Indivisibility of Tolerance, Human Rights and Peace
David Little
Fellow, United States Institute for Peace, Washington DC

Revealing Tolerance: Peace in Judaism, Christianity and Islam
Karen Armstrong
Leo Baeck College, London

14.45

Questions

15.00

Break

15.30

Global Issues - Indicators of Intolerance

Concurrent discussion groups on:
**Women; Education; Religion and Conflict; Secularism; New
Religious Movements**

17.00

Close of day two

18.00

Reception - The Barbican Centre

DAY THREE

THE UN YEAR FOR TOLERANCE

09.00

Barbican Centre
Wednesday 20 September 1995

PRESENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND FUTURE INITIATIVES:

Chair - Alison Jolly, Research Officer, Human Rights Centre

The United Nations Year for Tolerance
UK Year for Tolerance Committee

Tolerance - A Northern Irish Perspective
Mari Fitzduff
Community Relations Council, Northern Ireland

09.45

Questions

10.00

Break

10.30

Chair - Michael Roan, Director, The Tandem Project

Promoting Tolerance

Plenary panel: reports from Non-Governmental Organisations
Inter-Faith Network; Amnesty International; BBC; NGO sub-Committee, New York; American Refugee Committee; International Humanist and Ethical Union

12.00

Questions

12.30

Lunch

14.00

Future Initiatives

Discussion Groups
Education; Future Research Issues; Supporting the UN Rapporteur; Monitoring the 1981 Declaration; Tolerance and Development

15.00

Break

15.30

THE RULE OF LAW AND THE ROLE OF EDUCATION:

Chair - Juliet Sheen
Co-Editor, Freedom of Religion and Belief - A World Report

Strengthening international and national legal standards
Professor Natan Lerner
Faculty of Law, Tel Aviv University

The Educational Challenge: a universal curriculum on religion or belief?

Frank Field
Associate Professor, John Knox International Centre

16.30

A Call to Action: conference report and recommendations
Bertram Ramcharan, Commissioner, International Commission of Jurists
(invited)

17.00

CLOSE

SPEAKERS

Sir Sigmund Sternberg

Sir Sigmund is Chair of the International Council for Christians and Jews, a member of the Court of the University of Essex, and a patron of the UK Committee of the UN Year for Tolerance.

Ulrich Bunjes

Ulrich Bunjes is Director of the Council of Europe's European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance.

Kevin Boyle

Professor Boyle is Director of the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex, and Co-Editor of the World Report. He was founding director of Article XIX, the London NGO, and came to the Centre in 1989. His research interests, as well as freedom of religion and belief, include democracy, freedom of expression and Northern Ireland.

Abdelfattah Amor

Professor Amor is Professor of Law at the University of Tunis. In 1993 he was elected as Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, on religious intolerance and on the implementation of the 1981 UN Declaration.

David Little

David Little is Senior Scholar in religion, ethics and human rights at the United States Institute for Peace in Washington. He is currently director of the Working Group on Religion, Ideology and Peace which is conducting a five year study of religion, nationalism and intolerance, with special reference to the 1981 UN Declaration.

Karen Armstrong

A former nun in a Roman Catholic order, Karen Armstrong has been a freelance writer and broadcaster since 1982. Her television work includes *The First Christian*, and two series of interviews: *Varieties of Religious Experience* and *Tongues of Fire*. In 1993, she published *A History of God*, an examination of Western Society's fidelity to the idea of One God and the conflicting convictions it engenders in Christianity, Islam and Judaism.

Mari Fitzduff

Dr Mari Fitzduff is Director of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council. She is an expert in grassroots initiatives to build trust between Northern Ireland's divided communities.

Natan Lerner

Currently, Professor Lerner teaches international law and a seminar on race, religion and culture at the Faculty of Law, University of Tel Aviv. A graduate of the University of Buenos Aires, he practised law from 1950 to 1962. He is a member of the Academic Committees of the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research and the Curiel Center for International Relations.

Frank Field

Formerly Associate Professor of Kent University, Geneva Campus, Frank Field is currently the representative of the Unitarian-Universalist Association, which reports to ECOSOC. He is also acting moderator of the NGO sub-Committee on freedom of religion, conscience and belief, in Geneva.

Bertram Ramcharan

Bertram Ramcharan, who is a distinguished author on international human rights law, is a Special Advisor in the Secretary-General's Office, United Nations. He is presently working on the former Yugoslavia. He is a Commissioner of the International Commission of Jurists and attends the conference in that capacity.

DISCUSSION GROUP CHAIRS

Day Two Regional Overviews

Africa
Americas
Asia/Pacific
Europe
Middle East

Dr John Taylor
Dr Gary MacEoin
Dr Juliet Sheen
Professor Kevin Boyle
Said Essoulami

Indicators of Intolerance

Women
Education
Religion and Conflict
Secularism
New Religious Movements

Barbara Forster/Dr Juliet Sheen
Carolyn Hamilton
Françoise Hampson
Matt Cherry/Professor Robert Tielman
Dr Eileen Barker

Day Three Plenary Panel

Inter-Faith Network
Amnesty International
BBC
NGO sub-Committee -
New York
American Refugee
Committee
International Humanist
and Ethical Union

Dr Harriet Crabtree
Asad Rahman
David Craig

Sue Nichols

Tony Kozlowski

Professor Robert Tielman

Future Initiatives

Education
Future research issues
Supporting the UN
Special Rapporteur
Monitoring the 1981
Declaration
Tolerance and Development

Frank Field
Paul Martin

Sue Nichols

Michael Roan
Tony Kozlowski

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF - A WORLD REPORT

Overview

Country List

Africa

Americas

Asia/Pacific

Europe

Middle East

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief is proclaimed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, and by many other international instruments, as a fundamental right of the individual, a right which all States should uphold. Yet there is little systematic, comparative knowledge or understanding of how different countries, either in theory or in practice, acknowledge and protect the right.

In the world of the 1990s, competition between secular ideologies could be replaced by religious tension, confrontation and conflict. Even if such a prediction should prove wide of the mark, the question of how to ensure, throughout the world, the individual's right and freedom to follow his or her conscience is of the first importance. Equally, the question of how to build, within and between countries, tolerance, understanding and accommodation for different religions and beliefs is likely in the years to come to present the world community with a considerable challenge.

The purposes of the project are to seek to fill the gap in information and understanding of freedom of conscience as an internationally guaranteed right, to contribute to raising global awareness of the significance for international peace and security of the wide spread denial of this freedom, and to encourage action at all levels in defence of the spiritual dimension of the human being as a human rights concern.

The means adopted to fulfil these objectives are to research, publish and disseminate a human rights report on Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion or Belief. This survey, funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts of Philadelphia, will report on a representative sample of countries, examining the status of this freedom both in legal terms and in practice. Evidence of intolerance and discrimination will be reported on, but also highlighted, where they exist; will be developments that indicate efforts to strengthen protection for this freedom, and efforts to increase tolerance and understanding between different beliefs or religions. Each country entry will seek to give the reader a sense of the overall context of that society, its stage of development and its legal, social and political structure.

'Freedom of Religion and Belief - A World Report', edited by Professor Kevin Boyle and Dr Juliet Sheen, will be published by Routledge in 1996.

Algeria; Egypt; Malawi; Mauritania; Morocco; Nigeria; Senegal; South Africa; Sudan; Tunisia; Zimbabwe

Argentina; Brazil; Canada; Chile; Costa Rica; Cuba; Guatemala; Mexico; Peru; Trinidad and Tobago; USA

Australia; China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Malaysia; Pakistan; Philippines; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Vietnam

Albania; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bulgaria; Cyprus; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; The Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Romania; Russia; Spain; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom; Serbia

Iran; Iraq; Israel; Occupied Territories and Gaza; Saudi Arabia; Syria

BUILDING GLOBAL TOLERANCE

A companion study, drawing on the themes and issues identified in the World Report, is to be undertaken by the University of Essex, under the title 'Building Global Tolerance'. This will be an inter-disciplinary examination of some of the key challenges that need to be addressed if international human rights standards on freedom of thought and conscience are to be realised. The volume will include a discussion on concepts of toleration, whether these be derived from liberal thought, or from religious and belief systems, as well as chapters on women and religion, education, religion and conflict, freedom to change belief, and media representations of religions or beliefs. It will also examine in depth the efforts at local, regional and international level to eliminate religious intolerance and discrimination.

Concepts of Tolerance

This study will begin by exploring concepts of tolerance from the following perspectives:

Buddhism; Christianity; Hinduism; Humanism; Islam; Judaism; Western Liberalism.

From this exploration, the volume will seek to define an overlapping consensus, or basis for working for tolerance from all perspectives.

In light of the discussion in the first part of the volume, the following indicators will be discussed:

Indicators of Intolerance

Religion and conflict
Case study in religion and conflict
Minorities and religion or belief
Democracy and tolerance
Education
Conscientious objection
Gender and sexuality
New Religious Movements
Media and misrepresentation
Freedom to change belief
Diversity, tolerance and peace
Positive initiatives

'Building Global Tolerance' is edited by Kevin Boyle and Alison Jolly, and will be published by Routledge in 1996.

PERSPECTIVES ON TOLERANCE

United Nations Charter

Preamble

We the Peoples of the United Nations determined

...to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small...

And for these ends

...to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours...

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others, and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Shorter Oxford Dictionary

To permit without protest or interference. To bear.

Lord Chesterfield

"If you will please people, you must please them in their own way; and as you cannot make them what they should be, you must take them as they are."

Mary Robinson

"a campaign against intolerance places emphasis on the responsibility of each individual. For it can only be by personally thought-through individual acts of rejection of and resistance to outrage that genuine progress can be made. That place within each of us that is open to the other is the place to be nourished. We need to listen to the narrative of each other's diversities so that we can draw strength, not weakness, from our differences."

John F Kennedy

"Tolerance implies no lack of commitment to one's own beliefs. Rather it condemns the oppression or persecution of others."

Laurence Sterne

"So long as a man rides his hobbyhorse peaceably and quietly along the King's highway, and neither compels you or me to get up behind him - pray, Sir, what have either you or I to do with it?"

Juan Ramon Jiminez

"The world is like a map of antipathies, almost of hates, in which everyone picks the symbolic colour of his difference."

**1981 DECLARATION
ON THE ELIMINATION
OF ALL FORMS OF
INTOLERANCE AND
OF DISCRIMINATION
BASED ON RELIGION
OR BELIEF**

[Adopted without vote by the General Assembly of the United Nations, 25 November 1981. Resolution 36/55]

Considering that one of the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations is that of the dignity and equality inherent in all human beings, and that all member States have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the organisation to promote and encourage universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion,

Considering that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights proclaim the principles of non-discrimination and equality before the law and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief,

Considering that the disregard and infringement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or whatever belief, have brought, directly or indirectly, wars and great suffering to humankind, especially where they serve as a means of foreign interference in the internal affairs of other States and amount to kindling hatred between peoples and nations,

Considering that it is essential to promote understanding, tolerance and respect in matters relating to freedom of religion and belief and to ensure that the use of religion or belief for ends inconsistent with the Charter, other relevant instruments of the United Nations and the purposes and principles of the present Declaration is inadmissible,

Convinced that freedom of religion and belief should also contribute to the attainment of the goals of world peace, social justice and friendship among peoples and to the elimination of ideologies or practices of colonialism and racial discrimination,

Noting with satisfaction the adoption of several, and the coming into force of some, conventions, under the aegis of the United Nations and of the specialised agencies, for the elimination of various forms of discrimination,

Concerned by manifestations of intolerance and by the existence of discrimination in matters of religion or belief still in evidence in some areas of the world,

Resolved to adopt all necessary measures for the speedy elimination of such intolerance in all its forms and manifestations and to prevent and combat discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief,

Proclaims this Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief:

Article 1

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have a religion or whatever belief of his or her choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private to manifest that religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair their freedom to have a religion or belief of their choice.

3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 2

1. No one shall be subject to discrimination by any State, institution, group of persons or person on the grounds of religion or belief.

2. For the purposes of the present Declaration, the expression "intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief" means any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.

Article 3

Discrimination between human beings on the grounds of religion or belief constitutes an affront to human dignity and a disavowal of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and shall be condemned as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and enunciated in detail in the International Covenants on Human Rights, and as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations between nations.

Article 4

1. All States shall take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life.

2. All States shall make all efforts to enact or rescind legislation where necessary to prohibit any such discrimination, and to take all appropriate measures to combat intolerance on the grounds of religion or other beliefs in this matter.

Article 5

1. The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organise the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.

2. Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the wishes of his or her parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, and shall not be compelled to receive teaching on religion or belief against the wishes of his or her parents or legal guardians, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

3. The child shall be protected from any form of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief. The child shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal fellowship, respect for freedom of religion or belief of others and in full consciousness that his or her energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his or her fellow human beings.

4. In the case of a child who is not under the care either of parents or of legal guardians, due account shall be taken of their expressed wishes or of any other proof of their wishes in the matter of religion or belief, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

5. Practices of a religion or beliefs in which a child is brought up must not be injurious to his or her physical or mental health or to his or her full development, taking into account article 1, paragraph 3, of the present Declaration.

Article 6

In accordance with article 1 of the present Declaration, and subject to the provisions of article 1, paragraph 3, the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief shall include, inter alia, the following freedoms:

- a) To worship or assemble in connection with a religion or belief, and to establish and maintain places for these purposes;
- b) To establish and maintain appropriate charitable or humanitarian institutions;
- c) To make, acquire and use to an adequate extent the necessary articles and materials related to the rites and customs of a religion or belief;
- d) To write, issue and disseminate relevant publications in these areas;
- e) To teach a religion or belief in places suitable for these purposes;
- f) To solicit and receive voluntary financial and other contributions from individuals and institutions;
- g) To train, elect or designate by succession appropriate leaders called for by the requirements and standards of any religion or belief;
- h) To observe days of rest and to celebrate holidays and ceremonies in accordance with the precepts of one's religion or belief;
- i) To establish and maintain communications with individuals and communities in matters of religion and belief at the national and international levels.

Article 7

The rights and freedoms set forth in the present Declaration shall be accorded in national legislations in such a manner that everyone shall be able to avail themselves of such rights and freedoms in practice.

Article 8

Nothing in the present Declaration shall be construed as restricting or derogating from any right defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights.

**PROMOTING
TOLERANCE**

UNESCO

1995 is the United Nations Year for Tolerance, as proclaimed by the General Assembly in 1994. The lead organisation is UNESCO. Various published materials are available in connection with the Year, including 'Democracy and Tolerance', the proceedings of the Séoul seminar on tolerance held in 1994. For schools and community groups, educational and promotional materials focusing on this theme in all its aspects are or will be available.

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UK Committee

In the UK, the Year has been co-ordinated by the UK Year for Tolerance Committee, which meets regularly to discuss current and future initiatives to promote tolerance in the fields of age, belief, disability, gender, mental and physical illness, race and sexuality, among others. The co-ordinator is Margaret Quass.

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**COUNCIL OF
EUROPE YOUTH
CAMPAIGN**

The Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance is sponsored by the Council of Europe. Its Director is Ulrich Bunjes. The Campaign has played an active role across Europe in encouraging young people to work to combat intolerance, and promote tolerance. The Campaign produces a regular newsletter, titled 'All Different, All Equal'.

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CONFERENCE TEAM

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Alison Jolly

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Michael Roan

Sponsorship

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Corporation of London, University of Essex.

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in communion with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

2. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or adopt a religion or belief of his choice.

3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

4. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.