

## AN APPEAL FROM BRUSSELS

From many countries and religious traditions we have travelled to Brussels, here in the heart of Europe, as pilgrims, driven by our love for peace, the wish to come together and to invoke the One who is mightier than us. We started along this road to peace many years ago and it has taken us to Assisi, Rome, Warsaw, Bari and Malta. Today we are here in Brussels as a sign of our interest in constructing a unified Europe.

We are believers and people of religion who although we lack material powers, we have a conviction which comes from deep within our religious traditions, that is to say a source of great faith and love. In the building of tomorrow's Europe and of all societies, it is important to remember that religious values not only support man's home but also open it to friendship and solidarity with one and all.

Religions do not want war, on the contrary they enroot peace in the depth of their hearts.

The world has changed greatly over the past few years. Some difficult situations have been resolved, the Cold War is over and yet war and violence have not been eradicated from our world. Instead, in many parts of the world, they have spread like a disease which flourishes in the face of economic difficulties. Numerous regional conflicts continue and in a vast number of other areas we are witness to outbursts of uncontrollable violence. Often these situations are thought to be irresolvable.

We ask for peace for all those people who suffer because of war. To those with political responsibility we ask to do all that is possible to avoid the further spread of war and we ask them to make this their main priority. As believers we pledge to foster peace and to educate believers to dialogue. Wherever is violent struggle, dialogue shall replace weapons. Through the treasure of their faiths can realise a future of peace.

Our different faiths feel to have a common mission. Here in Brussels, seated side by side, they bear witness to the common destiny of men and women alike. In this spirit we would like to express our concern for the tragic situations existing in some areas of the world and even in entire continents where misery and abandonment add to war. In many areas in the southern parts of the world the situation has deteriorated dramatically.

From Brussels we appeal to the North of the world not to forget the South and we ask them to build and to create a destiny common to the peoples from North and South founded on solidarity and peace. We are convinced that true peace cannot come to all peoples of the world while some of them are abandoned to their destiny of misery.

We pray to God to help all men and women to build peace. He can submit the hearts of the violent, He can give the spirit of wisdom and justice and console seekers for peace. We present ourselves to the world being steadfast with one another in spite of our differences; we do not want to leave Brussels without making our single voice resounding in the heart of Europe, a voice that invites everyone to become a builder of peace and of a more just international world.

And, being closer to one another, we shall continue along our path of faith and peace.