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## Press Release

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## Head of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Addresses International Conference on Freedom of Religion

***“True freedom and lasting peace in the world is not possible until mankind comes to recognise his Creator”***

On 5 July 2022, the World Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad addressed the opening plenary session of the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief 2022 through a special recorded video message.

The event held at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre in London was organised by the UK government and was aimed at urging increased global action on freedom of religion and belief and brought together governments, parliamentarians, faith representatives and civil society.



The opening session also included messages from His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales and the British Prime Minister amongst others dignitaries and faith leaders.

During his message, His Holiness commended the objectives of the conference and outlined the Quranic teachings on freedom of religion and called attention towards the importance of people recognising their Creator in bringing about true lasting peace.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

***“Freedom of religion and belief are core human rights that must be preserved and protected for everyone and everywhere. Though we are living in an increasingly secularised world, in which people are moving away from religion, many millions of people around the world continue to adhere to religious values and it is essential that they are able to live their lives according to their beliefs and convictions.”***

His Holiness mentioned the persecution Ahmadi Muslims face because of their faith in Islam and outlined that Ahmadi Muslims shall never respond to hatred in kind.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

***“The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has itself been the victim of grave religious persecution, to the extent that obnoxious laws have been enacted against us preventing our members from professing and practicing their basic religious beliefs. Over a period of many decades, Ahmadi Muslims have been mercilessly targeted only because of their religious beliefs, and many have lost their lives as a result of utterly inhumane and barbaric attacks by religious extremists.”***

Speaking of the response of Ahmadi Muslims, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad continued and stated:

***“We [Ahmadi Muslims] have never and will never respond to such hatred and cruelty in a like fashion. Rather, our response will always be one of love and peace. Based on the teachings of Islam, we say to Muslims and non-Muslims alike, that all people must always be free to profess and practice their peacefully held religious beliefs.”***

His Holiness went on to speak about the emphasis the Holy Quran lays on the protection of religious freedom.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

***“Allah the Almighty has enshrined freedom of belief and freedom of conscience to such an extent that the Holy Quran states that permission to use force is only permitted in response to those who seek to eliminate religion from the world. In fact, the Holy Quran categorically states that if one does not respond forcefully to those who seek to destroy religion, then no church, synagogue, temple, mosque or any other place of worship, where the name of God is recited, will remain safe. Hence, the Holy Quran has made it the religious duty of Muslims to protect the rights of people of all faiths and made freedom of belief a cornerstone of our religion.”***

His Holiness also highlighted the fundamental importance of belief in God in bringing about true peace.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

***“As a religious person, it is my heartfelt belief that true freedom and lasting peace in the world is not possible until mankind comes to recognise his Creator, fulfils His rights and acts upon His commandments. Whether religiously inclined or not, we must recognise that there is One God, who is the Creator and in Whose Hand lies all of Creation, and so it is our duty to fulfil His rights and that of all humanity.”***

Concluding, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad prayed and said:

***“May Allah the Almighty enable for true religious freedom and harmony to prevail and for all communities and peoples across the world to live their lives freely according to their beliefs.”***

**End Release**

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