

Statement by the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC), Mumbai

On Faith, Violence, and Moral Responsibility in a Time of Global Crisis

At a time when violence continues to escalate across regions, and when religious identities are increasingly drawn into the language of conflict, the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council (IRSC), Mumbai, stands in resonance with faith leaders across the world who are calling for restraint, accountability, and a return to ethical clarity.

In his recent Easter message, Pope Leo XIV urged world leaders to “abandon every desire for conquest and domination” and to choose dialogue over war. His appeal reflects a wider moral concern: that violence, once normalised, creates cycles that are difficult to arrest.

From within the heart of conflict in Bethlehem, Rev. Munther Isaac has called on the global community to “talk to us, not about us,” reminding the world that faith cannot remain distant from human suffering, and that listening itself is an ethical act. His reflections have drawn attention to the lived realities of those caught in war, challenging the tendency to abstract or justify violence.

At the same time, voices within Jewish communities, including groups in Australia, have publicly expressed concern over the human cost of military actions, including the recent bombings in Lebanon. Such statements reflect an important truth, that within every faith tradition, there exist internal moral resources that resist violence and call for accountability.

These voices, across traditions and geographies, converge on a shared ethical ground: that no religion can claim legitimacy when it is used to justify harm, exclusion, or the dehumanisation of others.

In India, where religious diversity has long been a defining feature of public life, this moment carries particular significance. The challenges of polarisation, misinformation, and identity-based mobilisation demand a renewed commitment to the ethical foundations of our traditions. The question before us is not only how we respond to violence elsewhere, but how we ensure that our own social fabric is not shaped by the same forces of division.

As the Inter-Religious Solidarity Council, Mumbai, we affirm:

- That violence against innocent life cannot be justified in the name of religion or identity.
- That religious teachings must not be appropriated to legitimise power, exclusion, or political agendas.
- That standing in solidarity with those who suffer is a moral imperative across all traditions.
- That dialogue, when grounded in humility and responsibility, remains essential to sustaining peace in plural societies.

We remain committed to creating spaces for meaningful interfaith engagement that go beyond symbolic coexistence, and that address the ethical challenges of our times with honesty and care.

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