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## Statement of the International Youth Committee on the Ukraine Conflict

16 March 2022

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We, the *Religions for Peace* International Youth Committee, officers elected during the 10th World Assembly by the religious institutions and faith leader members of *Religions for Peace*, representing a global interfaith youth Network, express our disappointment and distress regarding the ongoing war being waged in Ukraine.

We write, together, from every corner of our one world, with urgency, to strongly condemn the ongoing violence and loss of human lives, the disrespect of international law and conventions, and the disregard for human rights. We are deeply troubled by this crisis and its foreseeable tragic implications, especially—but not only—for the young people who are robbed of a peaceful future.

The ongoing conflict deeply affects the youth—an impact that will not just be felt today, but one that will severely affect our futures. Without a path to peace and diplomacy, the wounds of this conflict will only perpetuate a never-ending cycle of violence and trauma. The actions that world leaders will take today will define our futures for many generations to come.

We, therefore, call for the immediate cessation of hostilities. Simultaneously, we urge all political and religious leaders, and their institutions, to commit not only to resolving this war, but to a future path of non-violence in any confrontations, for an accountability to justice, and for due restitution for all victims. We echo the call of our religious elders for the immediate assurance of safety and security of vulnerable populations, and the upholding of human rights.

We, young people, from different walks of life and diverse faith traditions, are drained by wars and conflicts that the outdated systems and institutions keep waging. The loss of any one life, due to preventable conflicts, is an atrocity. We will no longer stand idly watching the destruction of our future.

We are now expressing our voices to hold our religious and state leaders accountable. Think of your children and their children. Think of the kind of world you wish to leave them with. Let your legacies be an affirmation of all life in peace.

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