

## **Speech of HB Patriarch John X At the beginning of the Christian-Islamic Spiritual Summit, Bkerke**



Reverend Beatitudes, Eminences, Excellencies,  
Brethren,

We are here because the homeland is wounded, in pain, and bleeding. Our hearts are bleeding, for around us are victims, martyrs, killing, violence, displacement, and all afflictions that beset us. We are here by the mercy of the Lord in hope and expectation that our meeting and gathering will be a means of consolation for our people. We are here in hope and expectation that this meeting will be an impetus to find solutions for our people, our country, and Lebanon together with our brothers, the political and civil officials, and every authority. May it be a glimmer of hope for our wounded and suffering people.

First of all, we thank His Beatitude Cardinal Mar Bechara Boutros Al-Rahi for his kind invitation to meet in this honorable residence in Bkerke for an Islamic-Christian spiritual summit to consult on the affairs of our country and the painful

issues that trouble Lebanon and our people Lebanese at this difficult time. Our meeting is first a message to the world so that it may see that we have been and shall remain the children of this country with all its sects, Muslims, and Christians and that we are one spiritual family in a national unity that is not marred by any defect. It is also at the same time an internal message to our people for everyone to see that we are united and that nothing separates us. As Muslims and Christians in Lebanon, so dear to our hearts, we hold our hands together in the time of danger.

We are facing a brutal aggression carried out by Israel, starting from Gaza and now reaching Lebanon, while the whole world watches in silence, speechless as a stone. We cry aloud, demanding that the international community hurry up and stop this war, today not tomorrow. What is the meaning of this criminal behavior? We see before us innocent people, women, children, homes, martyrs, destruction, and displacement. However, unfortunately, the world watches indifferently, and I dare say, in support of this barbaric war. We appeal to the world to stop supplying weapons to kill, strike, destroy, and ruin. There are so many repercussions. We start with the issue of the displaced, those families living in stability with their families and relatives.

What is their fault? Why all this displacement, migration, and homelessness? And why all these calamities? Here, we must thank the governmental organizations, the army, the civil defense, and all the officials who have been supporting those displaced people. Thanks also to those who host them. Thanks also to all the local and foreign Arab bodies and other associations that support those families displaced by ongoing war and calamities. Here, we must highlight the importance of putting order into our internal house. First, we need to elect a president for the republic and build a government in a state of citizenship with complete constitutional bodies. We bear a great responsibility in this regard. We call on all the concerned authorities to unite and join hands to expedite the election of a president for the republic first to reorganize all constitutional bodies.

Our meeting today is a cry for the outside world, the international community. The Lebanese are a peaceful people and we do not want wars; we demand an immediate cessation of the war and an end to this massacre that is reaping thousands and thousands of martyrs, wounded, sick, and dead, and leaves homes destroyed. This meeting is also a call for our children in Lebanon to stand firm no matter the difficulties. We will remain steadfast and shall not look back, but rather keep our eyes looking ahead.

We pray the Most High and Glorious Lord, the Merciful God, have mercy on the souls of the martyrs, heal the wounds, comfort the hearts, and strengthen

everyone in these difficult and painful circumstances. We ask why the response is double in this world. Why the double revenge? Why are some atrocities only permitted there but forbidden there and vice versa? We appeal to the conscience of people all over the world to be children of peace and to strive for peaceful solutions in this troubled and unstable world that suffers from many wars and pains. I thank you for listening and I pray and ask God that this spiritual summit will be a meeting that comforts the hearts of our children, raises our voice to the whole world, and bears witness to truth and peace, confirming that God has created us and wanted us to be children of peace and joy. Thank you.

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