



## P R E S S R E L E A S E

The High Wycombe Statement on the situation in the Arab region

1st May 2011

We, representatives of **European branches of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation\*** meeting from April 29 - May 1, 2011 in the Wycliffe Center near High Wycombe (UK),

(1) are **impressed by the nonviolent revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt** and note that their **success** was in no small part due to the work that had gone on in previous years **by civil society**,

(2) also **note that the uprising in Libya rapidly turned violent** and has been met with violent repression,

(3) **deplore the military intervention in Libya** when **other nonviolent and diplomatic options were (and still are) available**, like the proposal of India, South-Africa and Venezuela to negotiate and the African Union's roadmap,

(4) are **concerned about the situation in various other Arab countries** where nonviolent uprisings are met with deadly violence, but **where the international community feels no need to intervene** (as for Syria) and indeed supports the oppressors (Bahrain), which **demonstrates the hypocrisy and double standards of the international community**,

(5) note the **urgent need for the international community**, especially the

**European Union, to develop mechanisms to prevent and defuse violence,**

(6) **call upon faith groups and civil society in general to use their networks to act as an early warning system for potential violence,**

(7) **affirm that justice and peace can only be achieved through nonviolent means including the upholding of human rights.**

\***IFOR** has 85 branches, groups and affiliates in 51 countries on all continents. Its membership includes adherents of all the major spiritual traditions as well as those who have other spiritual sources for their commitment to nonviolence.

Founded in 1914 at the eve of war in Europe, IFOR has taken a consistent stance against war and its preparation throughout its history. Perceiving the need for healing and reconciliation in the world, the founders of IFOR formulated a vision of the human community based upon the belief, that love in action has the power to transform unjust political, social, and economic structures.

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