

*'Peace comes from being able to contribute the best that we have, and all that we are, toward creating a world that supports everyone. But it is also securing the space for others to contribute the best that they have and all that they are.'* - Hafsat Abiola

With reference to the quote, assess the contribution of Islam and Christianity to world peace.

World peace not only means the absence of war however refers to an ideal state in which freedom, harmony and happiness are displayed by all nations and people within. This notion of peace is held sacred within the Christian and Islamic traditions and both provide valuable contributions that aid in creating '**a world that supports everyone**'. This sanctity of peace is derived from the sacred texts of Christianity and Islam, the New Testament as well as the Qur'an and Hadith respectively. The Christian organisations, the World Council of Churches, Eirene and the Brotherhood of St. Laurence as well as the Islamic organisations, Islamic Relief Worldwide, the Salam Institute for Peace and Justice and the Islamic Human Rights Commission derive their missions from these sacred texts. Cumulatively these organisations have contributed a great deal towards the achievement of world peace.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) founded in 1948 is a 'global fellowship of churches' that aims to promote peace and unity. The WCC comprises of 349 churches and is based at the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, Switzerland. The WCC has held 2 important events that have been effective in contributing towards world peace. The Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Reconciliation and Peace (DOV) lasted from 2001 - 2010. Their mission was to reach and help all people, regardless of faith, affected by violence whilst also removing theological justifications for war and violence. Although the DOV is over the WCC recognises that violence could not have been overcome in a decade and continues to strive for peace through other means. The World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel is another initiative by the WCC held annually. It advocates for the 'end to the illegal occupation of Palestine and a just peace for all in Palestine and Israel'. Although this initiative is highly specific it effectively aids in contributing towards world peace as this is a war torn region and is the source of much debate worldwide.

Another organisation is Eirene: International Christian Peace Service, an organisation founded in 1957 which is named after the Greek goddess and personification of peace. Eirene works in 3rd world countries to aid in the implementation of peace. One of their projects, which started in 2008, helps to prevent sexualised violence that is perpetrated against women on a daily basis in Uganda. Working with a partner organisation Action for Development (ACFODE) they have been able to teach young women self defence strategies to use in life threatening situations as well as the provision of psychologists to help sexual violence survivors cope. Another measure taken by Eirene is their attempt to 'establish a culture of peace in the educational system' of El Alto, Bolivia which has been highly successful. Since 2012 Eirene has helped to implement workshops in eight schools that teach students the correct way to deal with violence and the promotion of peace culture. Instilling these ideals in the youth of El Alto effectively allows them to grow up and '**contribute the best that they have and all that they are**' to the world

thereby contributing towards world peace.

Founded in 1930 amidst the Great Depression, the Brotherhood of St Laurence is an Australian based organisation which 'works toward a vision of an Australia free of poverty'. It focuses on issues such as unemployment, poverty and refugees which are of particular concern within Australia. An important contribution is the Brotherhood's Ecumenical Migration Centre which was established in 1962. For over 40 years it has played an important role in the migrant rights movement of Australia. Even today it continues to provide services for and strengthen infrastructure of new communities of refugees. The Brotherhood of St Laurence's monetary impact has been extremely effective with an estimation that in 2009 the total contribution from volunteers was worth \$6.24 million. Their Australian involvement shows that Christians recognise that in order to achieve world peace, the world in its entirety must be looked after not just developing countries or remote areas.

Islamic Relief Worldwide is an independent humanitarian organisation that has been 'serving humanity' since 1984. Guided by the values and teachings of the Qur'an, Islamic Relief aims to mitigate the effects of natural disasters and respond efficiently in times of crisis as well as addressing the root causes of poverty. Islamic Relief has been responding to the Syrian Crisis since 2011, the start of the war. In 2016 alone Islamic Relief spent \$74 million on the 13.5 million displaced people that were in desperate need of humanitarian aid. Islamic Relief has had a positive impact in their response to the severe drought and famine in East Africa. The drilling of 15 new wells in Somalia is able to supply over 100,000 people with freshwater and the restocking of livestock in Ethiopia will benefit over 6000 families. Islamic Relief's aid, not only to a war torn region however also to one suffering from famine, allows the affected people to become more happier and content with themselves, thus revealing Islamic Relief's effective contribution to world peace.

Since 2004 the Salam Institute for Peace and Justice has worked on issues regarding conflict resolution and non violence placing a focus on 'bridging differences between Muslim and non Muslim communities'. One of the institutes most successful initiatives is the establishment of the Muslim Peace-building Network in late 2015. It is an online platform that aims to connect Muslim professionals and organisations throughout the world providing 'innovative methods and practices of peace-building'. The Institute recognised the need for Muslims to come together in order to discuss the challenges they face and how they can be overcome. Another initiative is the Early Warning and Rapid Response Pilot Project for Vulnerable Communities in Chad, which receives funding from the US Embassy in N'djamena. The project targets communities that are at risk of recruitment to radical religious organisations and promotes the use of community dialogue as the primary means to resolve conflict. Therefore, the implementation of an online platform as well as promotion of peace in developing countries reveals the ongoing relevant contributions made by the Institute towards world peace.

The Islamic Human Rights Commission, established in 1997, works to achieve 'justice for all peoples'. Their influence is showcased in the fact that they have achieved consultative status with the United Nations Economical and Social Council. Their main contributions focus on bringing to attention the injustices that arise worldwide and are

often overlooked in the media thereby going unnoticed. On the 8th of March 2017, the Islamic Human Rights Commission presented a side panel meeting during the 34th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council. Their presentation focused on the persecution of the Rohingya Muslim community in Myanmar. By talking about this issue at such an important event it allows the public to empathise with the affected people and contribute funds to aid them. This monetary aid helps to alleviate the hardships faced by the Rohingya community. The path to achieving peace is obstructed if human rights abuses are occurring, thus the contribution of the Islamic Human Rights Commission helps to achieve world peace.

In Conclusion, the Christian organisations, the World Council of Churches, Eirene and the Brotherhood of St. Laurence as well as the Islamic organisations, Islamic Relief Worldwide, the Salam Institute for Peace and Justice and the Islamic Human Rights Commission have provided valuable contributions in the past and continues to do so effectively aiding in the achievement of world peace.