

## **The media in sad times**

War is always the result of a failure. Our thoughts go out at this time to all those, who are engaged in or suffering from the armed conflict in Iraq. We are concerned for the Iraqi people, the Iraqi families, who have suffered so long under a despotic leadership and cruel regime and are now suffering from the war, as we are for the soldiers of both sides and their fearful loved ones.

We, of the ICF, reject the concept of a “clash of civilisations”. We want our brothers and sisters in the Arab and Muslim world to know that this war is not the war of the Western and Christian world against them. Those of us in Europe do not forget the respect and admiration we have for the Arab civilization, that brought so much to Europe and the world. We are equally concerned to maintain and strengthen the spiritual and humanitarian tradition of much of European and Western culture.

Today’s failure is also the failure of the media. At the end of the road our mission, our great and simple mission is twofold: to inform honestly and broadly, in a balanced way, so that those who read us and listen to what we say, are able to understand what is happening in their town, in their country and in the world. They can therefore make up their own mind and be properly citizens and live in a true democracy. Our second mission is to inform about the culture, the problems, the dreams of other people and thus build understanding and mutual respect. In this sense war is also our own failure. It shows once again that we, in the media, are not fulfilling our task of bringing people together. If indeed there is so much hatred and violence in this world, it is also because we, in the media, are not properly helping people to understand and respect each other.

The sad times we are in should therefore - this is the conviction of the ICF people - give us a renewed motivation to better serve humanity, to build better media, that can help bring about the “civilisation of love” that should replace the pseudo-civilisation of hate and violence, and to make sure that together we will build a world in which tomorrow freedom, justice and compassion will prevail.

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