

## DECLARATION ON ART AND BEAUTY

As visual and performing artists of the World Youth Alliance, we represent a variety of artistic disciplines and cultural backgrounds. We create art, because in it we encounter the fullness of who we are. We develop a language to express ideas, beliefs, emotions and states of consciousness that would likely remain voiceless. In seeking transcendence, we experience the depth of our human freedom. When creating art, we find a place where our deepest hunger meets our most profound joy.

Beyond serving this undeniable need for self-expression, art is intended to communicate with the other. In this way, art is a gift of the self. Historical context, the intention of an artist, and education in a particular art form influence the ability to appreciate a work of art. However, the best art communicates by resonating with a vital aspect of what it means to be human. Such art elicits a visceral response, connecting us with a mystery far beyond what we can comprehend, yet at the same time anchoring us firmly in what we know so intimately at the core of our being.

Beauty illuminates the truth about the human person. Beauty is necessary for the achievement of human flourishing. In its presence, it inspires re-creation and, in its absence, calls for restoration. Far more than what is superficial and fleeting, beauty is what best describes this mysterious encounter that we experience through great works of art. In this way, art is not only personal, but universally meaningful.

Art provides a tangible experience of the intangible notion of beauty, and in doing so expands our vision and awareness. It provides a space to contemplate beauty and to continue striving for it. To create art in pursuit of beauty is not only well worth the risk and self-sacrifice that we put forth as artists but it is the vocation of the artist.