TALKING POINTS for Awakened World 2012

The Association for Global New Thought, and **The International Interreligious Peace Council (founded in 1994 by His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, Fr. Thomas Keating, Bishop Desmond Tutu) will convene:**

*An Expedition into Spiritual Citizenship*

**“Awakened World 2012: Engaged Spirituality for the 21st Century ”** will take place in Rome and Florence, Italy from October 13-21st

By “engaged spirituality,” we mean the dedication of our spiritual insights and energies in service to the entire planetary community. The purpose of the gathering will be to explore the evolution of religion and spirituality in these times, as a significant challenge and opportunity for the world. The event will set the stage for the next decades of evolutionary activism in humanity’s story of religion and spirituality.

We will meet in Rome from **October 13-17 and, midway through the conference, share our progress with international media at a press conference held at** the historic Capital Hill of Rome**. On October 18, the entire conference will transfer by express train in private cars to Florence, where we will continue our meetings, culminating in a second press conference at the world famous** Palazzo Vecchio in the heart of Florence**.**

The ultimate goal - creating a world that works for everyone – is the intention that is bringing together a diverse assembly of men and women from 28 countries, who believe in religious and spiritual evolution and are committed to healing the world.

But the real breakthroughs at the gathering will be made by the grassroots and organizational activists who attend:

• Activists will work closely with religious and spiritual leaders and secular experts from all faiths and cultures as we shape an agenda for “Engaged Spirituality in the 21st Century," and a working plan for its implementation.

• All participants will play a significant role in designing and implementing collaborative projects for peace, justice, and ecological sustainability.

• We will form a communication chain for continuing strategic contact with offices of these world leaders

• We will all return to their home communities with a message of hope and a new commitment

**This is not a “talking heads” conference—no keynotes or lectures, but constant interaction supported by a very precise design.** Scholars of religion point to “the Axial Age” as the period in which we saw the dawn of the great classical traditions. These days, it’s often suggested that we have entered a second great “turning on the religious axis,” -- a Second Axial Age. If the first brought the individual to the forefront, the latter shifts our focus to the global dimension – the collective ethical and spiritual consciousness that will shape our future choices.

There are 16 Axial Markers that are observable signs that we are in a time of dramatic evolutionary shift in spiritual values and religious practices. The Markers are represented by four thematic areas or “domains,” and four key “stages” of evolutionary unfolding.

*Domains*

Reconciling with the Other

Transforming Society

* Embracing the Earth Family
* Rediscovering the Sacred

*Stages*

* Signs of Change
* Systemic Shift
* Engagement
* Embodiment

Every cultural evolutionary passage needs to find its thematic moment and its first voice. We believe that "Awakened World 2012" can help to shape a genuine *transformative momen*t, calling attention to this shifting paradigm, and making at least some small steps toward healing a world that has been historically, chronically torn apart by religious conflict.

• What is the future role of religion and spirituality in the global quest for peace, nonviolent conflict resolution, economic and social justice, human rights, and ecological sustainability? *What commitments to action can we first agree upon, and then work to offer?*

• Sitting in circles with leaders and activists, we will chart the *SIGNALS* that a major turning of the world's cultural axis is underway.

• We will identify the *SHADOWS* of resistance that obstruct the world's evolutionary progress and explore strategies for overcoming them.

• We will define and energize the *STRENGTHS* we have individually cultivated, and now collectively bring to bear on building new principles and practices for nonviolence and peace-building among the world’s great religions.

• And, finally, we will design and implement *SOLUTIONS* – ways to assist the evolutionary processes that can begin to heal our global wounds.

*• Awakened World 2012: Engaged Spirituality for the 21st Century,* initiates a process that will continue to unfold in our own communities and in countless others.

The evolution of religion and spirituality in the 21st century is a significant challenge and opportunity for the world. Activists who attend will play a key role in determining how global dimensions of ethical, religious, and spiritual awareness connect directly with enlightened action.

If you are interested in joining us visit [www.agnt.org](http://www.agnt.org) to learn more about this amazing expedition into spiritual citizenship