Intercultural and Interreligious context of Media Information & Literacy

Developing Discourse that Promotes Empathy, Mutual Knowledge and Understanding
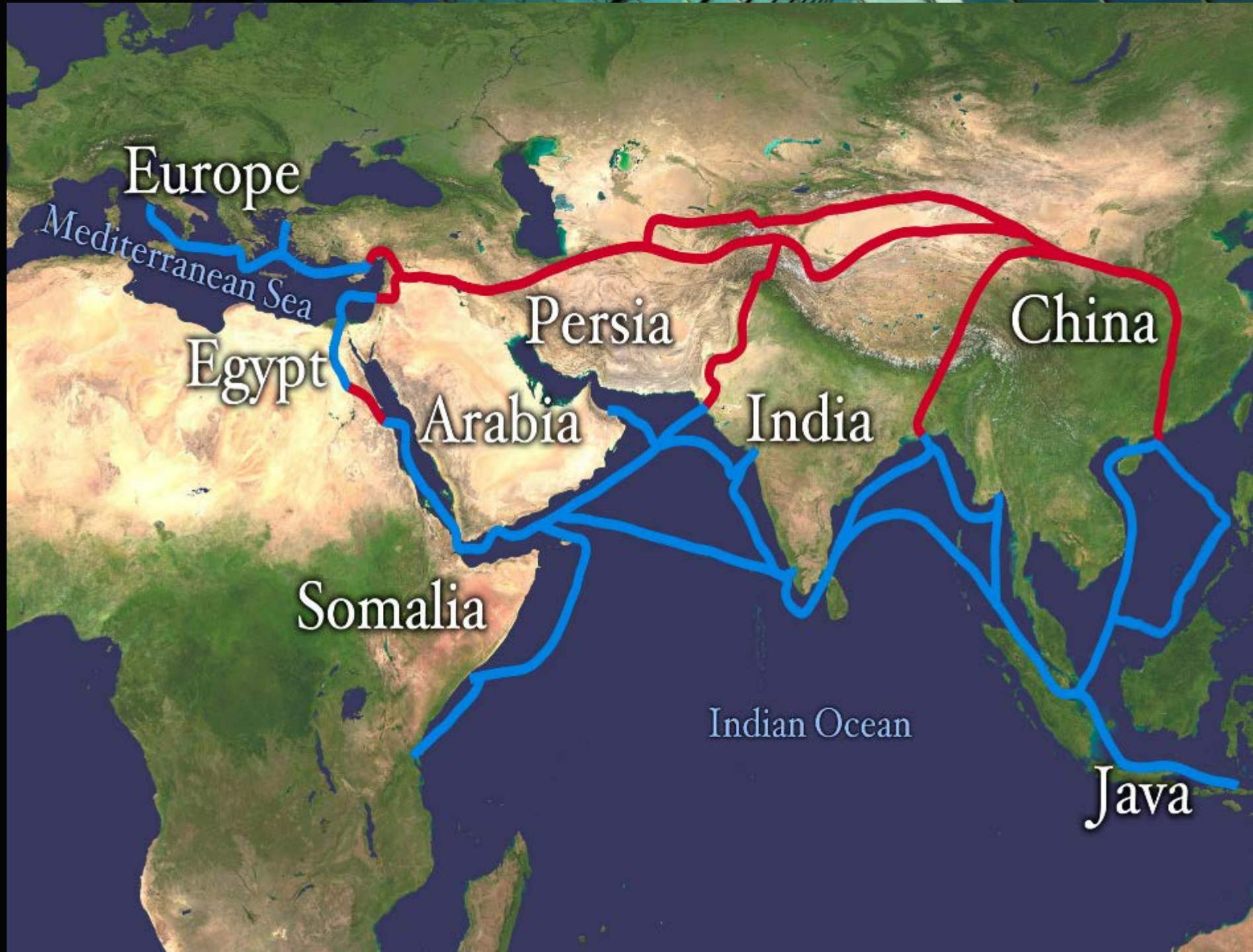
GLOBAL MIL WEEK 2016

THE SILK ROAD….

Existing over thousands of years enriching the countries it passed through, transporting cultures, religions, languages and of course material goods across Europe, Asia and Africa thus uniting them all with a common thread of **cultural heritage and plural identities.**

As an <u>Indian</u> sitting in the US eating my Sushi dinner (<u>Japanese</u>), drinking tea (<u>Chinese</u>), wearing denim jeans (<u>American</u>) overhearing brahms lullaby (<u>German</u>)….

WHO AM I?
SHOULD I WORRY?
WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Big Picture >>Ground Reality

Increasing conflicts

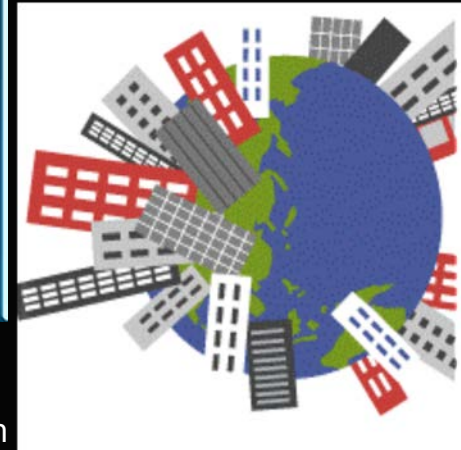Marginalisation on the basis of cultural identity

Globalisation

Technology

Falling Participation

Urbanisation

Growing Intolerance....

- *An **invincible assumption** of the infallibility of one's beliefs*

- *A **dogmatic conviction** about one's rightness*

- ***Towards expression of ideas** and views that challenge current doctrines and conventional wisdom*

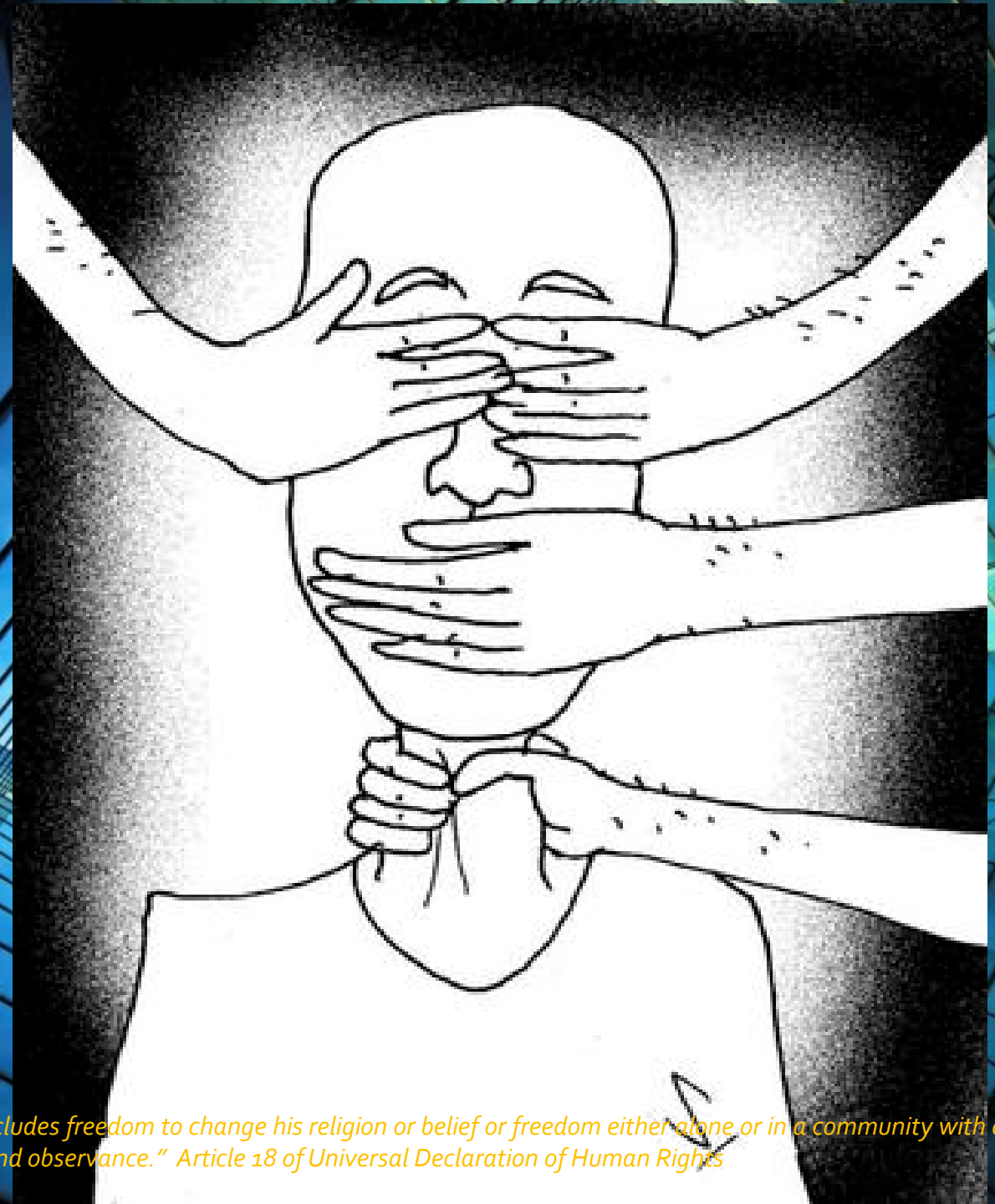- ***Equating of Criticism** with **Causing Offence** (Abolition of evil practices)*

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

PROTECT
FREEDOM
OF EXPRESSION

Freedom of expression will continue to remain under siege unless all groups accept that people can have different opinions and beliefs in a free country. It is not our differences that divide us but our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences."

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Intercultural dialogue?

- Essentially a linkage/ exchange of views and opinions across different cultures, communities, and people, promoting understanding and interaction.

Inter-religious dialogue?

- Cooperative, constructive and positive interaction among people of different religious traditions/beliefs

THROUGH....

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

mEdia

The Enabler

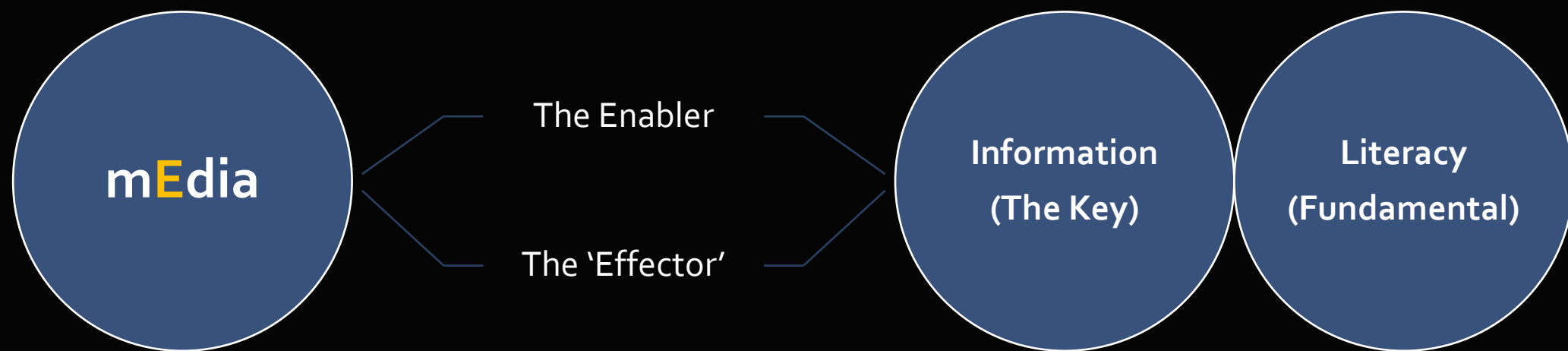The 'Effector'

Information
(The Key)

Literacy
(Fundamental)

MEDIA INFORMATION LITERACY

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Why is it needed?

For Dialogue

- To bridge ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural divides
- To constructively and democratically participate on the basis of shared universal values.
- Learn, Link, Share and Adapt good practices
- Strengthen People Participation

For Information Sharing

- To contribute constructively to the evolution and revolution of human mind

For Relationship Building

- To help bridge the cultural gap for a transformative societal impact

For Building Sensitivity and Respect

- To increase tolerance and empathy towards each other

Because the stakes of …

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Non-dialogue are high!

CAN LEAD TO…

- Extremism
- Intolerance and Discrimination
- Building a stereotypical perception of the *other*
- Climate of mutual suspicion, tension and anxiety
- Further Marginalisation of the marginalised
- Deprivation from the benefit of new cultural openings, necessary for personal and social development
- Segregated and mutually exclusive communities

WORD OF CAUTION…

At times the media's potential to be a force for good can easily backfire. By disseminating messages that create and reinforce negative stereotypes and perpetuate misconceptions, the media frustrates dialogue and understanding.

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Stakeholders and The Media

Government

- Supporting initiatives such as these Conference for fostering dialogues among cultures and civilizations
- Promoting diversity in school programmes, curriculums and school systems
- Making school policies more inclusive with a focus on formal and informal teacher training
- Supporting creation of online youth media news resources
- Promoting equal access to all social services and active people participation esp. the youth by addressing the root causes of discrimination based on gender, religion, culture, ethnic background etc.
- Leveraging through various platforms– Film Festival, Television Programmes, Dedicated air time, Community Radio, Street Plays, Theatre, Music Concerts etc. for cross-cultural and inter-religion information dissemination

Local Bodies

- Raising awareness through local policies which support intercultural inter religious initiatives
- Bringing together representatives of different religious and cultural communities
- Appointing local cultural ambassadors and create/facilitate information peer exchange

Youth Networks; Organisations etc.

- Participating in public debates and policy making
- Increasing youth visibility in public sphere through face to face interactions and eMedia
- Becoming part of youth media networks to promote cooperation and exchange of cultural knowledge, news and views

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Civil Society

- Encouraging people participation especially the youth & community
- Checking and countering media misrepresentations
- Building self awareness and capacity for information dissemination
- Complementing private and public efforts in this direction for a greater impact

Media Persons; Journalists

- Increasing direct attention for news media through face-to-face encounters, familiarization, exchanges and skills sharing.
- Becoming a part of Media Network or Centres to help build constructive perceptions; control inflammatory media reporting, and award examples of professional media coverage
- Contributing to shifting people perception by moving away from sensational media reporting to meaningful media handling
- Undertaking trainings to reduce ill-informed intercultural media reports that repeat stereotypes and emphasize extremes

AND…the role of **TECHNOLOGY** cannot be negated!

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

As a way of Life...

Books	Radio
Newspapers	Films & Television
New Media	

Transmitting content through connection and conversation

The Internet
ePapers
Wikipedia
Social Media
Mobile Platforms
Video Games
Virtual Reality
Webcasts

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The India LENS

From Vedas to Vivekananda, we have a long history with over 5000 year old civilisation and a rich cultural heritage.

The seat of Shri Aurobindo – an Indian Nationalist, philosopher, yogi, guru and poet, India is member of 19 UNESCO Conventions and contributes to its Peace and Development Mission through:

- Curriculum
- Innovation in Pedagogies with ICT
- Youth Focus
- Research
- Conferences and Seminars

Peep into India Initiatives to promote intercultural and inter religious dialogues

India

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

THINK GLOBAL; ACT GLOBAL

India

Key INDIA Initiatives

- **The United Kingdom (UK):** Launch of '2017 UK-India Year of Culture' campaign in August 2016
- **Rio De Janeiro:** Celebration of *Make in India* ahead of the recently concluded Rio Olympics
- **The United Arab Emirates (UAE):** Launch of two new initiatives to promote Indian culture and science in the UAE - 'Indradhanush'- Colours of Indian culture and 'Manthan'- Indian Science Lecture Series are the initiatives
- **Indonesia:** Launch of Celebrating 100 years of Indian cinema in 2013

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

THINK GLOBAL; ACT LOCAL

INDIA FOR INDIA...

- **Cultural Mapping Project** by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India

- **Ek bharat shreshtha bharat** connecting the country's states, their culture thus fostering peace, harmony, respect within as a priority.

- **Indian Interfaith Peace Initiative (IIPI)** inaugurated in April 2015

EK BHARAT SHRESHTHA BHARAT

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

As we go along, the linking of our world through media and global communications will also go on. Our world will be circled by Superhighways of Information.

Does this mean that slowly our world will become one world - integrated and united economically and politically with an improved understanding, respect and tolerance towards diverse cultures and religions?

THINGS CAN MAKE A DIFFRERNCE IF **HUMAN RIGHTS** ARE **THE** RELIGION OF NEW MILLENNIUM

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights

NAMASTE AND THANK YOU.

Shilpi Jain
November 3 2016

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief or freedom either alone or in a community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion, or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance." Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights