



Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America

<http://www.fezana.org>

*Representing 26 Zoroastrian Associations in the United States and Canada*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Zoroastrians to Discuss Ancient Concepts of Equality at the United Nations**

LOS ANGELES, December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008 – The concept of equality is central to the ancient Zoroastrian faith. The Gathas of Zarathushtra emphasize that good thinking and individual choices made through the use of the good mind, *vohu mana*, is what uplifts human kind – not our gender or ethnicity. This ancient, timeless concept led to the declaration of the first human rights charter in history proclaimed by Cyrus the Great, the Achaemenian, of Iran. These ideas will be shared by members of the community in the United Nations at the

**53<sup>rd</sup> Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**

*The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men,*

*Including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS*

**New York City, March 2<sup>nd</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

The delegation includes Mantreh Atashband (Toronto, Canada), Anahita Dua (Aberdeen, Scotland), Homi D. Gandhi (Glen Rock, New Jersey), Kamalrukh Katrak (Branford, Connecticut), Farah Minwalla (Las Vegas, Nevada), Afreed Mistry (Toronto, Canada), Deena Patel (New York, New York), and Trity Pourbahrami (Pasadena, California). The interdisciplinary team has expertise in Social Welfare, Conflict Resolution, Telecommunications, Medicine, Finance, Architecture, Public Health, and International Relations. They have come together with a common vision, becoming standard bearers for Zoroastrian ethics, reaffirming their ancient beliefs and celebrating current successes. One such success story is how Zoroastrians are working globally to model the equal sharing of responsibilities in care giving for people living with HIV and AIDS.

**About ZOROASTRIANS**

Zoroastrians have long served as effective bridge builders in interfaith dialogue as they see traditions of their faith reflected in major religions of the world of both the orient and the occident. The core values of its members are to uphold the truth, to respect “the other” and to care for the needy and for creation. Zoroastrianism, founded circa 1500 BCE, credited to be the oldest monotheistic religion, flourished as the imperial religion of three Persian empires. North America’s Zoroastrian community includes those who arrived from the Indian subcontinent, known as Parsis, and those who came directly from Iran seeking religious freedom.

**About FEZANA**

Founded in 1987, FEZANA serves as the coordinating body for 26 Zoroastrian associations throughout the United States and Canada. FEZANA promotes the study, understanding and practice of the Zoroastrian faith. For more information visit: [www.fezana.org](http://www.fezana.org).

**About the UNITED NATIONS**

The United Nations is central to global efforts to solve problems that challenge humanity. Cooperating in this effort are more than 30 affiliated organizations, known together as the UN system. For more information visit: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org).

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