The Alliance of Civilizations, a panel of prominent world religious leaders, politicians and intellectuals, has presented a 39 page report to former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan regarding the ever-increasing culture gap between East and West. The report states that the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is the chief cause of tensions between Islam and the West, and that if the world wants to bridge this culture gap, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the best place to start.

Quote: *"4.4 The partition of Palestine by the United Nations in 1947, envisaging the establishment of two states - Palestine and Israel - with a special status for Jerusalem, led to the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, beginning a chain of events that continues to be* ***one of the most torturous*** *in relations between Western and Muslim societies. Israel's continuing occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories and the unresolved status of Jerusalem - a holy city for Muslims and Christians as well as Jews - have persisted with the perceived acquiesance of Western governments and thus are primary causes of resentment and anger in the Muslim world towards Western nations. This occupation has been perceived in the Muslim world as a form of colonialism and has led many to believe, rightly or wrongly, that Israel is in collusion with "the West". These resentments and perceptions were further exacerbated by Israel's disproportionate retaliatory actions in Gaza and Lebanon.*

Zechariah 12:3
And in that day will I make Jerusalem **a burdensome stone** for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.

A message sent on behalf of Kofi Annan stated that religion is not the root cause of the culture clash, but the problem lies with the adherents of each religion and how they behave toward each other. The report recommends that a Global Youth Alliance be set up which would help young people contribute to the implementation of these proposals, that student exchange programmes should be started, a network of religious websites should be created to link students with "moderate" religious teachers, along with a number of funding schemes, government programmes and media regulations, which would help to re-educate the general public.

Source BBC , BBC