

Extract from the interview with Mohamed El Bachiri, author of "Un jihad de l'amour" ("A Jihad for Love") (JC Lattès, 2017), a message of peace written after the death of his wife, Loubna, in the terrorist attacks of 22 March 2016 in Brussels.

"I needed to write following my wife's death. Firstly, it was like therapy, a kind of release. Secondly, writing this book was also a way to pay tribute to her, to give meaning to her death, and to respond to the terrorists and all those who seek to divide us. It's a message of peace, love and reconciliation, which invites all the different beings to come together and live together.

I was fortunate to work with David Van Reybrouck [on my book]: he's an extraordinary person. I also had the privilege of meeting some wonderful people who gave me a lot of strength and courage. And I think it's faith that gave me the will to do this. I'm a believer, I believe in God, but I also believe in man. I was fortunate to be interested in all those philosophers, all those lay people, believers and otherwise, who really inspired me, who helped me to strive for something profoundly universal, and I think I mainly draw strength from that.

Through my message, I try to share this strength with people, so we can all realise that **being different, having different cultures, different beliefs, believing or not believing, is a beautiful thing**, it's what makes us human beings, and I'm an advocate for mutual knowledge and difference. I wouldn't want us all to be the same, it would be so boring.

In general, the message has been very well received, especially by young people. There's the testimonial aspect but there's also the message which is all the more important, a message of tolerance, which calls for empathy and tells us to put ourselves in the other person's position. It's well received and viewed favourably by young people. There's still work to do because human beings are what they are, and peace can never be taken for granted. It has to be worked on every day, it's a culture, a tradition, something we have to maintain. And it's our responsibility to make sure the world we're going to leave to our children, and this beautiful Belgium, is an even more harmonious one."