



*The Committee of Religious  
NGOs at the United Nations*



## **World Interfaith Harmony: Vital for Peace and Development**

Wednesday, 12 February 2014

10 am – 1 pm

Trusteeship Chamber, United Nations, New York

### **PROGRAM**

- 10:00 am **Master of Ceremony: Dr. Hanifa D. Mezoui, Senior Advisor, Humanitarian Affairs & Civil Society, UN Alliance of Civilizations**
- 10:02 am Welcome
- *Mr. Carl Murrell, Vice President, Committee of Religious NGOs & Representative to the United Nations, National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States*
- 10:09 am Sacred Opening
- (Coordinated by Committee of Religious NGOs Bureau: Dr. Caroljean Willie, Sisters of Charity Federation; Ms. Elizabeth Bagley, Pax Christ International; Ms. Monica Willard, United Religions Initiative; and Swami Parameshananda, Bharat Sevashram Sangha)*
- *Indigenous: Joan A. Henry, Tsalagi Ani'waya (Wolf Clan) Elisi & Traditional Song-Carrier; Ray Evans Harrell, Tsalagi, Nuyagi Keetoowah Peace Priest*
  - *Bahai'i: Menaaka Kannan and Laura Lawrence*
  - *Buddhist: Rev. Doyeon Park, Won Buddhism; Ivy Gabbert, Soka Gakkai International*
  - *Christian: Rev. Darrell L. Armstrong, Baptist World Alliance; Victoria Edmonds, The Salvation Army*
  - *Hindu: Pandit Hardwar, Shri Surya Narayan Mandi; Sharon Hamilton-Getz, Committee on Spirituality, Values & Global Concerns*
  - *Jewish: Gloria Landy, World Council of Conservative & Masorti Synagogues; Rabbi Roger Ross, United Religions Initiative*
  - *Muslim: Baker al-Hiyari, Religions for Peace; Ayesha H. Ahmed, UN Alliance of Civilizations*
  - *Zoroastrian: Tina Dukandar; Kerman Dukandar*
  - *Other Traditions: Dr. Kusumita Pederson, Council for the Parliament of the Worlds Religions; Rev. Debra Gill, Interfaith Minister*
- 10:20 am Keynote Remarks
- *H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, High Representative, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations*
  - *Dr. William F. Vendley, President, Committee of Religious NGOs & Secretary General, Religions for Peace*
- 10:40 am **Musical Interlude:** *Ms. Angela Manso: Flute Meditations*

- 10:50 am      Remarks
- *H.E. Mr. Adama Dieng, Under Secretary-General/Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, United Nations*
- 11.00 am      Artistic Interlude: Global Observances of World Interfaith Harmony Week
- *Rev. Doyeon Park, Treasurer, Committee of Religious NGOs & Alternate United Nations Representative, Won Buddhism*
- 11.10 am      First Panel Discussion: Transforming Conflict and Building Peace through Interfaith and Inter-cultural Harmony
- Moderated by Mr. Matthew Hodes, Director, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations***
- *Dr. Brian J. Grim, President, Religious Freedom & Business Foundation*
  - *H.E. Archbishop Francis A. Chullikatt, Apostolic Nuncio & Permanent Observer, Holy See to the United Nations*
  - *Ms. Roxaneh Bazergan, Team Leader for Mediation Support to the Middle East, Mediation Support Unit, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations*
  - *H.E. Mr. Ufuk Gokcen, Ambassador & Permanent Observer, Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the United Nations*
- Questions and Answers***
- 12.00 pm      ***Musical Interlude: Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations***
- 12.05 pm      Second Panel Discussion: Social Cohesion: Key to Promoting Sustainable Development
- Moderated by Dr. Caroljean Willie, Vice President, Committee of Religious NGOs & Representative at the United Nations, Sisters of Charity Federation***
- *Dr. Azza Karam, Senior Advisor on Culture, United Nations Population Fund*
  - *Ms. Kamila Jacob, Envoy Coordinator, Unitarian Universalist*
  - *Sr. Deirdre Mullan, Executive Director, Partnership for Global Justice*
  - *Mr. Sant Gupta, Interfaith Leader & Member, Hindu Mandir Executive Conference*
- Questions and Answers***
- 12.55 pm      Closing remarks
- *H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, High Representative, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations*
  - *Dr. William F. Vendley, President, Committee of Religious NGOs & Secretary General, Religions for Peace*
-

## **World Interfaith Harmony: Vital for Peace and Development**

### **BACKGROUND**

Each religious tradition has its own positive vision of Peace, which includes its understanding of human dignity, individual and communal flourishing, the obligation to be in harmony with others and the natural world, and its notion of ultimate fulfillment.

A recent Pew report documents an alarming trend with tremendous implications for achieving Peace has accelerated worldwide. A rising tide of hostility, in society and within and among religious communities, threatens the shared security people of faith are working to achieve. Religions can work to reverse this rising tide of hostility by powerfully collaborating on shared positive elements of Peace grounded in diverse faith traditions.<sup>1</sup>

Hence, in 2014 the United Nations Alliance of Civilization (AOC) in partnership with the Committee of Religious NGOs (RNGO) at the United Nations will focus on promoting inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue and action for peace to commemorate the Interfaith Harmony Week.

In addition to advocating to countries to support and spread the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill during that week based on "Love of God and Love of the Neighbor, or Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbor" and urging its constituencies and affiliates around the world to work for "peace, tolerance and mutual understanding" at the local, national and regional level, AOC and RNGO will organize a three-hour event in New York city. This will build on previous events that RNGO has been organizing to honor the World Interfaith Harmony Week; the last two years (2012 and 2013) in close collaboration with the President of the United Nations General Assembly.

---

**World Interfaith Harmony: Vital for Peace and Development is organized by the *United Nations Alliance of Civilizations* and the *Committee of Religious NGOs* at the United Nations, with the support of:**

- NGO Committee on Sustainable Development
- NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace & Security
- NGO Committee on Human Rights
- NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values & Global Concerns
- NGO Committee on Freedom of Religion or Belief
- Values Caucus at the United Nations

---

<sup>1</sup> *Religions for Peace 9th World Assembly Workbook*. Theme Paper: "Welcoming the Other: A Multi-Religious Vision of Peace." 2013