

Religions for Peace

In Celebration of World Refugee Day 2024

Welcoming the Other Strengthening Advocacy and Action for Refugees and Other Forcibly Displaced Communities

Thursday, 20 June 2024 | 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM EDT ([Click here for your local time](#))

A Virtual Event

Concept Note

Background

[World Refugee Day](#), celebrated each year on 20 June, serves as a reminder of the strength and resilience of people who have been forcibly displaced from their homes to escape conflict, violence, persecution, or natural disasters. With a record number of over [114 million people](#) forcibly displaced worldwide, there is an urgent need for the international community to come together and take meaningful strides to safeguard their fundamental human rights and support them in building a better future. This year, World Refugee Day presents a critical opportunity to strengthen collective action to promote the protection and well-being of those uprooted from their homes across the globe.

Faith communities have long offered sanctuary to refugees and other forcibly displaced populations in their journey to safety, as first responders mobilising to deliver lifesaving humanitarian assistance. *Religions for Peace*, as the world's largest multi-religious leadership movement, brings over 50 years of experience in advancing multi-religious and multi-stakeholder collaboration and action to mobilise advocacy and critical service delivery to refugees and other forcibly displaced communities across the globe.

At the 9th World Assembly of *Religions for Peace* in 2013, over 600 religious leaders united in the religious imperative to welcome the “other,” and [committed](#) to work together in resisting rising hostility toward vulnerable populations, including refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, internally displaced and stateless persons. Building on this commitment, *Religions for Peace* and the World Council of Churches (WCC) issued the [Interfaith Affirmations on Belongingness](#), grounded in the perspectives and experiences of religious scholars from different traditions and stateless people. In 2021, *Religions for Peace* and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) established the [Multi-Religious Council of Leaders \(MRCL\)](#), which continues to mobilise action for refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless, and internally displaced peoples by addressing the root causes of forced displacement and facilitating the meaningful participation of the most vulnerable forcibly displaced communities – including women and girls – in peacebuilding processes. At the Global Refugee Forum 2023, the MRCL [pledged](#) their collective support to refugees, committing to share the responsibility

Religions for Peace

with those who host them and work together and inter-religiously to improve the lives of refugees, regardless of their nationality, race, religious beliefs, class, or political opinions.

Continuation

Building on this foundation, *Religions for Peace* will convene diverse religious and faith leaders, women of faith and interfaith youth, and key stakeholders for the virtual event, ***Welcoming the Other: Strengthening Advocacy and Action for Refugees and other Forcibly Displaced Communities***, to be held on **Thursday, 20 June 2024 at 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM EDT**, in celebration of World Refugee Day 2024. The event will engage religious and faith leaders, and other stakeholders, in dialogue and action towards strengthened advocacy and mobilisation efforts for the protection and meaningful participation of refugees and other forcibly displaced communities in decision-making and peacebuilding processes.

Structure of the Event

9:00 – 9:01	Moment of Silence
9:01 – 9:06	Opening Remarks
9:06 – 9:13	Keynote Presentation
9:13 – 9:17	Short Film Screening
9:17 – 10:15	Interactive Panel Discussion
10:15 – 10:25	Q&A
10:25 – 10:30	Closing Remarks

The 90-minute virtual event will feature opening remarks, followed by a keynote presentation and a short film screening on the theme of the event. The subsequent interactive panel discussion will address the root causes of forced displacement. Panelists will delve into concrete strategies for enhancing advocacy efforts, ensuring the meaningful participation of refugees and other forcibly displaced communities in decision-making and peacebuilding processes, and empowering women and youth within these communities. The discussion will also highlight the crucial role of religious and faith leaders in supporting refugees, as well as the importance of a whole-of-society approach in addressing the complex challenges faced by displaced communities globally. The programme will end with concluding remarks that will summarise the key takeaways and establish the way forward.

Logistical Information

- The event will be a virtual Zoom webinar.
- Discussions will be conducted in English.
- *Religions for Peace* will send personalised Zoom links and connectivity information to all speakers by **Thursday, 13 June 2024**.

Links to Key Resources

- [The Vienna Declaration: Welcoming the Other – A Multi-Religious Vision of Peace \(2013\)](#)

Religions *for* Peace

- [Religions for Peace and United Nations Children’s Fund \(UNICEF\) #FaithOverFear | Faith Communities Stand with Refugees \(2017\)](#)
- [Guide to Action on Mobilising Faith Communities to Welcome Migrants & Refugees \(2018\)](#)
- [Religions for Peace and World Council of Churches \(WCC\) Joint Statement on Belonging – Affirmations for Faith Leaders \(2022\)](#)
- [Report of the Religions for Peace-UNHCR Multi-Religious Council of Leaders \(MRCL\) Mission to Moldova \(2023\)](#)
- [Statement of Religious Leaders at the Global Refugee Forum \(2023\)](#)