

INSPIRING FAITH IN HUMANITY

World Interfaith Harmony Week was first proposed at the United Nations General Assembly on September 23, 2010 by **H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan.** His Majesty proposed the first week of February, every year, to be observed as World Interfaith Harmony Week.



The unique occasion was built on the foundation of three important UN resolutions:

- Resolution A/Res/65/5 proclaiming the first week in February as the annual World Interfaith Harmony Week.
- Resolution A/Res/67/104 on the Promotion of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, Understanding and Cooperation for Peace.
- Resolution A/Res/67/106 on the Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

Continue this tradition of promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue by sharing and celebrating our humanity, on February 7, 2018, The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in partnership with the Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN, hosted the event:

> "World Interfaith Harmony Week: Inspiring Faith in Humanity"

The event featuring eminent speakers from the United Nations, Member States, civil society and religious organizations, and has attracted hundreds of people to the Church Center for the United Nations.



H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations



Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Religious Leaders, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to be with you again. I would like to thank the Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN for their persistent commitment to interfaith dialogue by bringing together spiritual, traditional and religious leaders to advance global unity. This initiative aims to celebrate our common values instead of our differences, and thus provide a vision of peace and harmony to our communities. I would like to take a moment to recognize all NGOs present here for their extraordinary efforts in promoting and protecting human rights across the globe, and "Inspiring Faith for Humanity".

I believe that interfaith and cross-cultural dialogues are interlinked, as the moral imperatives of all religions, convictions and beliefs call for peace, tolerance and mutual understanding. Therefore I am encouraging the trend towards dialogue with religious and interfaith organizations at the United Nations with the goal to eliminate conflict and sustain peace.

My faith is Islam. At the heart of Islam is the call for justice. Those who misuse and abuse Islam to support a political agenda do injustice to the basic teachings of our religion. Too often politics divides people, while faith, or belief in something more transcendent than ourselves, should be a tie that binds all of us together. As such, promoting respect among human beings and embracing the diversity of their beliefs and cultures and languages is at the core of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the UN Charter. The Alliance is one of the United Nations leading entities promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogue, reconciliation and forgiveness. We have organized more than 30 events involving religious leaders since 2013. We have taken the time to understand the dynamics and social processes that drive interfaith dialogue and encourage peaceful coexistence. We recognize that we must give every group—no matter its faith—an equal chance, an equal voice in decision-making. Whether you follow a certain faith, or are not practicing any at all, there is no set of beliefs that endorses violence, destruction and harm. In fact, every major religion and philosophy is based on the idea of "Love your neighbour as yourself".

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to draw your attention on the crucial role of youth in this regard. It is essential to provide young people with adequate tools and instruments to understand freedom of religion, of belief and tolerance of the other, and promote it worldwide to overcome every form of discrimination. In accordance with SDG 16, we must resist the siren song of virulent nationalism that promotes me and mine over our shared human needs and values. Instead, we must promote social and cross -cultural harmony with inclusive societies that unify rather than divide people. There is no single country, no single race or religion that has a unique or exclusive claim to universal truth. Each has something positive to contribute to social harmony and human values. I invoke the mantra of UNAOC: Many Cultures, One Humanity.

H.E. AMBASSADOR KATALIN ANNAMARIA BOGYAY Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations

QUOTES FROM H.E. AMBASSADOR KATALIN ANNAMARIA BOGYAY

Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations

"Diversity is the source of inspiration.

Pause in the music is as important as a note in the music, because pause is time for reflection. If we go deep down in our own faith, we will be open and be able to understand all of the other ideas coming from different faiths. We must open ourselves toward others and hope that other person open themselves as well. Hopefully this way, we can prevent terrible things that have been happening throughout the history of humanity. Many people, especially many young people, probably won't listen to what we, diplomats, ambassadors and governments, tell them. But they would hopefully listen to religious leaders. That is why this aspect [interfaith] is so important.

Tolerance is not enough. We need mutual acceptance and respect to be able to celebrate together our common, colorful heritage."

"Prevention is better than wars. Preventive diplomacy is how we think, relate, listen and at least try to understand each other. It is due to lack of knowledge, ignorance or lack of time that we don't really focus on the other person."



INSPRING FAITH IN HUMANITY



Msgr. Hilary C. Franco

Adviser - Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations

It will be a very difficult task to address this great gathering with just few words after listening to great speakers like the High Representative Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, so well known to all of us at the United Nations, also because of his leadership in the U.N. Alliance of Civilizations, speakers like my good friend Ambassador Katalin Annamaria Bogyay of Hungary, Mr. Jesse Jackson, who used to mesmerize us youngsters with his fiery, yet positive oratorical skills and actions, speakers like you, Swami Parameshananda, who are an inspiration to all of us for the profound spirituality that permeates your words and your multiform initiatives.

But I was told that I had to deliver a message since tonight, here, in the Tillman Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations (and I wish to greet the Reverend Chaplain of this Chapel), I am representing the Holy See Mission to the United Nations.

Yes, there are many religious affiliations in the world, but we all strive to bring a message of peace and fraternity in a world torn by dissensions and diatribes by insisting that we all have a common denominator, namely humanity. And it is precisely in the name of humanity that we gather especially during this World Interfaith Harmony Week to overcome the boundaries that divide us in the name of a unity of intents which is actually the only hope for a peaceful world in the future.

We are called to go beyond...and to do what Pope Francis has done in these past few years...he has opened his arms, like flashy columns of Bernini and has embraced the world!

And, by the way, it is not enough to just use words, as we often do in this great Assembly, but I would like to leave you tonight with a message which I have found in the writings of a great soul of past history, Anthony of Padua (1195-1231). By the way, when I mentioned his name to our Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, he corrected me – and he was right - saying that his name was not Anthony of Padua, but Anthony of Lisboa, because he was originally from Lisbon.

So Anthony had written: "ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS. LET YOUR WORDS TEACH AND YOUR ACTIONS SPEAK!"

This, perhaps, should be our motto and our program for a future humanity which – we hope and pray – will be blessed with reciprocal understanding and lasting peace.

Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Sr

"The wall offered a kind of false security, because hiding behind the wall are hatred, fear, violence and most destructive of all, ignorance. We need to tear down that wall of ignorance and open our hearts and minds.

We must build a bridge in South and North Korea. The DMZ should become a peace zone and fight off angry unification. We must reconnect the Korean Peninsula. Together, the countries must play games together, eat together, learn together and unify together. It is a big break-through that that they are actually playing together in the Pyeongchang Olympics."

Quotes from Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. American civil rights activist, Baptist Minister and politician



Msgr. Hilary C. Franco



Dionne Boissiere

Chaplain - Church Center for the United Nations The United Methodist Women

As the chaplain of the Church Center for the United Nations, it's an honor and a blessing welcome teverybody present here today.

Since 1963, this beacon of hope that we all know as the Church Center for the United Nations, pioneered by the United Methodist Women, has served as a gathering place for all of us who focus on Peace and Justice.

When we gather here this year, marking 50 years since the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, we want to celebrate his legacy. We want to stay true to his work of Justice. Amidst all the injustice in the world, amidst the grievances of people being attacked and degraded which we encounter everyday, it is not always easy to remain hopeful. But your presence here is a reminder for me that peace is possible, and that harmony can be achieved. Welcome to the ceremony organized by the Committee of Religious NGOs and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, Welcome to the World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Swami Parameshananda, President of Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN Bharat Sevashram Sangha Inc

Danzaki Bastida - Conch blower

Welcome to World Interfaith Harmony Week. I would like to set the foundation for today's program by taking you on a journey to consciousness. Imagine you just completed Yoga exercises or what ever exercise you do. Your body is at peek performance. Starting at your feet, move your mind upward to the legs, relaxing all the muscles, relax your hip, relax your spine, starting at the bottom and moving gently upward, over the head, over the face, down the throat, over the chest, over the belly and to the bottom of the body. Go into the belly, relax the body. Go to the torso and relax the lungs, heart, relax your hands ,shoulders, neck, facial muscles, eyes, ears, nose and forehead. Relax the brain.

Now that the body is totally relaxed, starting at the feet, let the energy from all the cells flow upward through the legs, the belly. Let the energy from all the organs flow into the stream of energy. Let's remove our energy starting from the toes, moving upward and exiting at the center of the forehead and into the atmosphere as energy vibrations. Then we move into space. Now, we are consciousness. See our nine planets, including the Earth, orbiting the Sun. We move into the vastness of the universe. We are the trillions of stars and planets. We are consciousness,. This is our salvation, our liberation. **Enjoy the freedom**.



Swami Parameshananda and Danzaki Bastida



Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations **Bureau Members**



Rev. Liberato Bautista Church and Society The United Methodist Church CRNGO bureau member and past President



Mr. Richard Jordan Program Moderator. NGO Committee on Peace, Development and Security, Symphony for United Nations and Friends of the United Nations, and Chairman of the CONGO NGO Committee on the UN and Sports.



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February 20, 2018

Revered participants, members and well-wishers,

On behalf of CRNGO bureau members I want to thank you for your presence and participation in WORLD INTERFAITH HAR-MONY WEEK 2018. It was such an honor to serve in Inspiring Faith in Humanity.

What a delight to see the dedication of Member States, UN agencies and civil society in harmony in lifting our being to consciousness, a state where we became one. It was divine to hear prayers, devotional singing and enjoy dances from diversified faith traditions. Truly it was a spiritual experience that gave an insight to the solution for all problems.

Infinite blessings.

Dane Farameshanda

Swami Parameshananda President, CRNGO at the UN Vice Chair, CSVGC UN & Intl. Rep Bharat Sevashram Sangha Inc.

To honor and continue the traditions of the First Interfaith Harmony Ceremony, representatives of indigenous and faith traditions each offered a prayer for peace in a beautiful Symphony Of Peace Prayers

Rev. Cathy Towle NGO Committee on Spirituality Values and Global Concerns at the UN



wind

An Iroquois Pray-er in Powerful Prayers for Everyday Liv-ing by Mark Linden O'Meara

We return thanks to our mother, the earth, which sustains us. We return thanks to the rivers and streams, which supply us with water. We return thanks to all herbs which furnish medicines for the cure of our diseases. We return thanks to the corn. and to her sisters, the beans and to her sisters, the bear and squash, which give us life. We return thanks to the bushes and trees, which provide us with fruit. We return thanks to the

wind, which, moving the air, has banished diseases. We return thanks to the moon and the stars, which have given us their light light when the sun was gone. We return thanks to our grandfather He-no,

who has given to us his rain. We return thanks to the sun that he has looked upon the earth earth with a beneficent eye. Lastly, we return thanks to the Great Spirit. in whom is embodied all goodness. and who directs all things, for the good of his children.

Thien Phuoc Quang Tran Mennonite Central Committee



The Beatitudes - Matthew 5:3–12

Blessed are the poor in spirit

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn,

for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,

for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful.

for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart,

for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers.

for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of

riahteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



Dr. Bakul Matalia

JAIN MAANGLIC

These four are the most auspicious benefactors in the universe:

The arihants, the siddhas, the ascetics (including Acharyas, Upadhayas, and Sadhus/Sadhvis), and the religion expounded by the omniscient beings.

A benefactor is one who possesses the ability to remove sins and bring real happiness. The Panch Parmesthis are the embodiment of benefaction and devotion to them brings supreme happiness.

These four are the most divine and supreme in the universe: The arihants, the siddhas, the ascetics, and the religion expounded by the omniscient beings.

May I take refuge in these four:

The arihants, the siddhas, the ascetics, and the religion expounded by the omniscient beings. A person taking refuge in the Panch Parmesthis obtains bliss and becomes free from all miseries, such as the cycle of birth and death.

Rabbi Roger Ross

Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns at the United Nations

SHEHECHEYANU-A PRAYER FOR A NEW BEGINNING BARUCH ATAH ADONAI ELOHEINU. MELECH HA 0 LAM. SHECHEYANU-V'KI MANU-V'HEE GEE YANU. LAZ-MAHN HAZEH

LET THE RAIN COME AND WASH AWAY THE ANCIENT GRUDGES

AND BITTER HATREDS HELD AND NURTURED OVER GEN-ERATIONS. LET THE RAIN WASH AWAY THE MEMORY OF THE HURT,

THE NEGLECT. THEN LET THE SUN COME OUT AND FILL THE SKY WITH

LET THE WARMTH OF THE SUN HEAL US WHEREVER WE

ARE BROKEN. LET IT BURN AWAY THE FOG SO THAT WE CAN SEE EACH

COTHER CLEARLY AND SO THAT WE CAN SEE BEYOND LABELS, BEYOND ACCENTS, GENDER OR SKIN COLOR. LET THE WARMTH AND BRIGHTNESS OF THE SUN MELT OUR SELFISHNESS SO THAT WE CAN SHARE THE JOYS AND FEEL THE SORROWS OF OUR NEIGHBORS. AND LET THE SUN BE SO STRONG THAT WE WILL SEE ALL PEOPLE AS OUR NEIGHBORS. LET THE EARTH, NOURISHED BY RAIN; BRINGING FORTH

ALL PEOPLE AS OUR NEIGHBORS. LET THE EARTH, NOURISHED BY RAIN; BRINGING FORTH FLOWERS TO SURROUND US WITH BEAUTY. AND LET THE MOUNTAINS TEACH OUR HEARTS TO REACH UPWARD TO HEAVEN. AMEN Sarabjit Kaur The United Sikhs



Ken Kitatani - Sukyo Mahikari Kamunagara (in Ancient Shinto):

The spiritual era has now begun and the Creator is counting on the collaboration of all human beings to help accomplish the sacred plan, regardless of whether their position in society is high or low.

The more I manifest my gratitude to God the greater the happiness God grants me. Who would have thought that such boundless happiness could be granted to someone like me?

The period of great transition from the age of materialism to the age of spirit-centered has come. The Creator is manifesting power so that the sacred plan can be accomplished.

The teaching of Sri Guru Granth Saheb ji, as sung by Bhagat Kabeer Parbhati

Firstly God created light and then by his Omnipotence, made all the mortals.

From the One light has welled up the entire universe. Then who is good and who is bad?

O men, my brethren, stray ye not in doubt.

Creation is the Creator and the creator is in Creation. He is fully filling all places.

Clay is but the same, but the Fashioner has fashioned it in various ways. There is no fault with the vessel of clays, nor is there any fault with the potter.

He, the One True Lord, is a midst all and it is in his will that everything is done.

Whosoever realizes the Lord's will, he alone knows the One Lord and He alone is said to be His slave.

The Lord is invisible and can be seen not. The Guru has blessed me with sweet molasses of His Name.

Say Kabir, my Doubt has been dispelled and I now see the Immaculate Lord every where.

Reverend Ken Kitatani - Sukyo Mahikari

Hanifa D. Mezoui,

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

Surah Al Fatihah

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds -The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement. It is You we worship and You we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path - the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked your anger or of those who are astray.

of those who are astray.



Hanifa D. Mezoui - United Nations Alliance of Civilizations



Reverend. Doyeon Park Won Buddhism

We vow to help all sentient beings. We vow to eliminate all delusions. We vow to learn infinite teachings. We vow to attain supreme enlightenment.

Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence. O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy.

O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind.

O God! Establish the Most Great Peace.

Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together.

O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy

love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.



Rosleny Ubiñas National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States



Holy One of Blessing, Creator God,

Help us to celebrate the different ways we build community, learn to love one another, our world and you. Grant us curiosity and a desire to listen that we might appreciate our neighbors not because of their similarities to us. May we discover how we are not alike and rejoice in those differences. For it is in the bonds of difference that we expand our world; through bonds of difference that we are able to see and know and love all of humanity; through bonds of difference that true peace is found.

Give us courage to speak, to live and to act each day with respect for every human being. Help us to resist evil that we might strive for justice and peace among people of every tribe, race, people and nation.

Song: Stand Reverend. Joni Carley

Let there be peace, I am a stand for peace Let there be love, I am a stand for love Let there be joy, I am a stand for joy

Swami Parameshananda, Bharat Sevashram Sangha Inc

Om Bhur Bhuva Swaha,

Tat Savitur Varenyam,

Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi,

Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayat

O God, the protector, the basis of all life, who is self existence, who is free from all pains, and whose contact frees the soul from all troibles, who pervades the universe and sustains all. the creator and Energizer of the whole universe, The Giver of happiness, the most excellent who is pure and the purifier of all, let us embrace that very God so that he may direct our mental faculties in the right direction.

Audrey Kitagawa, Light of Awareness International Spiritual Family



At the Interfaith Harmony event, all food and fellowship reception was sponsored by the United Sikh.



"Let no one be hungry where the spirit of God prevails"

United Sikhs Food Volunteer Team: Deep Singh, Rajesh Singh, Kulwant Singh, Gurmail Singh, Praveen Kaur, Aditi Kaur, Sarabjit Kaur.

The Langar or free kitchen was started by the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak Dev Ji in 1481. It is designed to uphold the principle of equality between all people of the world regardless of religion, caste, color, creed, age, gender or social status; to eliminate extreme poverty in the world and to bring about the birth of "caring communities". In addition to the ideals of equality, the tradition of Langar expresses the ethics of sharing, community, inclusiveness, and oneness of all humankind. "..the Light of God is in all hearts.'



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

Children's Choi

Teach me all that I must

Directors: Jessica Sundwall and Emily Pelo Ryan D Koch, Brandon Todd, Ava Todd, Lau- ren Todd, Elisabeth Pelo, Hudson King, Sawyer King, Olive King.	do, To live with Him some day. I have a Family here on earth, They are so Good to me I want to share my life with Them, through all eternity. Families can be together
I am a child of God, And he has sent me here. Has given me an earthly home, With Parents kind and dear. Lead me, guide me, walk beside me, Help me find the way.	forever, through Heav- enly Fathers Plan. I always want to be with my own family, And the Lord has shown me how I can, The Lord, has shown me how I can.

All praise and glory be unto Thee, oh Lord, The Giver of Life and All Good and Perfect Gifts. We glorify You and Your Sacred Name, and thank ou for this Sacred Gift of Immortal, Eternal Life. In all ways, Lord, guide, us, shine your light upon us and upon our pathway as we journey through life.

Illuminate our hearts, our minds and our spirits that we may become adiant beacons of Your Light, Hope and Inspiration to all those whose lives we touch. Grant us Your Grace that we may we cultivate from more to more each day, our love and devotion to You within the sacred chamber of our own

Hindu Gayatri Mantra. Om bhu Om buvaha

Om janaha Om tapaha Om sat yam Om tat savetuer varen yam bhargo Devasya dimahi Diyo yonoha Prachodoyat

Om swaha Om maha

> Om. shanti. shanti. shanti

The recitation of the

Our appreciation for the planning committee and the performing artists

Aztec Conchera dance performed by Xochitl

Rina Espiritu and Brandon Perdomo, The World Peace Prayer Society





Rev. Joni Carley, Rabbi Roger Ross and Martha Gallahue: We Act To Inspire Faith In Humanity.

- ♦ We affirm human responsibility to model the way toward the end of violence in all forms.
- We affirm the sacred nature of all life and our interdependent relationship with Mother Earth.
- ♦ We affirm our collective capacity to achieve world peace and harmony among all nations.
- We affirm the power of every religion to promote respect and cooperation and goodwill among all peoples.
- We consecrate ourselves to the work of elevating all forms of discourse toward understanding, trust and goodwill among all people.
- We consecrate ourselves to promote inter-cooperation among all religions amid the widest diversity of religious expressions.
- We consecrate ourselves to promote the highest principles of the United Nations through the accurate expression of our religious beliefs.
- We consecrate ourselves to spread truth and to disseminate the good work of the United Nations throughout the world.
- We consecrate ourselves to assist the United Nations especially in their humanitarian support for the poor, the marginalized, the hungry, the migrant, the refugee and those suffering catastrophe from Climate Change.
- We consecrate ourselves to work toward the implementation of all Resolutions that promote the Culture of Peace.

Chorus by all attendees: WE ACT TO INSPIRE FAITH IN HUMANITY

WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK INSPIRING FAITH IN HUMANITY

With the support of:

The Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

Sponsored by:

Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations (CRNGO) Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns-NY (CSVGC-NY) Bharat Sevashram Sangha Inc The United Methodist Women The United Sikhs United Religions Initiative Mennonite Central Committee The Salvation Army

OUR THANKS TO THE RELIGIOUS NGOs PLANNING TEAM:

Kusumita P. Pedersen Parliament of the World's Religions The Interfaith Center of New York	Denise Scotto International Day of Yoga Committee at the UN	Jillian Abballe World Council of Church	Lesli Gaitan United Religions Initiative	Sharon Deep Spiritual Caucus at the United Nations	Lucas Musetti, David Kirshbaum Nonviolent Interna- tional.
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