

*The Committee of Religious
NGOs at the United Nations*



United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
Many cultures. One humanity.



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. Debbra 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*
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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.¹

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.

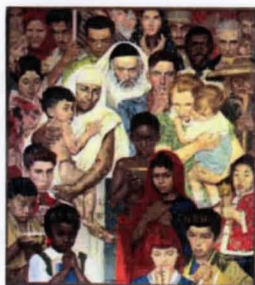
In addition to advocating to countries to support and spread the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill during that week based on "Love of God and Love of the Neighbor, or Love of the Good and Love of the Neighbor" and urging its constituencies and affiliates around the world to work for "peace, 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

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

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These brief bio data are in the order of presentations.



Dr. Hanifa D. Mezoui, Senior Advisor, Humanitarian Affairs & Civil Society, UN Alliance of Civilizations

Hanifa Mezoui, PhD, has enjoyed a distinguished career with the United Nations for the past 28 years. In the last ten of those years, she has been Chief of the NGO Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). The Informal Regional NGO network (UN-NGO-IRENE), was developed under her guidance as a critical channel for communicating key themes and programs between the UN and the NGO community, including marginalized groups in developing countries. Since March 2009, she has been designated as the Permanent Representative to the United Nations and ECOSOC of the

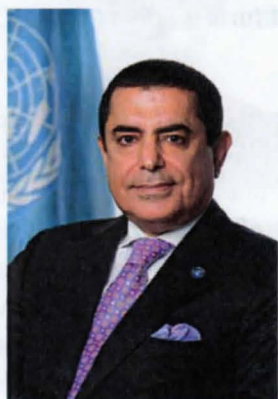
“International Association of the Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions” (AICESIS), IGO in Observer status with ECOSOC. From September 2011 to September 2012 she joined the Office of the President of the Sixty Six General Assembly as the Special Coordinator for the Third Committee and Civil Society. Presently she is a Senior Advisor to the United Nations High Representative of the Alliance of Civilizations, in charge of Humanitarian Affairs & Civil Society.



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

Mr. Murrell is the Representative to the United Nations for the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States. His Office engages in the discourses that focus particularly on the advancement of women, race unity and human rights. Mr. Murrell serves as Vice President of the Committee of Religious NGOs. He is also a director on the Executive Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations Associates with the United Nations Department of Public Information. In addition, he serves on the Executive Committee of the Council of Organizations of the United Nations Association of the United States of America. Mr. Murrell

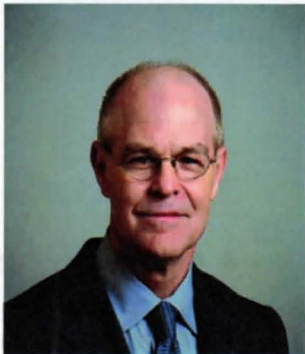
also serves as Co-Chair of the Values Caucus at the United Nations. Before joining the NGO community, Mr. Murrell worked in the private sector in a number of fields including computer software design and mortgaged-back securities investing.



H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations

On 1 March 2013, H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser assumed the post of UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations. Prior to that, H.E. Al-Nasser assumed the Presidency of the Sixty-Sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly from 13 September 2011, to 17 September 2012. H.E. Al-Nasser represented his country on the United Nations Security Council during the two-year term of Qatar as a non-permanent member (2006 to 2007). He was Security Council President for the month of December 2006, when the Council took action on a range of complex peace and security issues, including international cooperation to combat terrorism and the protection of journalists in armed conflict. A veteran diplomat,

H.E. Al-Nasser has the rank of Minister, granted by His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar. He has contributed to advancing the multilateral agenda in the realms of peace and security, sustainable development and South-South cooperation over a career spanning nearly four decades.



Dr. William F. Vendley, President, Committee of Religious NGOs & Secretary General, Religions for Peace

Dr. Vendley is the Secretary General of *Religions for Peace*, the world's largest and most representative multi-religious coalition advancing common action for peace. He is a pioneer in advancing multi-religious cooperation to help resolve conflict and has been engaged in multi-religious peacemaking efforts in Syria, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Iraq, and other countries. Dr. Vendley is an advisor to a number of governments on matters related to religion and peace. He advised US President Barack Obama through his service on the Multi-religious Cooperation and International Affairs Task Force of the White House Faith-Based Council. He was appointed by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as one of ten

members of the US State Department's Advisory Committee on Strategic Partnership with Civil Society and is a Co-chair of the Religion and Foreign Policy Working Group. Dr. Vendley is a recipient of the UNICEF Lifetime Achievement Award.



Ms. Angela Manso, Musician

Ms. Angela Manso is a pianist, organist and composer. She teaches piano and theory and is staff accompanist at the Newark School of the Arts in Newark, New Jersey. She has served as musical director/pianist for over 40 operas and musical theater productions, including 20 at New York's Bel Canto Opera Company. She also was assistant conductor for the Carnegie Hall performance of Mrs. H.H.A. Beach's "Grand Mass in E Flat Major", which was subsequently recorded on the Newport Classics label. Ms. Manso was one of two official accompanists for the First World Harmonica Championship on the Isle of Jersey, U.K., and performed in recital with Larry Adler and Cham-Ber Huang in the "Bach Double Violin Concerto" arranged for two harmonicas and piano.



H.E. Mr. Adama Dieng, Under Secretary-General/Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, United Nations

On 17 July 2012, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of H.E. Adama Dieng of Senegal as Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. H.E. Dieng assumed his positions as United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Registrar of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in 2001 for a term of four years. H.E. Dieng graduated in Law from the Sakar University and holds a Certificate from the Research Centre of the Hague Academy of International Law. He has also a Certificate on Homeland Security, Internal and External Security from the Paris Institute of International High Studies. Before joining the United Nations, H.E.

Dieng was for ten years the Secretary General of the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists (1990-2000), ICJ Legal adviser for Africa (1992 -1990).



Rev. Doyeon Park, Treasurer, Committee of Religious NGOs & Alternate UN Representative, Won Buddhism

Rev. Doyeon Park is a Kyomunim, literally meaning one who devotes oneself to teach Buddha dharma in the Won Buddhist tradition. She has served as a minister of the Manhattan Won Buddhist temple and Associate Representative of Won Buddhism to the United Nations since 2008. Also, she is the Buddhist chaplain at Columbia University and New York University. Rev. Doyeon focuses on creating a sangha (spiritual community) where various individuals and groups can cultivate their inner wisdom and compassion to live with peace and dignity based on

the teachings of Won Buddhism. Realizing the interconnectedness of all through her spiritual practice, she is also actively engaged in interfaith dialogue and cooperation to promote mutual understanding and respect among different religions.



Mr. Matthew Hodes, Director, UN Alliance of Civilizations

Mr. Matthew Hodes is the Director of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. He has spent most of the past twenty years in a variety of assignments related to the design and implementation of peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict nation building operations around the world as an international civil servant, not-for-profit leader and private consultant. As Director of Programs at the Club de Madrid in 2010, Mr. Hodes directed activities for a NGO composed of former national leaders, with a focus on transformational leadership in transitional societies and equitable development policies. From 2001 to 2007, he served with the Conflict Resolution Program at The Carter Center, directing the Program from 2003-2007. He advised former President Carter on matters relating to armed conflicts and political disputes while leading Carter Center mediation or negotiation assistance activities in various countries around the world.



Dr. Brian J. Grim, President, Religious Freedom & Business Foundation

Dr. Brian Grim is a leading expert on international religious freedom and the socio-economic impact of restrictions on religious freedom, and an expert on international religious demography and religion-related violence. He is an affiliated scholar at Boston University's Institute on Culture, Religion & World Affairs. Prior to becoming the Foundation's President in 2014, Dr. Grim directed the largest social science effort to collect and analyze global data on religion at the Pew Research Center, Washington DC's premier "fact tank." He also worked for two decades as an educator, researcher and development coordinator in the former Soviet Union, China, Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe.



H.E. Archbishop Francis A. Chullikatt, Apostolic Nuncio & Permanent Observer, Holy See to the UN

Archbishop Chullikatt was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Verapoly in 3 June 1978. He completed a doctorate in Canon Law and entered the diplomatic service of the Holy See in 1988. He served at the Apostolic Nunciatures in Honduras, various countries of southern Africa, and the Philippines, at the Mission to the United Nations in New York and at the Secretariat of State in the Vatican. He was appointed Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations in New York on 17 July 2010.



Ms. Roxaneh Bazergah Mediation Support Unit, Policy & Mediation Division, Department of Political Affairs, UN

Ms. Bazergah is the Team Leader for mediation support to the Middle East with the United Nations (UN) Mediation Support Unit (MSU) and was the lead drafter of the UN Guidance for Effective Mediation. In 2013 she was deployed to Yemen as part of the team of the Special Adviser to the Secretary General working in support of the National Dialogue. As a political affairs officer in Lebanon after the 2006 war, she was responsible for negotiations with the Israeli and Lebanese armed forces on marking the Line of Withdrawal and tripartite meetings on security issues. Other posts in the UN include team leader for the Policy Planning Unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and policy adviser on HIV, during which she conducted extensive planning and assessment missions to Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Kosovo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Sudan and led inter-agency teams on HIV and Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration efforts. Prior to joining the UN, Ms Bazergah was a research fellow with the Centre for Defense Studies, King's College, London, and was an election observer in Sierra Leone for the European Union.



H.E. Mr. Ufuk Gokcen, Ambassador & Permanent Observer, Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the UN

H.E. Ufuk Gokcen, in addition to be the Permanent Observer of the OIC to the UN in New York since April 2010, is presently also acting as the focal point with the US State Department for the US-OIC cooperation. Before his current post, he served as the Political Advisor to the OIC Secretary General at the OIC Headquarters in Jeddah from 2005 to April 2010. Prior to that, he served as at the Turkish Embassies in Damascus, Muscat and Riyadh and at the Middle East Department of the Turkish Foreign Ministry in Ankara.

Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations

Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations has performed for many years at the UN, and other venues around the world, songs composed by Sri Chinmoy. In 1970, then Secretary-General U Thant invited the spiritual leader to conduct twice-weekly non-denominational peace meditations for delegates and staff at UN Headquarters in New York. Until his passing in 2007, Sri Chinmoy brought his multifaceted inspiration to the United Nations family through meditations, lectures; concerts, art exhibits and special programmes, and the Singers are honored to continue in this spirit.



Dr. Caroljean Willie, Vice President, Committee of Religious NGOs & Representative at the UN, Sisters of Charity Federation

Caroljean Willie is a Sister of Charity of Cincinnati. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, a Master's Degree in Reading and a Ph.D. in Multicultural Education. She has extensive experience working cross-culturally throughout the United States, the Caribbean and Latin America as a teacher, principal, teacher-trainer, and cultural diversity consultant and retreat director. She is the author of several books as well as numerous articles in professional journals. She is a frequent speaker at regional and national conferences and has also given presentations in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America. She currently resides in the greater New York area where she serves as the NGO representative at the

United Nations for the Sisters of Charity Federation and also works with microfinancing projects in Africa.



Dr. Azza Karam, Senior Advisor on Culture, United Nations Population Fund

Dr. Azza Karam's programmatic experience spans the fields of global multi-religious collaboration, gender issues, governance, human rights, conflict, and political Islam. Prior to joining UNFPA, she was the Senior Policy Research Advisor at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the Regional Bureau for Arab States where she worked on the Arab Human Development Reports, among other portfolios. Dr. Karam has also worked at the World Conference of Religions for Peace where she founded the first Global Women of Faith Network, and advised on issues related to Muslim and Arab affairs. Also during this time, she served as the President of the Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations. She has served as Lecturer at the School of Politics at the Queens University of Belfast, as Lecturer in Development, Conflict and Humanitarian issues at the University of Amsterdam, and as Senior Programme Officer at the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA) in Stockholm.

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Ms. Kamila Jacob, Envoy Coordinator, Unitarian Universalist

Ms. Kamila Jacob graduated from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA with a B.A. in Sociology and double minored in Spanish and African American Studies. She studied abroad in Peru with the School for International Training (SIT). She is from Manhattan and is a born and raised Unitarian Universalist (UU). Kamila has lead workshops and trainings at UU congregations and events as well as with interfaith groups. Kamila has worked at the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UU-UNO) since 2011 and loves working with people of all ages to promote human rights locally and globally.



Sr. Deirdre Mullan, Executive Director, Partnership for Global Justice

Sr. Mullan has given keynote addresses all over the world and is a keen advocate of Girls Education. She has worked with others to bring education to the most vulnerable and is responsible for building schools in Cambodia, Zambia and Sudan. A native of Northern Ireland, she has been involved in Education for Mutual Understanding for over 20 years. Prior to coming to New York she was Head of Religious Studies at Thornhill College in Derry. In 1996, she was appointed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Dr. Mo Mowlan) to be part of a group looking at the under-representation of women, Catholics, and ethnic minorities in the Royal Ulster Constabulary.



Mr. Sant Gupta, Interfaith Leader & Member, Hindu Mandir Executive Conference

Mr. Gupta moved to the US over 45 years ago. He holds B. Tech EE from IIT Delhi, MSEE from the University of Florida and MBA from Rutgers University, NJ. He resides in Washington DC suburbs and works full time as Business Development Executive serving the US DOD and Federal marketplace. He has championed the networking between institutions as the Program Chair for Hindu Mandir Executive Conference (HMEC) in North America. He has promoted dialog between communities through active participation in Inter-Faith Conference of Washington DC (IFCMW). He firmly believes that Humans are the caretaker of Mother Earth and harmony with Nature and preservation of its bounty is critical for the survival and sustenance of the Human race. He has been active with variety of projects relating to the

protection of the environment with special focus on Water (Save the Ganges), Air, Global Warming and Soil. For him the conservation, protection and nurturing of our resources is our obligation and duty.

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)

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