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BUILDING CONSENSUS FOR FAIR AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RELIGIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS FOR A DIGNIFIED FUTURE

26-28 SEPTEMBER 2018

Policy Recommendations for the 2018 G20 Summit

This Document's Purpose

The G20 Interfaith Forum, explores religious dimensions of both key G20 policy concerns and priority agendas of religious communities. Leaders from networks that include religious leaders, religiously affiliated aid organizations, and scholars present proposals to G20 leaders. This document highlights priority recommendations that emerged from the September 26-26 Forum, introduces policy briefing papers, and notes topics under review.

Recommendation Clusters

- 1 <u>Protecting the dignity of labor,</u> equality and the vulnerable
- 2 <u>Structural Inequality</u>
- 3 Environmental Issues
- 4 <u>Corruption and Religious</u> <u>Violence</u>
- 5 Refugees and Migration
- 6 <u>Sustainable Food</u>
- 7 Women and Religion
- 8 <u>Religion and Provision of</u> <u>Humanitarian Relief</u>
- 9 Religious Freedom and the G20 Agenda
- 10 Enhanced Religious Literacy

Religion and the G20 Summit Process

The annual G20 summit of leaders (representing the world's wealthiest nations) plays an important role in setting global agendas and in addressing critical issues. Initially convened to address problems precipitated by the 2008 global financial crisis, it has since expanded its focus beyond an initial agenda focused on economics to address far broader issues, linked closely to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The process has retained its informal character (for example, there is no formal secretariat), but given the significant global influence of the G20 countries, the G20 Summit and associated processes are a focal point for different groups with a stake in the overall agenda. Since over 80 percent of the world's population has at least some religious affiliation, religious communities have a keen interest in G20 agendas and important insights to offer.

Argentina's G20 Priorities

When Argentina assumed the leadership of the G20 process as a host country on December 1, 2017, it identified several key priorities: the future of work (with a focus on educating for the future in light of technological change), infrastructure for development, and a sustainable food future. Gender perspectives, notably the importance of empowering women and protecting them from all forms of genderbased violence, were emphasized. Argentina facilitated work in a series of work streams beyond these stated priorities, including (to note those of most direct concern to religious communities) anti-corruption, climate sustainability, development, education, employment, and health.

Overview of the G20 Interfaith Forum Buenos Aires, 26-28 September 2018

The 2018 G20 Interfaith Forum in Buenos Aires took place roughly two months before the G20 Summit itself. The three-day agenda was planned over a six-month period, jointly by Argentine leaders and the G20 Interfaith Forum Organizing Committee. The 2018 event was also co-organized by Etica y Economia (Ethics and Economy), a regional organization with a history of high-level work on the intersection between religion and economics. The Forum attracted considerable media coverage (links available <u>here).</u>

Sessions. With vital support from the International Shinto Foundation (ISF), and other collaborating institutions, the Forum agenda covered a rich array of topics (over 30 sessions), selected either because of their direct relevance to Argentinian priorities or because of their relevance to continuing G20 concerns. Advance preparation for selected conference sessions focused on generating policy briefing papers on salient G20 issues (described in more detailed recommendations below). Forum sessions focused on ideas that could be translated into practical recommendations that could attract broad consensus among diverse religious actors. Where areas of disagreement were encountered, these were flagged as areas needing respectful dialogue and further study.

ABOUT THE G20 INTERFAITH FORUM

Since 2014, the G20 Interfaith Association has convened conferences each year in the country hosting that year's G20 Summit: Australia (2014), Turkey (2015), China (2016), Germany (2017), and Argentina (2018).

As the G20 process has unfolded, a variety of "engagement groups" have emerged for business (B20), civil society (C20), labor (L20), science (S20), think tanks (T20), women (W20), and youth (Y20). The G20 Interfaith Forum aims to develop a comparable structure to gather input from diverse religious networks with relevant expertise. The Forum's agenda mirrors that of the G20 host each year, and it focuses also on topics vital for religious engagement.

The G20 Interfaith Forum has attracted support from religious leaders, religiously affiliated humanitarian organizations, institutions dealing with religion and development, and academics working on the religion/public policy interface. A fuller description of the organization, prior conferences, and collaborating institutions is available <u>here</u>. **Participants.** Roughly 300 individuals participated, representing widely diverse institutions, networks, nationalities, and religious traditions from over 30 countries, always with participation by Argentinians. Regional participants came from Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama, and Peru, with international participants from Australia, Canada, Europe, Ethiopia, India, Japan, Maldives, New Zealand, Spain, Saudi Arabia, and the United States, thus further assuring broad geographical representation. On the religious front, there were adherents of Bahá'í, Catholic, Orthodox, Reformed, Baptist, Evangelical, Mormon, humanist, Jewish, Muslim, Shinto, and Indigenous traditions. An important feature was participation by leaders from different religious and interreligious networks.

Public Sector Participants. The Forum was addressed by Gabriel Michetti, Vice President of Argentina. Several governmental and institutional leaders played important roles in the conference. These included Alfredo Abriani, National Secretary of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Foreign and Religious Affairs, Argentina; Faisal bin Abdulrahman Muaammar, Secretary General, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID); Kevin O'Brien, Country Director, Handa Foundation (representing Dr. Haruhisa Handa, Patron of G20 Interfaith Forum); Jorge Triaca, Argentine Secretary of Labor; Juan Somavia, former Director-General of the International Labor Organization (ILO); Armando Di Filippo, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (UN ECLAC); Kristina Arriaga, Vice Chair, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom; Gabriel Castelli, Secretary of Childhood and Family, Argentine Government; Rabbi Sergio Bergman, Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development, Argentine Government; Maria Eugenia Di Paola, Coordinator of the Environment and Sustainable Development Program, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Argentina; Stephanie Hochstetter, World Food Programme; Álvaro Albacete, Deputy Secretary General, KAICIID, Spain; Adalberto Rodriguez Giavarini, T20 Co-Chair, President, Argentine Council for International Relations (CARI), and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Argentina; Rabbi David Saperstein, Former Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, United States; Ahmed Shaheed, United Nations Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion or Belief, Maldives; Thomas Lawo, representing the International Partnership for Religion and Sustainable Development, Gabriel Bottino, Program Area Coordinator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Argen;ina; and Kirsten Evans, Director, USAID Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives, USA.

Religious leaders who addressed the conference included Pope Francis (statement read by Monsignor Carlos Malfa, Secretary of the Argentine Episcopal Conference); Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (video); Elijah Brown, Secretary General, Baptist World Alliance (video); Sonia Skupch, President, Ecumenical Commission of Christian Churches in Argentina (CEICA); Rowan Williams, Former Archbishop of Canterbury; Cardinal Pedro Barreto, Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM), Peru; Kiran Bali, Global Chair for United Religions Initiative (URI), UK; Claudio Epelman, Executive Director, Latin American Jewish Congress, World Jewish Congress, Argentina; D. Todd Christofferson, Apostle, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Metropolitan Emmanuel of France, Ecumenical Patriarchate; Rev. Dr. Chris Ferguson, General Secretary, World Communion of Reformed Churches; Rev. Darío Barolín, Executive Secretary, Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches of Latin America (AIPRAL), Uruguay; Mons. Crisóstomo Ghassali, Archbishop, Syriac Orthodox Church, Argentina; Rev. Gloria Ulloa, President, Latin America and Caribbean World Council of Churches; Elias Szczytnicki, Religions for Peace Latin America; and Fr. Augusto Zampini, Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, Holy See.

Key areas of substantive focus. Topics for each plenary and parallel session are described in the Forum Program (available <u>here</u>). Detailed notes on each session are available <u>here</u>. Specific sessions were clustered around major G20 concerns. They included sessions focused on (1) labor, inequality and the vulnerable, including children; (2) structural inequalities and development; (3) environmental concerns; (4) challenges in the social environment such as corruption and violence in the name of religion; (5) refugees and migration; (6) sustainable food; (7) women's issues; and (8) religion and the provision of humanitarian relief. Forum themes emphasized (9) the significance of religious freedom as a key to sustaining other religious contributions to G20 issues and (10) enhanced religious literacy in the sense that better understanding of the religions of others can help solve problems in many other areas.

Process. The Organizing Committee aims to develop robust processes to prepare appropriate formal recommendations over time but the primary objective is to ensure discussion and dialogue processes that bring diverse expertise and experience together to generate creative ideas and to esstablish a setting from which practical ideas and policy recommendations can emerge. Many participants attend in their individual capacity, without authorization to commit their states or organizations to particular policy perspectives. Those who participate have freedom to move forward with actions in support of various recommendations they view as being particularly significant. The recommendations that follow represent major concerns that emerged from the Forum. They reflect the collective wisdom of the extraordinary group that gathered in Buenos Aires.

Policy Recommendations for the 2018 G20 Summit

In what follows, recommendations are organized around the ten major policy focus clusters noted above. Several recommendations are backed by more detailed policy briefs (presented as appendices). Further review of several topics is recommended, through working groups established to report back at the time of the next G20 Interfaith Forum in Japan.

1. Protecting the dignity of labor, equality and the vulnerable

The plenary session on "The Future of Work and Urgent Challenges of Inequality and the Vulnerable" addressed implications for the future of labor flowing from artificial intelligence and other technological advances. Issues facing children and an area at the dark edge of labor markets—the challenges of slavery and trafficking—received particular attention. Sessions on dignified work and religion in the workplace (Session 2.1); religion and anti-discrimination norms (Session 2.4); religion and innovation (Session 2.5); religion, business and sustainable development (Session 2.2); human trafficking and modern forms of slavery (Session 2.3); and critical issues facing children (Session 2.7) followed the plenary.

Recommendations:

- 1.1 **Reasonable accommodation**. Governments should facilitate processes and establish legal standards calling for reasonable accommodation of religious beliefs and practices in the workplace.
- 1.2 Government and religious organizations should promote greater religious literacy on the part of employers
- 1.3 **Slavery and Trafficking.** G20 governments, in light of the commitment in SDG 8.7 to eradicate modern slavery, human trafficking, and forced labor, can establish contracting standards with corporations, organizations, and individuals to ensure that they are exercising due diligence to slavery-proof their supply chains. They should support other initiatives to end slavery and trafficking abuses.
- 1.4 **Children.** The May 2017 Panama Declaration on Ending Violence Against Children highlights religious leader commitments. G20 Governments should address human rights violations and other needs of the 50 million migrant and displaced children as a priority, monitor condition of children, and increase investment in early childhood education.

See the policy brief on "Recommendations Regarding Religion in the Workplace," Appendix Item 1, for more detailed elaboration.

See the policy brief on "Action to Eradicate Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in Our Generation," Appendix Item 2, for more detailed recommendations.

Panama Declaration on Ending Violence against Children, Appendix Item 3. **Further Review Recommended:** Action to address the needs of society's most vulnerable emerged as a Forum priority, with special importance for religious communities. Ways to enhance cooperation with public and private bodies could provide more effective protection and support.

2. Addressing Structural Inequalities

During the Forum issues of structural inequality were an underlying theme but were addressed more specifically in sessions organized by Etica y Economia, a principle co-sponsor of the Forum in Argentina.

In a session on international financial architecture, attention was focused on the UNEP Inquiry into the Design of a Sustainable Financial System. The focus was on new styles of development that can facilitate preservation of the environment and promotion of development for local communities. An Etica y Economia session explored ways that religions can foster the creation of new paradigms of development. A final plenary summarized and reported these discussions, noting the compelling need to recreate a financial

For summary of the analysis and recommendations of the Etica y Economia meeting, see the "Concluding Remarks of Ethics and Economy," Appendix Item 4. Document

architecture at a human scale and to rebuild an ethical dimension of economic practices capable of addressing challenges of robotization, technological change, and sustainable development.

3. Environmental Concerns

The plenary session on "Caring for the Earth: Climate Change's Multiple Challenges and Religious Roles" was chaired and addressed by Rabbi Sergio Bergman, Argentina's Minister for Environment and Sustainable Development. Grave concern about threats to the environment and the risks of climate change were recurring themes. Discussion focused on bold initiatives like the Papal Encyclical *Laudato si!* and the Rainforest Initiative, both of which reflect religious leadership and shared concern. The growing consensus among major religions on the urgency of the environmental crisis was apparent, underscoring the need to make common cause and to accelerate efforts to address global environmental concerns. The challenges we face are not merely technological, but ethical. Religious communities are vital to addressing these dimensions, as well as central actors in multi-sectoral action partnerships. Religious voices are clearly united in recognizing that it is typically vulnerable groups who suffer most acutely from environmental deterioration.

Recommendations:

- 3.1 G20 governments should more actively engage faith groups, notably to integrate ethical concerns in technical discussions that dominate addressing environmental issues.
- 3.2 Interfaith dialogue and engagement offer promising paths towards social mobilization and action engagement in various areas of environmental concern, including sustainable cities, responsible consumption, protecting species, and promoting finding ways to promote just allocation of burdens in pursuing these goals.

Further Review Recommended: The G20 Interfaith Forum can sharpen its focus on various dimensions of environmental issues, linking the many ongoing initiatives and highlighting them in the G20 context.

4. Challenges to the Social Environment: Corruption and Violence in the Name of Religion

The Forum focused on key challenges around the global social and political environment. Two priority concerns were a focus. The scourge of corruption takes different forms in different settings, but everywhere it fuels anger and cynicism and undermines efforts to advance good governance on virtually every front, including fighting poverty and supporting those left behind. Fighting corruption belongs at the center of the G20 agenda where religious communities can potentially play much larger roles in global and national anti-corruption efforts. Violence in the name of religion is another critical global problem that involves religious communities directly and indirectly. Effective policy responses demand a deep understanding of how

religious forces are involved with modern politics and society and active, creative involvement of religious actors. More detailed policy briefs have been prepared on these two issues.

Recommendations:

- 4.1 Good governance should be a central theme of the 2018 G20 Summit, with specific commitments to continuing action to combat corruption and poor governance.
- 4.2 Land reform and extractive industries, including rainforests, are of special concern to religious communities, which should be engaged in relevant action.
- 4.3 G20 review of countering violent extremism (CVE) approaches to ensure that religious dimensions have sensitive and appropriate focus is recommended.

See policy brief on "The imperatives of better governance: fighting corruption is a sine qua non for global agendas," Appendix Item 5.

See policy brief on "Sharpening the focus: Religious actors addressing extremism and violence," Appendix Item 6.

Further Review Recommended: A task force that includes economic and religious actors should prepare recommendations on ways that religious communities can contribute to anti-corruption efforts that can be submitted to the 2019 G20 Summit. Exploration of additional ways that religious coordinating networks can contribute to various aspects of the social environment can also generate fruitful new initiatives.

5. Refugees and Migration

The forced movement of large populations in many world regions present critical issues and creates pain and suffering for those on the move and tensions in societies that host them. Concerns that bolder action is

needed to address these issues ran through the Forum. G20 offers opportunities to look boldly at refugee and migration challenges, underscoring both ethical and practical challenges ahead. Although two far-ranging global compacts, one for refugees and one for migrants, have been negotiated, in too many world regions, the trend is towards relinquishing responsibility for forcibly

See policy brief "G20 policy makers should support wider religious roles in refugee resettlement," Appendix Item 7.

displaced people. Religious actors should be seen as central to this agenda-setting process. Deeply held religious traditions focus on welcoming the stranger, and religious communities worldwide play large if often unseen roles in supporting refugees and migrants and the communities that host them.

Recommendations:

- 5.1 G20 agendas should give priority to global refugee and migration issues, taking well into account experience and ethical leadership of leading religious communities, building on the experience in negotiating global compacts and in follow-up implementation.
- 5.2 Build on religious experience with psycho-social interventions and overcoming trauma.
- 5.3 G20 governments should give high priority to investment in educational opportunities for displaced children.

See policy note presented at the Forum on "Implementing the Global Compact on Refugees from a Faith Perspective." Prepared by Act Alliance, Catholic Relief Services, Islamic Relief USA, and Jesuit Refugee Service. Appendix Item 8.

See Joint Learning Initiative Policy Brief, "Faith Actors and the Implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees," Appendix Item 9.

6. Sustainable Food

Religious communities are often first to provide essential aid during crises, and transnational faith-inspired humanitarian organizations have deep experience in the opportunities and pitfalls of response. This experience and networks are under-appreciated. The experienced and moral voice of religious actors has much to contribute to "Ending hunger by 2030" (UN SDG 2). Parallel Session 3.2 focused on religious contributions to ending hunger and questions of food emergencies, food waste, and hidden dimensions of hunger, such as child malnutrition and rural hunger.

Recommendations:

- 6.1 G20 countries should include religious leaders in their integrated policy and interagency responses to food security concerns.
- 6.2 Urgent action is required to address famine situations in Africa and Yemen. This requires action to assure adequate and timely financing for food aid, and resolute action to assure access to affected populations.
- 6.3 A concerted focus by G20 members and religious communities on reducing food waste is recommended.

See policy brief on "Engaging religious actors in addressing the famine emergency in South Sudan, Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen," Appendix Item 10.

7. Women and Religion: Dignity, Equality and Empowerment

Many Forum sessions highlighted the priority for enhancing women's roles across policy agendas, and addressed specific challenges involving religious communities. Traditional cultural norms often perpetuate inequality, perhaps most dramatically between men and women and echo still in many religious institutions and practices. Religious communities often make positive contributions to protecting vulnerable women, engaging women in furthering sustainable development goals, and contributing to the amelioration of women's vulnerable situation.

Recommendation:

7.1. G20 members should work with the G20 Interfaith network to enhance impact of measures to address domestic violence, end sex trafficking, end child marriage, and address workplace discrimination.

8. Religion and the Provision of Humanitarian Relief

A plenary session brought together leaders of several global faith-inspired organizations actively involved in humanitarian crises. It focused on the intense commitment of these organizations to human dignity and

to serving the many global citizens who are in acute need. With the international community focused on reshaping humanitarian approaches and needs, there is ample scope for dialogue and engagement with religious actors, who bring distinctive experience and approaches. The Istanbul Humanitarian Forum

See summary of comments from global humanitarian aid leaders, Appendix Item 11.

and consultations on the two global compacts regarding refugees and migrants have elicited reviews of faithinspired roles.

The session reflected on religious roles in confronting global humanitarian challenges. Faith-based organizations bring important assets, notably their deep local roots and broad approach that cuts across sectors. They can bring hope and dignity beyond material needs. Leading global organizations and local organizations both face rising demands and expectations (as well as severe resource constraints), linked to the growing and complex humanitarian crises worldwide. Faith organizations, alongside all humanitarian organizations that work within the SDG framework, face the challenge of linking aid, especially in crises

and with refugees, with long term development. This requires complex alliances as humanitarian aid does not simply involve giving things to the poor; it is about transformation. Recommendations below also draw on Session 4.6 on Funding Essential Humanitarian Relief in Conflict Zones.

Recommendations:

- 8.1 Religious inspired global organizations should support G20 efforts to enhance local empowerment of displaced persons.
- 8.2 G20 governments need to address financial challenges being experienced by humanitarian aid organizations and the nonprofit sector more generally that result from bank de-risking policies caused by proliferating security regulations.

See recommendations submitted at the Forum by the Global NPO Forum on "Access to Financial Services for Non-Profit Organizations," Appendix Item 12.

Further Review Recommended: There is a continuing need to study how religiously affiliated humanitarian aid organizations can work synergistically, both with each other and with public sector bodies.

9. Religious Freedom, Religious Vitality, and Religious Contributions to the G20 Agenda

Achieving longer term G20 objectives, such as the SDGs, depends on heavy lifting coming from religious communities around the world. Macro goals cannot succeed without micro-implementation, and religious communities are often optimally placed to facilitate advances in reduction of poverty, hunger, provision of health care and education, promotion of decent work and equal treatment, and so on through the list of SDGs. Firm protections for freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) are essential. The fourth plenary session and sessions 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 4.2, and 4.4 focused in varying degrees on FoRB issues

Recommendations:

- 9.1 G20 countries should support the UN-based initiative to reduce incitement to hatred by
- supporting religious leaders and faith-based actors in fulfilling their human rights responsibilities as summarized in the Beirut Declaration and the 18 commitments of the "Faith for Rights" program.

See Beirut Declaration and Its 18 Commitments (English pages), Appendix Item 13.

9.2 In light of growing awareness of linkages between FoRB and an array of other social goods, G20 countries should take advantage of initiatives such as the G20 Interfaith Forum to open conversations about ways that protecting FoRB can help advance G20 objectives across a wide-ranging policy agenda.

Further Review Recommended. The G20 Interfaith Forum should highlight mechanisms that link religious engagement and FoRB with other policy processes unfolding at national, regional and international levels. An increasing number of governments have recognized the importance of FoRB not only as a human right, but also as a more general factor in human flourishing. However, linkages between FoRB and economic and social policy are not well understood. The G20 Interfaith Forum should contribute to deeper understanding in this domain, for example by identifying ways that protecting religious diversity can contribute to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals.

10. Enhanced Religious Literacy

Several Forum sessions highlighted the need for enhanced understanding of religious dimensions of global agendas, expressed as "religious literacy". Several journalists and educators examined roles that education and media play, for better or worse, in creating religiously literate citizens and building peaceful, cohesive societies in their respective countries. Broad recommendations focus both on awareness of the challenge and several specific areas for potential action.

Recommendation:

10.1 G20 governments should encourage incorporation of religious literacy programs into education systems (public and private) as an aspect of global citizenship.

Further Review Recommended: Information should be gathered about effective mechanisms for enhancing religious liberty in the form of best practices, curriculum materials, and other useful educational tools.

Conclusion

The G20 Interfaith Forum is an ongoing, expanding, and inclusive process designed to bring religious leaders, government officials, NGOs, and academic experts together to define ways in which religious communities can provide significant policy input to the G20 process. With the SDGs a scaffold for global action, the Forum responds to the call for creative partnerships, working with a rich array of networks that engage and link religious communities in service of the common good. The aim has been to highlight recommendations for the G20 Summit hosted by Argentina, but also to identify issues deserving ongoing study and review for future G20 Summits.

The 2019 G20 host is Japan. Plans are underway to organize the 2019 G20 Interfaith Forum there, building on the ideas and specific proposals that emerge from this vital interreligious process.

APPENDIX

POLICY BRIEFS AND OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS for recommendations from the G20 interfaith forum buenos aires, argentina

September 26-28, 2018

Appendix Item No.	Policy Brief or Supporting Document	Click on Link to Access: Item
1.	Recommendations Regarding Religion in the Workplace	Item 1 Link
2.	Action to Eradicate Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in Our Generation	Item 2 Link
3.	The Panama Declaration on Ending Violence against Children	Item 3 Link
4.	Concluding Remarks from the Ethics and Economy Meeting	Item 4 Link
5.	The imperatives of better governance: fighting corruption is a sine qua non for global agendas	Item 5 Link
6.	Sharpening the focus: Religious actors addressing extremism and violence	Item 6 Link
7.	G20 policy makers should support wider religious roles in refugee resettlement	Item 7 Link
8.	Implementing the Global Compact on Refugees from a Faith Perspective	Item 8 Link
9.	Joint Learning Initiative, Faith Actors and the Implementation Of the Global Compact on Refugees	Item 9 Link
10.	Engaging religious actors in addressing the famine emergency in South Sudan, Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen	Item 10 Link
11.	Summary of comments from global humanitarian aid leaders	Item 11 Link
12.	Global NPO Forum, Access to Financial Services for Non-Profit Organizations	Item 12 Link
13.	Beirut Declaration and Its 18 Commitments	Item 13 Link
	Click here to link to a consolidated file containing entire Appendix	Entire Appendix