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TOKYO, JAPAN PEOPLE, PEACE, PLANET: PATHWAYS FORWARD

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Recommendations for the G20 Leaders and Religious Networks following the G20 Interfaith Forum 2019

The G20 Interfaith Forum offers an annual platform where networks of religiously linked and faith-inspired actors engage on global agendas within the broad framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This document highlights priority recommendations that emerged from the June 7-9 Forum in Tokyo, introduces policy briefing papers, and notes topics under review. It complements and elaborates on [core recommendations](#) on that were presented prior to the June 28-29 Osaka G20 Leader Summit.

Recommendation Clusters

1. Religious Roles in Peacebuilding
2. Children's Rights, Youth Voices and Education
3. Protecting the Planet
4. Rule of Law and Freedom of Religion or Belief
5. Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery
6. Refugees and Migration
7. Aging Societies and Health
8. Religious Literacy and the Media
9. Structural Inequality and Gender Inequality
10. Cultural Heritage

About the G20 Summit Process and G20 Interfaith Forum

G20 Summits, ministerial meetings, and engagement groups play important roles in setting global agendas and in spurring action to address critical contemporary issues facing the world. The "Group of 20" (19 individual countries and the European Union) accounts for two-thirds of the world's

population and more than 80 percent of the world's gross domestic product (GDP). The annual leaders' summit, formally the "Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy," was initially convened to address problems precipitated by the 2008 global financial crisis. Its focus has since expanded beyond an initial agenda centered on global economic challenges to address far broader issues. In 2016, leaders endorsed the "G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" to align the G20's work with the 2030 Agenda. The president and host country of the G20 summit, which rotates annually, also define priorities for the G20 to address.

The organizing structure and process of the G20 is informal (there is no formal secretariat). However, 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, including leaders of other nations and international organizations. As the G20 process has unfolded over the years, "engagement groups" have assumed significant roles, 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. With over 80 percent of the world affiliated with a religious tradition, faith communities and actors in diverse sectors have important practical and moral insights to contribute. The G20 Interfaith Forum acts as a platform to present these insights as recommendations to the G20, as well as to the religiously linked networks focused on global agendas.

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), Argentina (2018), and Japan (2019). The originators and core organizers of the Forum have comprised an informal association for several years, and a legal entity was formed in 2019 to provide continuity and to facilitate ongoing activities. The Association's organizing committee serves as an [advisory council](#) in the formalized structure. The Centre for Interfaith and Cultural Dialogue at Griffith University in Australia and Brigham Young University and especially its International Center for Law and Religion Studies (ICLRS) in the United States have played central roles in the Forum's evolution, as have KAICIID (King Abdallah Bin Abdulaziz Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue), the World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD), and Worldwide Support for Development (WSD). A wider group of collaborating institutions play significant roles in organizing annual Forums.

The Forum's agenda largely mirrors that of the G20 host each year, focusing also on the Sustainable Development Goals as a leading global agenda and on topics of particular relevance for religious and interreligious agendas.

Japan's G20 Priorities

Japan assumed the presidency of the G20 in December 2018 from Argentina, and will pass the baton to Saudi Arabia in December 2019. Japan's G20 priorities were organized under eight broad themes: (1) Global Economy, (2) Trade and Investment, (3) Innovation, (4) Environment and Energy, (5) Employment, (6) Women's Empowerment, (7) Development, and (8) Health. Creating a "human-centered future society" was emphasized, with topics such as innovation and digital and technological advancement presented alongside and in support of achieving the SDGs. Addressing aging societies and marine plastic litter emerged as two topics of importance to the Japanese Presidency. Work continued on several additional fronts of particular relevance to religious communities, including inequality, anti-corruption, education, displacement, and disaster risk reduction.

Overview of the G20 Interfaith Forum Japan, 7-9 June 2019

The 2019 G20 Interfaith Forum convened at the Hotel New Otani Makuhari, June 7-9. The Forum was organized around the theme: "Peace, People, Planet: Pathways Forward." The [agenda](#) covered a rich array of topics, selected either because of their direct relevance to Japanese priorities or because of their relevance to continuing G20 and interreligious concerns. Advance preparation for selected conference sessions (recognized notably from the 2017 Germany Forum as essential) focused on generating policy

briefs on salient G20 issues. Forum sessions focused on ideas that could be translated into practical recommendations, pertinent for the G20, that reflected broad consensus among diverse religious actors. Areas of disagreement were flagged as areas needing respectful dialogue and further study.

Support. Substantial support for the Tokyo Forum (as well as for Buenos Aires in 2018) was provided by the Worldwide Support for Development (WSD), chaired by Dr. Haruhisa Handa, Japanese Shinto leader and philanthropist. Forum organization was led by the International Center for Law and Religion Studies (ICLRS) at Brigham Young University. The World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD) was a core co-organizer, and the event took place under the auspices of the King Abdallah bin Abdulaziz Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID), the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs at Georgetown University, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Many additional organizations continue to provide ongoing support for Forum initiatives (full [list here](#)).

Participants. Over 200 international speakers and guests representing diverse geographic, religious, and professional backgrounds were joined by Japanese participants and a public audience of over 2000. Among the networks that participated actively in the 2019 Forum were Religions for Peace (RfP), the UN Interagency Task Force on Religion and Development, the Joint Learning Initiative on Faith & Local Communities (JLI), the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD), the Global Network of Religions for Children, the Transatlantic Partnership on Religion and Diplomacy, the WASH Alliance, the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities (IFASC), the Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, Sport at the Service of Humanity (SSH), the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy (ICRD), and leaders of large faith-inspired organizations and academic institutions focused on religious freedom, religious peacebuilding, human rights, and sustainable development.

The Forum was marked by its attention to political processes. Three former Prime Ministers, David Cameron (UK), Sir John Key (New Zealand), and Enda Kenny (Ireland), and H.E. Graça Machel, a notable stateswoman and international advocate for women and children, gave keynote speeches and participated actively in Forum discussions. Prime Minister Abe's greeting to Forum participants was featured in the Program. Two senior Japanese political leaders representing the Prime Minister spoke at the Forum: Koichi Hagiuda, Member of the House of Representatives and Executive Acting Secretary-General, LDP, and Katsuei Hirasawa, Member of the House of Representatives, Acting Chairperson of General Counsel, LDP.

Religious leaders who addressed the Forum included Pope Francis and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew (via messages), Lord Carey of Clifton (103rd Archbishop of Canterbury), Sulak Sivaraksa, Bishop Gunnar Stålsett, Elder Gerrit W. Gong, and many others, representing a broad spectrum of faith traditions and nationalities.

A full list of speakers and panelists can be found [here](#).

Recommendations. The G20 Interfaith Association aims to develop robust processes to prepare appropriate formal recommendations over time. A primary objective of the annual Forum is to advance discussion and dialogue processes that bring diverse expertise and experience together to generate creative ideas, and to establish 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 can support various recommendations they view as being particularly significant.

The following recommendations represent major concerns that emerged from the 2019 G20 Interfaith Forum and reflect the collective wisdom of the extraordinary group that gathered in Tokyo. The first five topics were also presented as a set of [Core Recommendations](#), which were transmitted to Prime Minister Shinzō Abe ahead of the G20 Osaka Summit. Several recommendations are backed by more detailed

policy briefs (presented as appendices and available [here](#)). For several important topics where work is underway, further review is recommended.

Policy Recommendations for the
G20 Osaka Summit
following the G20 Interfaith Forum 2019

1. Religious Roles in Peacebuilding

‘Peace’ is a widely shared primary objective that both underpins and transcends all other topics. This theme was echoed throughout the Forum plenary sessions and notably in working sessions 2a (“The Diplomacy of Religious Peacebuilding”), 3d (“Religious Cultural Heritage”), 4a (“Peacebuilding in Practice”), 4e (“Institutional Challenges: Governments Engaging Religion”) and 5a (“Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue for Action”). Discussions centered around expanding the definitions of ‘religious diplomacy’ and ‘religious peacebuilding,’ and re-defining Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in ways that are inclusive and that promise to foster significant dialogue and cooperation.

Recommendations:

- 1.1 Create spaces for dialogue and peaceful interactions that can enhance respect for diversity and inclusion.
- 1.2 Reframe the discourse focused on countering violent extremism (CVE) that unduly emphasizes religion as a source of conflict.
- 1.3 Increase the capacity of religious peacemakers and involvement of religious actors in peacebuilding, with heightened awareness of the various roles that religious actors can play and an emphasis on inclusion of actors often excluded by formal religious authorities and official institutions, including women, young people, and traditionalist faith actors.

Further Review Recommended: Explicitly address questions of how governments and religious institutions can engage one another through a multi-stakeholder task force that includes economic, political, and religious actors, to report to the 2020 G20 Summit with action recommendations. Further discuss the role that NGOs and other secular civil society actors can play in engaging and bridging policymakers and governments with religious actors.

Brief: “[Religious Actors Addressing Extremism and Violence: Sharpening the Focus](#)”

2. Children’s Rights, Youth Voices, and Education

The 2019 G20 Interfaith Forum focused intensely on the topic of children, building on the 30th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Forum featured a wealth of wisdom on the topic, notably the central address of H.E. Graça Machel, the former Minister of Education of Mozambique. The advocacy of the Global Network of Religions for Children was highlighted. Of special note were contributions by the delegation of young leaders and mentors from Sport at the Service of Humanity and of a youth climate activist from the Fridays for Future movement. Several plenaries highlighted a focus on children, as did working sessions 1b (“Every Child Has the Right to a Childhood”), 3e (“Youth Promoting Values for Peace”), 4b (“Highlighting priorities for 21st Century Education”), and 5c (“Mobilizing for Action”), which featured an inter-generational discussion between elders and youth involved in mobilizing campaigns at local, national and international levels to highlight lessons to be learned from one another. Forum discussions addressed both the resources and reach of faith communities and their positive role in advancing children’s rights, ending violence, and providing education, as well as the role and responsibility of faith actors to educate and advocate for children’s

protection within their own communities and to condemn violence against children most especially when it is perpetrated in the name of religion.

Recommendations:

- 2.1 Focus explicit attention on ending violence against children and ensuring a sustained focus on children's rights, with a renewed commitment to translating promises into practice. Meeting needs in the first years of life, early childhood education, countering violent extremism and radicalization that targets children, online abuse of children, child marriage, forced labor and trafficking of children are all areas that require revived investment.
- 2.2. Give special attention to children in refugee situations, with bold efforts to "close the gap" and provide equal assistance to all children.
- 2.3 Commit to working in partnership with faith actors on child protection and education efforts, and building robust documentation on effective mechanisms of partnership and engagement.
- 2.4 Involve children directly, and enable their voices to be heard and heeded.

Further Review Recommended: The message that children are vital to the achievement of SDGs and global agendas was repeatedly underscored. Specific strategies for faith communities and policy makers to invest proactively in children to solve global challenges could be further developed. There is an opportunity to develop robust policy recommendations that address the benefits and pitfalls of religious education, as well as both global education and religious literacy more broadly, and to present these at the 2020 G20 Interfaith Forum. These can build on the Abu Dhabi Guidelines on Teaching Interfaith Tolerance, and other ongoing interfaith initiatives.

Brief: ["Focus on Children: Recommendations from Religious Actors"](#)

3. Environmental Concerns

Forum participants made explicit the economic and ethical challenges of manmade and climate-related disasters in bold calls to action and sharing of efforts underway to protect the planet and humanity from environmental crises. A clear consensus on the urgency of climate change and threats to the environment underscored the need to accelerate global as well as local efforts. There was a special focus on the potential for meaningful partnership and action through the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative (IRI). This topic was highlighted at the Launch of the Forum, during the Formal Inauguration of the Forum, and throughout action-focused plenary sessions. Working sessions 1c ("Religious Calls to Protect Rainforests"), 2c ("Calling for Action on Climate – Disasters: Past, Present, and Future"), 3c ("Ending Hunger, Water as Life", and 4c ("Torn by Controversy: Cons and Pros of Extractive Industries") addressed specific topics related to environmental concerns and the vulnerable populations they most directly impact. The witness of a youth climate activist from the Fridays for Future movement was a powerful call to action, both for G20 leaders and for religious communities.

Recommendations:

- 3.1 Commit to ending subsidies and other incentives leading to deforestation and to implement economic incentives to protect forests and their ecosystem services.
- 3.2 Support existing and new moratoriums and anti-deforestation policies, develop land-use plans that protect standing forests, and prioritize securing land rights for indigenous and other forest communities.
- 3.3 Announce significantly higher ambitions to face the threat of climate change, including through enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions and the ongoing replenishment of the Green Climate Fund.
- 3.4 Commit to rapid and large-scale reduction in use of plastics.
- 3.5 Establish or improve national platforms for disaster risk reduction and commit to implementing the Sendai Framework.
- 3.6 Include local faith networks in disaster preparedness, planning, and mitigation strategies.

3.7 Build viable and practical partnerships with faith organizations and communities to achieve sustainable development in the face of mounting climate crises.

Further Review Recommended: 2020 will be a significant climate turning point. The UN Climate Action Summit (Sept. 2019) and Santiago Climate Change Conference (Dec. 2019) offer important opportunities for renewed and revamped commitments on climate change action. Faith networks can strengthen global initiatives to promote sustainable living and to advocate for international and national policy changes. The G20 Interfaith Forum can link ongoing initiatives and highlight them in the G20 context.

Briefs: [“Combating Deforestation and Protecting Rainforests: Religious Dimensions”](#) and [“Religious Dimensions of Reducing Risk, Strengthening Resilience and Responding to Disasters”](#)

4. Rule of Law and Freedom of Religion or Belief

Strong rule of law institutions and protection of human rights, including freedom of religion or belief, are essential foundations for the synergies and implementation power that religious communities can provide in advancing SDGs and other social goals. These topics were thus fundamental to the Forum. In his keynote, Former Prime Minister David Cameron highlighted his advocacy for SDG 16 – peace, justice and strong institutions and its underlying importance to the other SDGs. Many topic discussions underscored difficulties in advancing solutions without addressing underlying corrupt practices and violations of human rights. Specific sessions included 1a (“From Vile to Violence: Freedom of Religion and Belief and Peacebuilding”) and 2d (“Combatting Corruption”).

Recommendations:

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 Both government and religious leadership should advocate and work to ensure protections of religious minorities in practice and to create spaces for these groups to flourish.
- 4.4 Good governance should be a central theme of the 2020 G20 Summit, with specific commitments to continuing action to combat corruption and poor governance and to increase transparency, accountability and protection for whistleblowers.
- 4.5 Work in partnership with religious actors to broaden tools and coalitions that address corruption and reinforce values of integrity at community, national, and global levels.
- 4.6 The framework of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group should be addressed with specific reference to religious actors and voices.
- 4.7 The issues of land reform and extractive industries, including fisheries and rainforests, which are of special concern to religious communities, should be a focus of the G20 Communique with commitments to active consultation with pertinent religious groups.

Further Review Recommended: Religious actors need to be an integral part of addressing corrupt practices within their own communities, partners in pinpointing and documenting the daily corrosive effects of corruption on communities and, individually and collectively, building on shared ethical teachings to bolster effective action. 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 2020 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.

The G20 Interfaith Forum should highlight mechanisms that link religious engagement and FoRB with other policy processes unfolding at national, regional and international levels and contribute to deeper understanding in this domain, for example by identifying ways that protecting religious diversity can contribute to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Brief: "[The Imperative of Better Governance: Fighting Corruption is a Sine Qua Non for Global Agendas](#)"

5. Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

This topic emerged with renewed force at the 2019 G20 Interfaith Forum. In addition to prominence in plenary sessions and reference in other sessions including those focused on children and migrants (two groups especially vulnerable to this crime), working session 4d ("Human Trafficking and Modern Forms of Slavery: Towards New Partnerships in a G20 Context") focused specifically on the issue. Drawing on the wisdom of faith actors with experience working on the ground alongside those who have been involved in high level policy processes, dedicated attention and action was highlighted as vital to end this critical moral and economic crisis.

Recommendations:

- 5.1 Include Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery on the 2020 G20 agenda, and commit to addressing specific action areas, including human trafficking as a prominent feature in refugee and migration governance, protection of children, and stopping illegal organ harvesting.
- 5.2 Identify areas and establish robust partnerships with religious actors, especially where they are actively engaged in advocacy and on-the-ground solutions and can enhance communication and trust at global, regional, national, and local levels.
- 5.3 Promote dialogues of encounter with victims of human trafficking and include the voices of trafficked persons on advisory commissions and in national research hubs.
- 5.4. Increase enforcement, with adequate resources dedicated to implementing existing legislation, and undertake legal reforms to further strengthen their stringency and close legal loopholes.
- 5.5 Establish contracting standards with corporations, organizations, and individuals to ensure that they are exercising due diligence to slavery-proof their supply chains.
- 5.6 Take action to prevent Government monies or assets from knowingly or unwittingly funding or endorsing illicit activities of human trafficking, including forced labor, and establish a global agreement that profit from human trafficking is seized and utilized in the fight against the crime.
- 5.7 Increase the capacity of countries to detect, systematically collect data, and report on trafficking cases. Undertake data mapping efforts in at-risk regions.

Further Review Recommended: Religious institutions and organizations can provide moral leadership on this issue, take steps to ensure that their own supply chains and communities are free from forced labor and human trafficking, and revamp efforts to advocate for increased protection and empowerment of victims. A permanent committee on the issue tasked with engaging G20 countries, their Sherpas, leaders, and media should be established.

Brief: "[Actions Speak Louder than Words in Combating Human Trafficking and Modern Forms of Slavery: Faith-inspired Actors/Communities Supporting Global Efforts](#)"

6. Refugees and Migration

The G20 offers opportunities to look boldly at refugee and migration challenges, underscoring both ethical and practical challenges ahead. The Forum focused on the growing numbers and needs of forcibly displaced populations, including during a plenary panel of former state leaders who stressed the responsibility of countries to develop proper programs to accept and integrate refugees. The Rohingya

crisis and urgency of global refugee crises more broadly were highlighted in plenary speeches and panels, and in working session 3a (“New Ways to Serve and Integrate Refugees and Forcibly Displaced Communities”).

Recommendations:

- 6.1 Actively support the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Refugee Forum, and the Global Compact for Migration, and commit to ensuring their implementation.
- 6.2 Recognize and integrate faith actors as proactive, well-positioned and sustained responders to forced displacement, and expand engagement with faith actors worldwide that play large if often unseen roles in supporting refugees and migrants and the communities that host them.
- 6.3 Recognize religious belief and practice as central to migrants and refugees, and promote the agency of migrants and refugees.
- 6.4 Advance more globalized understandings of citizenship and support policies that shape more open societies; responsibly plan for migration and refugee acceptance, and address online hate speech.
- 6.5 Invest in educational opportunities for displaced children.

Further Review Recommended: Building capacity towards education and mitigation of real and perceived lack of engagement with faith actors on issues of acceptance, tolerance, and respect for differing beliefs among migrant populations deserves greater attention. At the same time, faith communities and actors are at the forefront of welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating refugees and migrants. A G20 refugee and religion research fund could explore ways to enhance partnerships for action on the global refugee crisis. A standing interreligious advisory group could advise the G20 leaders and advisors on religious dimensions of the forced migration crisis and specifically resettlement issues and approaches. There is an urgent need for a rigorous mapping of ongoing efforts and robust communication strategies.

Brief: [“Resettlement of Refugees and Forced Migrants: Religious Dimensions”](#)

7. Aging Societies and Health

Health was one of eight core themes of the Osaka Summit. Health and wellbeing, including spiritual wellbeing, of all of humanity is a high priority for world religious and faith actors. These issues were explicitly examined in working sessions 3b (“Universal Health Coverage: Translating Global Goals into Action”) and 5b (“Aging Societies”). The first highlighted the importance of action on financial models with various faith-managed healthcare systems facing severe disruptions and crises of sustainability. Successful models offer lessons, with an emphasis on local context, reaching those left behind, and empowerment of local actors. With falling birth rates and increasing life expectancy in countries across the globe, the specific issue of how to help and support the health and wellbeing of the growing share of older citizens is coming to the forefront of the global agenda. Many faith traditions place special emphasis on honoring elders and caring for their dignity. Relationships between religion and innovation, along with more challenges topics of the de-valuing of those who do not work, end of life care, and accepting the reality of decline, were examined.

Recommendations:

- 7.1 Common efforts should be expanded upon to build sustainable models of health care provision that take into account local context, including faith actors.
- 7.2 Engage religious actors who facilitate access to health services and resources for healthy lifestyles locally and globally, and establish partnerships with faith actors who can provide wisdom and resources to implement strategies on the ground.
- 7.3 Incentivize greater gender equity in the leadership of healthcare initiatives.

- 7.4 Commit to the development of evidence-based legislation, policies and plans that pay explicit attention to meeting the health and wellbeing needs of older people, with a sharp focus on dignity and human rights, within the framework of the 2016 WHO Global Strategy and Action Plan.
- 7.5 Draw on faith and religious practices to encourage active aging and restore the dignity of elders; integrate recognition of the benefits of religion and spirituality into policies and plans for health system interventions.

Further Review Recommended: Faith-based healthcare is context specific and diverse. Strategies to broaden networks across faith lines are needed, including further exploration of desirable innovation. This includes approaches to how different faith traditions confront aging. Efforts to map religious engagement with human enhancement and other emerging technologies could sharpen recommendations on the opportunities or ethical challenges surrounding these innovations.

Brief: [“Serving Aging Populations: Religious Dimensions of Health and Well-being”](#)

8. Religious Literacy and the Media

Various sessions highlighted the changing landscape of communications as a critical change factor that needs to be reflected across different topics. A corollary issue is the importance of religious literacy in broad policy discussions, affecting inter alia governments, foreign ministries, schools, and the media.

These issues were addressed notably in session 5d (“Media in the Spotlight: Peace, People and Planet Demand a Robust Religious Literacy”)

Recommendations for action and further review focused on the need to address hate crimes with preventative legislation, partnerships including interreligious partnerships, and forceful, sensitive framing of responses.

9. Structural Inequality and Gender Inequality

The need for the G20 to focus on addressing inequalities, of income, welfare, and opportunity, ran through the Forum, with specific attention to ethical dimensions and to the issue of women’s inclusion and rights. Among other observations, income inequality increases tension and distrust of experts and governments, and can be the basis of extremist recruitment and populist movements. Gender equality is not just a women’s issue: inequality in any society affects everybody within that society and beyond.

Sessions that focused explicitly on these issues included session 1d (“Bringing Ethical and Religious Perspectives to the Challenge of Inequality”) and 2b (“Inclusion, Focusing on Challenges of Women’s Equal Rights”).

Recommendations emerging from discussions highlighted the ethical dimensions of inequality issues and the need for inclusive dialogue on action. The year 2020 will see a sharp focus on progress made towards women’s equality; the role of religious institutions both in promoting equality and in posing challenges to resolve deserves attention.

10. Cultural heritage

Protecting cultural and religious heritage sites and, more broadly, engaging proactively in advancing cultural understanding was a significant Forum theme, notably highlighted in session 3d (“Religious Cultural Heritage”). Recommendations focused on advancing the initiatives launched by the United Nations Secretary General and linking these to the broader efforts to engage in dialogue and action.

Conclusion

The G20 host each year plays a central role in defining the G20 agenda. The issues facing the G20 are urgent and complex. They demand both commitment of global leaders and a far more robust set of partnerships, including with religious actors. The G20 Interfaith Forum offers an opportunity to learn and contribute to differing approaches and priorities but also to maintain a focus on leading moral and practical issues.

The immediate challenges are to highlight and advance the excellent ideas and proposals that emerged in preparing and conducting the Tokyo agenda but also to look to the agenda for 2020, 2021, and beyond. G20 hosts will be Saudi Arabia (2020), Italy (2021) and India (2022).

The G20 Interfaith Forum will remain actively engaged in drawing on the wisdom of the world's religious and faith communities both to respond to global agendas and to help shape them, and invites all relevant actors to join in this bold endeavor.