

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Good Friday Agreement Negotiator and AI Scholars to Examine Artificial Intelligence's Role in Peacebuilding

New York City, July 10, 2026 — The G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20), the world's leading organization focused on the intersection of faith and policy, will host a webinar on July 16 examining how artificial intelligence is reshaping the work of peacemaking. Titled "AI and Peace" and part of IF20's ongoing "AI and Human Flourishing" series, the session gathers a key negotiator of Northern Ireland's 1998 Good Friday Agreement, a leading Oxford scholar of cultural evolution, and the founder of an international dialogue organization to ask how AI can strengthen, rather than supplant, human-led efforts toward peace.

The webinar's premise is that AI can help communities detect conflict early, bridge divides through dialogue, and support collaborative problem-solving rooted in human dignity. Yet the speakers converge on a shared caution: the technology is a tool for human peacemakers, not a substitute for them.

John, Lord Alderdice — a psychoanalytic psychiatrist and a key negotiator of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement — argues that peacemaking must evolve alongside both conflict and technology.

"The work of peacemakers must adapt both to the changing character of conflict and to the rapidly emerging new technologies," Alderdice said. "As AI impacts the neuro-psychological development of individuals, as well as how societies function, it must be a key focus of our study and praxis."

Professor Pieter Francois, Director of Oxford University's Computational Humanities Lab and Co-Chair of the IF20 subgroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief, will lead the discussion. He cautions that AI's effects on peacemaking are still coming into focus.

"AI is changing rapidly the modalities of the peace negotiation process," Francois said. "As with all new technology, the impact of AI is uneven at first and requires sustained reflection on both the possibilities and pitfalls."

Julian Weinberg, founder and executive director of the international nonprofit Dialogue Action, frames AI as a complement to human peacemaking rather than a replacement for it.

"By itself, AI will not solve conflict; neither will it build peace," Weinberg said. "But it can contribute to human-led efforts toward peace."

The free webinar will take place on July 16, 2026, at 12 p.m. EDT. Register at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oSp0FMD8Rfm5GfznAWutrg#/registration

Speakers will include:

- **Professor Pieter Francois (Moderator)** — Professor of Cultural Evolution and Director of the Computational Humanities Lab at the University of Oxford, and Lead of the Research Group on Resilient Societies at the Alan Turing Institute. He is Co-Chair of the IF20 subgroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief, and his recent research examines the role religious tolerance plays in building resilient, cohesive societies.
- **John, Lord Alderdice** — Psychoanalytic psychiatrist, Liberal Democrat life member of the UK House of Lords, and Presidente d'Honneur of Liberal International. As leader of Northern Ireland's

Alliance Party, he was a key negotiator of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement and became the first Speaker of the new Northern Ireland Assembly, later serving as one of four international commissioners overseeing security normalization. He holds honorary academic appointments at Oxford, Cambridge, Queen's University Belfast, and the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, is founding chair of The Concord Foundation, and focuses on intractable violent political conflict, religious faith and fundamentalism, and the problems of indigenous peoples.

- **Julian Weinberg** — Founder and Executive Director of Dialogue Action, which he launched while a Non-Resident Fellow at Stanford University's Center on International Conflict and Negotiation, and an External Member of the Computational Humanities Lab at Regent's Park College, Oxford. With more than 15 years' experience leading high-level political dialogue processes, he has built networks of political, governmental, business, and religious leaders across Europe, Southeast Asia, North Africa, and Western Asia to advance reconciliation and sustainable development. He served as Specialist Advisor to the UK Parliament's Foreign Affairs Select Committee (2016–17) and is an Advisory Board Member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Tunisia.

About the G20 Process

The Group of Twenty, or G20, is the premier forum for international economic cooperation, bringing together the leaders of Earth's most prosperous economies. Collectively, G20 members represent around 80 percent of the world's economic output, two-thirds of the global population and three-quarters of international trade. Throughout the year, representatives from G20 countries gather to discuss financial and socioeconomic issues as well as broader humanitarian issues targeted by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum seeks global solutions by collaborating with religious thought leaders and political representatives to help shape the overall G20 agenda. It draws on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting a rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values. Through its extensive network of networks, it helps prioritize key global policy goals and point toward practical means of implementation at every level of society.

For more information, please visit www.g20interfaith.org.

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