More than a hundred experts and leaders on economy, law, politics, religion, development and humanitarian aid from 30 nations gathered for the fourth consecutive G20 Interfaith Summit to discuss how religion relates to sustainable development and the refugee crisis. As with past summits, a diverse array of religious traditions or beliefs were represented including, but not limited to, Bahá’í, Jewish, humanitarian, Konko, and various Christian traditions. Participants from a variety of interfaith (e.g., the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue – KAICIID, Coexister, Religions for Peace Europe), human rights (e.g., Office of UN High Commissioner of Refugees, Human Rights Department for the German Commission of Justice and Peace) organizations contributed to the dialogue. The majority of G20 nations were represented. Ulrich Nitschke, Head of the Secretariat for the recently formed International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD), discussed how they are engaging civil society and non-governmental organizations such as religious and value-driven organizations, secular NGOs, community initiatives, foundations, academic institutions and other relevant development organizations to help implement the Sustainable Development Goals.

Plenary sessions developed in accordance with three themes: sustainable development, religious freedom or belief, and the economic sector. The relationship between religion and sustainable development paid particular attention to religious contributions to alleviating the refugee and famine crises. The plenary on religious freedom or belief explored the contributions faith based organizations make in contexts of weak or failed states, and the challenges associated with religious contribution to SDG fulfillment given the deep privatization of religion, the confessional nature of religious communities, and the barriers of denominationalism. The plenary on religion and the economic sector focused on developing religious literacy for organizations to improve the quality of conversation because religion is important to the economy.

Several parallel sessions focused on the relationship between religion and special interest groups important to the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Delegates from Africa including Mussie Hailu Gebrestadik, the Regional Director of United Religions Initiative for Africa and Representative to the UN and African Union and Nicta Lubaale, the General Secretary for the Organization of African Independent Churches, contributed perspectives focused on Developing Partnerships with Africa. Two concurrent sessions were focused on the interfaith youth movement: Youth Interfaith Engagement and A Common Word among the Youth: Interfaith Development Goals. A parallel session on Women, Faith, and Human Rights was also convened for the second time in the history of the Interfaith Summits.
Several of the parallel sessions addressed recent political developments. Delegates discussed the US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement in a session on *Faith, Sustainable Development and the Environment*. Delegates struggled with the need for new communication strategies in a session on *Religion, Media, and Development in the Post-Truth World*. Delegates discussed in a session on *Shrinking Space of Civil Society* how security concerns are increasingly misused to limit the freedom of religious minorities and what might be done to strengthen and defend human rights.

Several advances have been made this year in relation to the shadow summit process. Prior to the Interfaith Summit, representatives from the Think20 (T20), an official engagement group during Germany’s G20 Presidency that brings together research institutes and think tanks from the G20 countries to develop policy recommendations within thematic Task Forces, reached out to some religious leaders including three who were heavily involved in executing the 2017 Interfaith Summit: Cole Durham (G20 Interfaith Summit Executive Committee), Ulrich Nitschke (Head of the Secretariat for the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development – PaRD, Germany), and Katherine Marshall (G20 Interfaith Summit Organizing Committee; Senior Fellow, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University; Executive Director, World Faiths Development Dialogue; USA). They contributed to two briefs on famine and refugee resettlement that were both included in the final document that was sent to the G20 Sherpas. In so doing, they learned that the process of actually impacting the G20 Sherpas is a disciplined long-term exercise that requires planning a year in advance of the event. For this reason, in anticipation of the 2018 G20 meetings, the Interfaith Summit Organizing Committee invited several delegates from Argentina to participate in the Potsdam meetings including the Government of Argentina’s Director of Religious Freedom and Diversity from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, the Director of Global Affairs from the National Senate, and the President of the Argentine Council for Religious Liberty. Interfaith Summit participants in the T20 think tank also learned that they can have an impact. T20 participants were unaware of the complexity of religious organizations and interfaith participants were able to deconstruct simplistic associations of religion with violence and patriarchy.

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3 20 Solution Proposals for the G20 from the T20 Engagement Group, see http://www.t20germany.org/2017/05/30/20-solutions-g20/
4 There were 15 briefs on Digitalization, 8 on Climate Policy and Finance, 13 on The 2030 Agenda, 8 on Global Inequality and Social Cohesion, 6 on Forced Migration, 5 on Financial Resilience, 5 on Trade and Investment, 5 on Toward Ending Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture, 3 on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, 1 on Resilience and Inclusive Growth, 3 on Circular Economy, and 2 on G20 and Africa. See http://www.g20-insights.org/policy_briefs/
document that was sent to the G20 Sherpas. As a result, the 2017 Interfaith Potsdam Summit marked a notable shift in strategy away from collaborative statements toward policy recommendations aimed at practical application. Members of the G20 Interfaith Summit Organizing Committee advised session chairs to facilitate discussion to identify points for dialogue with the G20 to be included in the *G20 Interfaith Summit 2017 Summary Report*. The G20 Interfaith Summit Executive Committee will use this information for planning purposes as they prepare for 2018 in Argentina.

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5 *Summary Reports* for the annual summits are posted at https://www.g20interfaith.org/