



# INTERFAITH FORUM



ETHICS AND ECONOMY

**BUILDING CONSENSUS FOR FAIR  
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**RELIGIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS FOR A DIGNIFIED FUTURE**

26 - 28 SEPTEMBER 2018 | BUENOS AIRES | ARGENTINA



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#### Organizing Committee

**Prof. Mohammed Abu-Nimer**

Senior Advisor, KAICIID Dialogue Centre, Vienna, Austria.

**Dr. Brian J. Adams**

Director, Centre for Interfaith & Cultural Dialogue, Griffith University, Australia.

**Rev. Prof. Dr. James Christie**

Director, Ridd Institute for Religion and Global Policy University of Winnipeg, Canada.

**Prof. Pieter Coertzen**

Faculty of Theology, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa.

**Dr. Ganoune Diop**

Director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Seventh-day Adventist Church, Maryland, USA.

**Prof. W. Cole Durham, Jr.**

Founding Director, Int'l Center for Law and Religion Studies, BYU Law School, USA.

**Prof. Cristina Calvo**

Director, Int'l Program on Democracy, Society, and New Economies, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

**HE. Metropolitan Emmanuel of France**

Ecumenical Patriarchate and KAICIID Board.

**Prof. Alessandro Ferrari**

Director, Center on Religion, Law and Economy in the Mediterranean Area, Insubria University, Italy.

**Prof. Marie-Claire Foblets**

Director, Department of Law & Anthropology Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Germany.

**Prof. John Kirton**

Co-Director, G20 Research Group, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, Canada.

**Dr. Elizabeta Kitanovic**

Executive Secretary for Human Rights, Conference of European Churches, Belgium.

**Prof. Asher Maoz**

Dean, Peres Academic Center Law School, Israel.

**Prof. Katherine Marshall**

Senior Fellow, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs Georgetown University, Washington, DC.

**Rev. Yoshinobu Miyake**

Superior General, Konko Church of Izuo, Japan.

**Midori Miyazaki**

Director, International Shinto Foundation (for Dr. Haruhisa Handa), Washington, DC.

**Prof. Faizan Mustafa**

Vice-Chancellor, NALSAR University of Law, India.

**Prof. Juan G. Navarro Floria**

Pontifical Catholic University; National Justice and Peace Commission, Argentina.

**Prof. Norberto Padilla**

President, Latin American Consortium for Religious Liberty, Argentina.

**Dr. Peter Petkoff**

Director Law and Religion Programme, Regent's Park College, Oxford University, UK.

**Dr. Raúl Scialabba**

President, Argentinian Council for Religious Liberty (CALIR), Argentina.

**Dr. Humberto Shikiya**

Board of Directors, CREAS – ACT ALIANZA, Argentina.

**Prof. Xiaoyun Zheng**

Deputy Director, Institute of World Religions, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China.



# INTERFAITH FORUM



## Welcome to the G20 Interfaith Forum!

No one left behind: that phrase captures the central purpose of the G20 Interfaith Forum. It reflects a hope that a better world is possible and that with wise and collective efforts we can achieve it. Since 2014, this Forum has highlighted the vital work of religious communities on a full range of vital global issues, from assuring universal health care to protecting the riches of the natural world. It offers specific ideas to the G20 leaders, and it addresses the core question of how the world's vast array of religious communities can contribute, even as they strive never to forget the easily forgotten: those who are excluded and left behind.

The ambitious United Nations Global Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) provide a framework, but we confess, our ambitions and our dreams go well beyond. We envisage a world with a core moral compass that truly reflects both common goals and human rights and the rich diversity of the world's religious traditions and cultures. We dream of a world where every man, woman and child truly can have the chance to thrive and develop his or her God-given potential.

We look forward to engaging with every participant in this Forum. You come from all the continents, representing different religious traditions and different sectors of activities. We hope that you bring opinions and new ideas and that you are ready to engage with others in the Forum to find new and better ways ahead. We commit ourselves to listening and to working together to advance good ideas as we move forward.

Sincerely,

**G20 Interfaith Forum Organizing Committee.**



On behalf of the Argentine Council for Religious Freedom (CALIR) it is an honor and a privilege to welcome you to this G20 Interfaith Forum that will be held under the motto:

**Creating a consensus for fair and sustainable development:  
Contribution of religions for a dignified future.**

We are pleased as the local entity, within the framework of the Presidency of Argentina of the G20, to celebrate in our country and in particular in the City of Buenos Aires a gathering of these characteristics. Inspired by the agora of Greek civilization, we aspire to make this Forum a meeting place, a destination for debate and the exchange of ideas and experiences among all participants.

We appreciate the participation of government leaders, religious leaders, academics, and experts from around the world who accept the option of analyzing religion and beliefs as an important criteria for sustainable development on the world stage and in the formulation of inclusive public policies.

We trust that there are ways for different groups to work together to improve the level of expression for the advantages and for the development of the practices.

We want the Forum to help identify and showcase the political and social contributions of various traditions and philosophies to global issues, while providing opportunities for communication and relationship building.

We aspire during the sessions to open a path of dialogue and debate and reflection and understanding of the other, essential for the development of one's spiritual and intellectual personality.



**Raúl Scialabba**  
President



On behalf of the Regional Program "Ethics and Economy" we extend a cordial and fraternal welcome to all the participants of the event "Constructing consensus for a just and sustainable development: contributions of religions for a dignified future", carried out within the framework of the G20 activities in Argentina.

Searching for reforms within the international financial and monetary system, the "Ethics and Economy" Program was launched to focus on dialogue identifying the current challenges and obstacles in the region and to build upon international experts' proposals and recommendations. The general objective of the program is "to contribute to the ethical, economic and economic protection reflection from the perspective of human rights for the implementation of a New International Financial Architecture".

Since 2016, the "High Level Ethics and Economy Dialogue" has been held, a process of discussion, study, and reflection that brings together economists, experts in development, and international and ecumenical partners, as well as representatives of different religious denominations and theologians of Latin America and the world.

This initiative is promoted by the Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Social Pastoral - Caritas (SELACC), the Department of Justice and Solidarity of the Latin American Episcopal Council (DEJUSOL-CELAM), the International Program on Democracy, Society and New Economies of the University of Buenos Aires (PIDESONE), the Ecumenical Regional Advisory and Service Center (CREAS) and the Global Ethics Network (Globethics.net); accompanied by the Dicastery of Integral Human Development of the Vatican, the World Communion of Reformed Churches (CMIR), ACT Alliance, the Alliance of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches of Latin America (AIPRAL), Christian Aid, the United Nations Program for the Development of Argentina (UNDP), the Latin American Integration Program of the Inter-American Development Bank (INTAL).

The First High Level Dialogue "International Financial Architecture: Ethics and Economics. Argentina: Road to G20 2018", took place in November 2016 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The "II Dialogue of High Level of Ethics and Economy: Sustainable Finance, Decent Work and Inclusive Development" was held in Buenos Aires in November 2017. And the "III Dialogue of High Level of Ethics and Economy: Inequalities and Justice of Gender, Rights and Systems of Social Protection", took place in Sao Paulo, Brazil in May 2018.

The international agenda on sustainable development with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) places equality and equity at the center of development, and this necessarily implies changes in economic systems and processes in order to promote public policies that guarantee the achievement of a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable world. Our "Common House", the inhabited land, requires commitment and joint collaboration between policy leaders and religious communities who together can contribute to a dignified, just, and sustainable future. We welcome you to this forum and we encourage you to accept the challenge of "no one is left behind" in pursuit of these goals.



**Dra. Cristina Calvo**  
Co-chair Ethics and Economy  
Program, Director of PIDESONE.  
University of Buenos Aires.



**Dr. H.C. Humberto Martín Shikiya**  
Board of Directors,  
CREAS - ACT ALIANZA.



**Dr Haruhisa Handa, Chairman, International Shinto Foundation, Patron of the G20 Interfaith Forum.**

I extend a warm welcome to participants in this important and remarkably diverse gathering! It is marked by sustained support from senior authorities of the Government of Argentina, and we are most grateful for their hospitality and engagement.

The Forum reflects the caring and hard work of a unique coalition of religious leaders, advocates for the world's vulnerable communities and for the earth itself, and committed scholars. It has been meticulously prepared and shows the deep commitment of an organizing committee drawn from all world regions who have demonstrated over many years, their drive for creative and responsible engagement in the important global G20 process.

The work of religious communities may be the world's best kept secret. They educate children, promote artistic endeavors, vital health facilities, create sports programs in impoverished neighborhoods, care for children who face violence and exclusion, and feed those who are hungry. When disaster strikes, as happened recently in my own country, Japan, with a new severe earthquake and typhoon, religious communities feel compelled to respond.

This is the daily work of religious communities, women and men, in every corner of the world, and it keeps communities safe and progressing. But the communities too often work in isolation, one community separated from another, institutions divided by language and by approach, and, more rarely, by conflicting ideas and hopes. The Forum can help, by shining light on the many places, actual and potential, where religious communities can contribute to the bold goals that world political leaders have defined.

Interfaith work is a path to overcoming many challenges. I know of few opportunities as promising as the G20 Interfaith Forum. It brings much needed voices to the G20 leaders and process, and it brings communities from different traditions and world regions together to learn from each other and to ensure that their excellent ideas and good work are understood as a central part of the global agenda.

I look forward to learning about your ideas and recommendations. These have special importance as we look to the next G20 meeting, where Japan will be the host. The demands of health for all, care for the earth, assuring equality between women and men, and responding to natural catastrophes will feature on next year's agenda. Once again we look to your wisdom, courage, and experience in advancing ideas and actions that can help shape a better world.



**Dr. Haruhisa Handa**  
Patron of the Forum



**Bienvenido! Ahlan wa sahan!  
Welcome to the 2018 G20 Interfaith Forum!**

We're Islamic Relief USA, a humanitarian aid agency that provides worldwide relief and development in a dignified manner regardless of gender, race, or religion. We work to empower individuals in their communities and give them a voice in the world.

That's why it's an honor for us to support the 2018 G20 Interfaith Forum, a gathering that embodies so many of the values we share, like fair and sustainable development and religious contributions for a dignified future.

At Islamic Relief USA, we have five core values: excellence, sincerity, compassion, custodianship, and social justice.

At this year's forum, we're excited to hear how so many of you put these same interfaith values into action. Whether you're a leader, scholar, economist, policy maker, or other change agent—we're eager to learn from you.

We also know how critical passionate, young people are to transforming communities for the better. That's why we're proud to sponsor the G20 Interfaith Forum youth panel that features four bright, inspiring emerging leaders. Don't miss it!

Again, welcome to this year's G20 Interfaith Forum. Let's work together to develop and promote solutions to global challenges. Let's work together for a better world.

In solidarity,



**Sharif Aly**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Islamic Relief USA

## CONDENSED PROGRAM



### Wednesday, 26 September 2018.

- 8:00 - 8:45** Registration/Accreditation. *Auditorio Manuel Belgrano, Cancillería Argentina, Esmeralda 1212.*
- 8:45 - 9:45** **Inaugural Session.** *Auditorio Manuel Belgrano, Cancillería Argentina, Esmeralda 1212.*  
Welcome from principal sponsoring organizations.  
Welcome address on behalf of Argentine Government.  
Video greetings.
- 9:45 - 11:00** **Plenary Session I.** *Auditorio Manuel Belgrano, Cancillería Argentina, Esmeralda 1212.*  
Religions and emerging global challenges. Part I.
- 11:00 - 11:15** Musical interlude.
- 11:15 - 12:30** Religions and emerging global challenges. Part II.
- 12:30 - 12:45** Conference photo.
- 12:45 - 13:30** Reception, Foreign Affairs Ministry.
- 14:30 - 16:00** **Plenary Session II.** *Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center.*  
Future of work and the urgent challenges of inequality and the vulnerable.
- Ethics and Economics.** *Episcopal Conference of Argentina, Suipacha 1032, Buenos Aires.*  
Opening of the 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Dialogue on Ethics and Economics.
- 16:00 - 16:30** **Coffee break.**
- 16:00 - 17:45** **Parallel Sessions.** *Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center.*  
Dignified work.  
Religion, Business and Sustainable Development.  
Human traffic and modern forms of slavery: urgent challenges, urgent responses.  
Religion and anti-discrimination norms.
- Ethics and Economics.** *Episcopal Conference of Argentina, Suipacha 1032, Buenos Aires.*  
Eco-economy: a new style of development.
- 17:45 - 18:00** **Coffee break.**
- 18:00 - 19:30** **Parallel Sessions.** *Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center.*  
Innovation and why religious voices matter.  
Modern exodus: ethical facets and action imperatives for refugees and migration.  
Children: A common imperative for G20 engagement.



### Thursday, 27 September 2018.

- 8:30 - 9:30** Registration/Accreditation.
- 9:00 - 10:30** **Plenary Session III.** *Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center.*  
Caring for the Earth: climate change's multiple challenges and religious roles.

**Ethics and Economics.** *Episcopal Conference of Argentina, Suipacha 1032, Buenos Aires.*  
Structural inequalities and paradigms of development.

**10:30 - 11:00**

**Coffee break.**

**11:00 - 12:30**

**Parallel Sessions.** *Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center.*

Religious approaches to climate change.

To end hunger: religious teaching, religious action.

The imperatives of better governance: fighting corruption is a sine qua non for global agendas.

From pomp to policy: the value of interreligious work in the 21st century.

**Ethics and Economics.** *Episcopal Conference of Argentina, Suipacha 1032, Buenos Aires.*

Closing of the 4<sup>th</sup> Dialogue of Ethics and Economics.

**12:30 - 14:00**

**Lunch.**

**14:00 - 15:30**

**Plenary Session IV.** *Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center.*

Religious freedom, religious vitality, and religious contributions to the G20 agenda.

**15:30 - 16:00**

**Coffee break.**

**16:00 - 17:15**

**Parallel Sessions.** *Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center.*

Faith and Finance: religious commitments and contributions.

Human rights, faith and sustainable development: institutional contributions to global priorities.

Women and religion: dignity, equality, and empowerment.

Freedom of religion or belief: challenges and policies.

**Ethics and Economics.** *Episcopal Conference of Argentina, Suipacha 1032, Buenos Aires.*

Eco-economy: a new style of development.

**17:15 - 17:45**

**Break.**

**17:45 - 19:00**

**Parallel Sessions.** *Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Convention Center.*

Religious actors addressing religion and violence.

In the line of fire: funding essential humanitarian relief in conflict zones.

Despise not my youth: international youth interfaith leadership.

Religious literacy on the global stage: roles and responsibilities of education and media institutions.



**Friday, 28 September 2018.**

**8:00 - 8:30**

Registration/Accreditation. *Jorge Luis Borges Auditorium of the Biblioteca Nacional.*

**8:30 - 10:00**

**Plenary Session V.** *Jorge Luis Borges Auditorium of the Biblioteca Nacional.*

Advancing the work of religiously affiliated humanitarian organizations.

**10:00 - 10:30**

**Break.**

**10:30 - 12:00**

**Plenary Session VI.** *Jorge Luis Borges Auditorium of the Biblioteca Nacional.*

Religion, public sector partnerships, and building synergies for sustainable development.

**12:00 - 12:05**

**Musical interlude.** *Jorge Luis Borges Auditorium of the Biblioteca Nacional.*

**12:05 - 13:30**

**Concluding Plenary Session.** *Jorge Luis Borges Auditorium of the Biblioteca Nacional.*

A sustainable interfaith future.





## Religious Freedom and Sustainable Development

By Brian Grim.  
President, Religious Freedom & Business Foundation.

There is a strong and positive relationship between religious freedom and sustainable development as embodied in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit.

This relationship is important to understand because over the next twelve years, motivated by these new goals, countries will mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities, and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. All sectors of society need to see how religious freedom contributes to these efforts.

Sustainable development has been defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It calls for concerted efforts towards building an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future for people and planet. And eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.

Religious freedom plays a part in achieving sustainable, inclusive, and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, and promoting integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems.

### How does religious freedom align with the sustainable development goals?

#### Ending poverty

Religious freedom helps tackle ‘small-p’ poverty through ‘self-reliance’.

Poverty, some argue, can only be effectively tackled by governments enforcing top-down, big-P Poverty reduction policies and programs. But a host of religious groups haven’t gotten the memo. Innovative faith-based initiatives worldwide are tackling poverty using bottom-up, small-p poverty alleviation approaches that empower individuals to be resourceful, resilient and self-reliant.

Indeed, a central aspect of religious freedom is that it gives faith groups license to innovate and contribute to the wellbeing of individuals, communities and nations. But where religious freedom is curtailed, so are such innovations. For instance, reform-minded Saudi princess Basmah bint Saud argues, religion “should not be a shield behind which we hide from the world but a driving force that inspires us to innovate and contribute to our surroundings.”

#### Empowering women

Jo-Ann Lyon, General Superintendent, Wesleyan Church, and I have explored how religious freedom contributes directly to women’s empowerment.

Religion is often seen as a barrier to gender parity. Stories abound of gender-based violence done in the name of religion. As a result, in many cases, the issues of religion and gender parity are often dismissed as too complicated to address. There appears to be no way to unwind this rather complex multi-institution. However, a critical factor overlooked in this conversation is religious freedom. Unless there is religious freedom, minority groups, including women, will not be at the table and their vital, productive, and creative voices will not be heard. Corporations and economies will suffer if they miss out on the contribution of women. The denial of religious freedom contributes to gender inequality throughout the world.

Extremist ideologies such as ISIS represent the complete loss of religious freedom, and when respect for a diversity of religious beliefs and practices disappears, gender equality suffers.

### Fostering peace

A global study, conducted by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) in conjunction with the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation, challenges the myth of religious violence. Aiming to get beyond ideology to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how religion interacts with peace, the research found no general causal relationship between religion and conflict when looking at all of the current conflicts in the world.

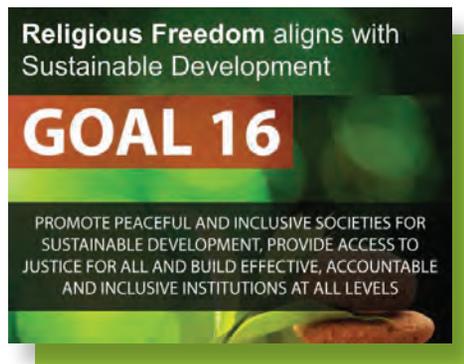
Quantitative analysis has revealed that many of the commonly made statements surrounding the relationship between peace and religion are not supported by the analysis contained in this study.

*Countries with greater religious freedoms are generally more peaceful, whereas countries with less religious freedom are generally less peaceful.*

The most influential factor affecting religious freedom is the government type. Full democracies are the most peaceful and have the greatest level of religious freedom, regardless of the type of religious belief or various religious characteristics.



**Brian Grim**  
President, Religious Freedom & Business Foundation.





## The time must be now

*Kevin Hyland OBE, ChildFund Ireland, ChildFund Alliance; former Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, UK; former Head of London Metropolitan Police Service's Human Trafficking Unit; Author and lead negotiator of SDG Target 8.7.*

September 2018. Modern slavery, human trafficking, and forced labour in the 21st century is a critical health check on our modern globalised world. Never before in history, have so many children, women and men been exploited to provide services to those who wield power and control, or to satisfy the constant 'supply and demand' culture driving our global economy. This economic structure fails to consider the dignity of the human being, leaving the most vulnerable exposed to exploitation.

It brings shame on our world that the human rights of an estimated 40 million people are denied in this trade. And 10 million of them are children. Pope Francis is amongst those who call this 'a crime against humanity'. Surely this vile crime cannot be funded, either knowingly or unwittingly, by legitimate businesses or by the taxes we pay our governments. Would any ordinary tax payer want their hard-earned money supporting slavery?

Best estimates show 16 million people are victims in the 'supply chains' of the 'legitimate economy', producing products or services we use on a daily basis. And while governments may explicitly prohibit the violation of human rights, a blind eye is turned to the small child in the coltan mine, the exploited woman in a sweatshop, and the abused man on the fishing vessel, 16 million times every day.

Many issues divide public opinion: defence, social benefits, immigration... But in the case of modern slavery, there are no divisions. Agreement is global. All 193 UN member nations have committed to eradicating child-slavery by 2025 and all slavery by 2030. If they are committed to eradication, it follows governments must not contribute to the estimated US\$150 billion of criminal assets this crime generates every year.

The reality is all governments across the world continue to engage supply chains that enslave people. The time has come for clear leadership from our governments and political leaders to replace promises and speeches on the global stage with firm action. It is time they ensure taxpayer monies never end up in the hands of criminals who profiteer from this human rights violation. And it is time the G20 nations who control two-thirds of the world's trade set an example to the world by introducing robust measures that ensure they or any business with whom they trade does not profit from this most evil of crimes.



**Kevin Hyland**  
OBE, Former UK Independent  
Anti-slavery Commissioner





## Toward Global Goals

*By Katherine Marshall, G20 Interfaith Forum Executive Committee; Senior Fellow, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University; Executive Director, World Faiths Development Dialogue.*



Following what is described as the largest, most ambitious global consultation ever conducted, the 193 United Nations member states in September 2015 approved the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, known as the SDGs, with 2030 as the target deadline. The SDGs' scope is so sweeping that their essential aims are distilled as five "Ps", a framing that highlights interconnections among all 17 distinct goals and the 169 associated targets:

- People: the essential central focus, with special emphasis on health and education.
- Peace: the sine qua non for achieving progress.
- Planet: caring for the earth is now integral to all goals.
- Prosperity: sound, sustainable economic growth to support development; and
- Partnerships: because all sectors must collaborate and work together to achieve the goals.

The SDGs have emerged as a major theme running through successive G20 Summits. Religious communities and institutions are vital partners in the unparalleled strategic effort embodied in the Global Goals and the underlying agenda. They offer wisdom and practical resources relevant to each and every dimension of the goals. The challenge now is to translate this good will and vast potential into concerted action and meaningful partnerships.

The G20 Interfaith Forum has its grounding in the vision and framework of the Global Goals and the 2030 agenda. It draws on "networks of networks" of faith-linked and inspired organizations worldwide that are dedicated to sustainable, equitable progress. The G20 Interfaith Forum thus offers an opportunity to take stock of progress made, to explore agendas that arise from the meeting of actors from different sectors, and to address areas of concern and debate.

Within the broad scope of the G20 and the SDG agendas, the G20 Interfaith Forum focuses sharply on poor and vulnerable communities to ensure that in advancing hopeful agendas and bold innovations, those communities will never be out of sight. The moral anchor of the G20 Interfaith Forum coincides with the Global Goals in its focus on equality, justice, and sustainable progress. But what religious voices promise to bring is broader perspectives on the long-term horizons with which the Global Goals are pursued, and a constant and sharp focus on those who may be left behind. A better world is not only possible: it is our duty and opportunity to bring it about.



**Katherine Marshall**  
Senior Fellow, Berkley Center for  
Religion, Peace and World  
Affairs Georgetown University,  
Washington DC.