**Opening Plenary Meeting**

**Ms. Nayana Jayarajan, The International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)**

@NayanaOnline @KAICIID

When we began this journey to the G20 Interfaith Forum earlier this year, we were looking forward to the “Road to Riyadh” in a more literal sense. But the goal of our event remains the same. … We are looking forward to bringing hundreds of perspectives and recommendations from the interfaith space to the #G20 to assist them in their decision-making.

**H.E. Abdullatif Al-Sheikh, Minister of Religious Affairs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

@Dr\_Abdullatif\_a @Saudi\_MoiaEN

God almighty gave us the tools to save humanity. The pandemic of #COVID19 asks us all—government and religious institutions, international organizations, and civil society—to work together to deal with this pandemic and its impact. As religious institutions are very close to people, their role only grows in these crises.

I would also like to repeat the necessity to stand up against #Islamophobia, which is spreading due to extremists that do not reflect the true values of humanity.

**H.E. Faisal bin Muaammar, Secretary General of The International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID)**

@MuaammarFaisal @KAICIID

The story of the G20 Interfaith Forum does not begin tonight and does not end in 5 days’ time. This year’s story began months ago with the first regional meeting. The “Road to Riyadh” has wound its way through Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, the Arab Region, and North America. Each regional consultation brings to Riyadh today a series of recommendations for the wider human development narrative.

**H.E. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)**

@MiguelMoratinos @UNAOC

The world has turned inward instead of turning outward. …

This is the time for a different approach, driven by unity and solidarity, but most of all by compassion. Religious leaders, working together with faith actors, are the ones who can send a clear message to world leaders meeting at the #G20.

Many religious leaders have a mobilizing capacity because of the trust of the communities which they serve. But with that trust comes responsibility.

**Prof. W. Cole Durham Jr., President of the G20 Interfaith Forum Association**

@durhamwc @iclrsorg

“We live in challenging times. Transforming challenges into opportunities depends on individual initiative. … As we reflect on our time together, I hope we can reflect on opportunities we find in challenging times to magnify and extend each other’s voices.

Many of the problems the world faces cannot be solved without the input and assistance of religious leaders and faith actors.”

Thanks @MuaammarFaisal’s recommendation that the #G20Interfaith Forum be made an official engagement group of the #G20.

I hope we can find better ways of finding unity project by project and friend by friend.

**H.E. Dr. Mohamad Al-Issa, Secretary General of the Muslim World League and President of the Organization of Muslim Scholars**

H.E. Dr. Mohammad Al-Issa of @MWLOrg\_en @MWLOrg

Civilizational leaps in material gains must be matched by civilizational leaps in moral values. …Peace efforts must comprise tangible outcomes.

**Rev. Kosho Niwano, President-designate of Rissho Kosei-kai; Co-Moderator and Executive Committee Member of Religions for Peace and member of KAICIID Board of Directors**

Rev. Kosho Niwano of @KAICIID and @religions4peace

The need has never been greater to ensure that religious perspectives and experiences are reflected in policymaking. We are called upon to act for those whose minds have been filled with anxiety and intolerance. In addition to #COVID19, the world is infected by violence, discrimination, anger, and prejudice.

It is no longer enough to simply approach these issues from the perspective of solving problems. We must shift our perspective toward a better way of living.

**H.E. Sheikh Abdallah Bin Bayyah, President of the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies**

@Bin\_Bayyah

We participate in this forum to raise awareness and achieve the goals of unity and peace. From the world of theories to the world of people—the values of coexistence and not competition; This is the vision of our kingdom as a capital of coexistence and tolerance. We want religion to be part of the solution and not part of the problem. Religion is a great power that can be a bridge of outreach among people. I have a vision of religious people as fire brigades, which put out fires of conflict between people. This crisis tests our ethics, our beliefs, and our values—our ability to be resilient and have patience while acting against forms of inequality.

**His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch**

@EcuPatriarch

‘If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. If one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.’ Such calls for solidarity need to be translated into public deeds. The center of all theology is the protection of human dignity. We would like to remind everyone who is attending that human dignity does not have color, age, gender, ethnicity, or religion. Equal treatment of human persons must be provided at every time and every place.

**His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Ángel Ayuso Guixot, Titular Bishop of the Diocese of Luperciana; President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue; member of KAICIID Board of Directors.**

Cardinal Miguel Ángel Ayuso of @KAICIID @VaticanNews

We as religious leaders in particular need to be a contagion of hope. This is our public responsibility.

Today we have an opportunity to draw from the richness of what the Pope is offering to the entire human family. I invite you to join this adventure promoting fraternity and friendship. In seeing respect and friendship as two fundamental aptitudes necessary for dialogue, Pope

Let us not forget that believers of different religious traditions can offer their own valuable contributions to fraternity in the societies in which they live. It is wrong if the only voices heard in society and debate are the centralized and expert. As Pope Francis reminds us, this is why it is necessary to develop not only a spirituality of fraternity, but a more efficient world organization to resolve pressing problems.

In a world where interactions between persons are characterized by selfishness and greed, there is a need for fraternity.

**H.E. Sheikh Dr Shawki Ibrahim Allam, The Grand Mufti of Egypt and President of the General Secretariat for Fatwa Authorities Worldwide.**

H.E. Sheikh Dr. Shawki Ibrahim Allam, Grand Mufti of Egypt

The entire world has literally become a small village, so anything that happens affects the smallest, most remote corners of the world.

There is no doubt that people disagree about morals and religions.

Perhaps the most important things that morals enhance is peace and security. This ability of moral values surfaces to help society in spite of religious and political differences. There is a dire need for us to turn those values into a tangible reality in these challenging times.

For goodness to prevail, humankind needs to live in peace, kindness, and cooperation.

**Dr. Kezevino Aram, President of Shanti Ashram and member of KAICIID Board of Directors**

Dr. Kezevino Aram @KAICIID

This call for solidarity emanates from a deep sense of wisdom that our Hindu faith brings to us: The wisdom that we are all interconnected, and that our individual actions have consequences for all of us. ‘Ahimsa’ means true harmony, operating at the forefront of caring for the people of all nations.

Traditions offer values that help us reimagine the future in a different way. Assimilated wisdom of centuries compels us to look at greater needs over individual needs.

**Chief Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, President of the Conference of European Rabbis**

@PinchasRabbi

Social media has run uncontrolled, disseminating hate and discrimination all over the world. The Conference of European Rabbis has been on the forefront of combatting these agents of hate, racism, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia all over the world.

We live in a world of conflicts and wars between different nations and religions throughout history. Amidst a new rise of racism, intolerance, and infringements on faith in Europe, we are grateful to the partners of the G20 Interfaith Forum for creating a space for unity and dialogue.

I hope very much that in the future we will see peace in the Middle East and that we will be able to work together towards peace and combatting this pandemic.

**H.E. Dr. Yousef bin Ahmed Al-Othaimeen, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)**

Dr. Yousef bin Ahmed Al-Othaimeen of @OIC\_OCI

We know the importance of dealing with international challenges in relation to #COVID19, and we’re aware of how essential it is to work with religious leaders to widen the gap and allow tolerance and solidarity to prevail. Today we stand on a threshold that allows us to measure our cooperation.

**• H.E. Dr. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group**

@AminaJMohammed @UN\_SDG @UN

The #COVID19 pandemic is testing us all. Our social fabric is being stretched. Inequality is rising, climate change is not on pause, and the resurgence of hate and discrimination is seen all over the world. Realizing the 2030 Agenda takes commitment and courage. There is strength in diversity, and we need that solidarity now. Thank you for coming together to heal. You have joined together from many faiths to support our shared faith in humanity. The @UN stands with you.

**H.E. Anthony Abbott, former Prime Minister of Australia and Patron of Worldwide Support for Development (representing Dr. Haruhisa Handa)**

@HonTonyAbbott

What can religious leaders bring to the #COVID19 issue? A sense of perspective. A comparative freedom from fear. And a readiness to put ourselves out for others, despite the personal cost.

‘Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.’ This is the foundation of our thinking, and that should not change in the crisis of a pandemic.