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## G20 Interfaith Forum

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October 13, 2020

Welcome!

On behalf of the G20 Interfaith Forum Association, and with appreciation to the wonderful partners who have worked many months to make the coming days possible, I extend our welcome to this year's G20 Interfaith Forum.

We meet under radically different circumstances this year because of the COVID-19 virus. What would have been a truly historic meeting with representatives from a broad spectrum of the world's religions gathering for the first time in the Kingdom Saudi Arabia has been driven by the virus into its current online form. But as in so many of life's trials, there are hidden blessings. This year we have been able to hold a more extensive set of regional preparatory meetings than ever before—all held online in the shadow of the virus, but possible in part because people understood the need for online meetings. The same is true for our meetings over the next several days: we will be joined by far more participants and we have more speakers than in any of our previous G20 Interfaith meetings.

At a time of global crisis, hardship, and polarization, we look forward to a rich harvest of the kinds of insights and recommendations that religious voices in all their diversity can make to solving many of the world's most pressing problems. We do not have all the answers that are needed, and we claim no monopoly for obtaining such answers. But we are confident that the best answers will not be found without listening to religious voices, and to sensitive experts often well placed to help translate religious insight into practical policy initiatives.

We look forward to fruitful exchange. We hope to find creative ways to build the new friendships and networks that would have been the natural result of the physical meeting we wish we could be enjoying. We promise to find effective ways to carry the best ideas developed here into implementation. We express our appreciation to the speakers, the participants, and all who have worked so hard to make this event possible. Please enjoy the Forum, and please stay engaged as we move on to next year's event in Bologna, Italy!

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'W. Cole Durham Jr.'.

W. Cole Durham, Jr.  
President, G20 Interfaith Forum Association