

Holy Wisdom

Peace: Showing that Others Matter!

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SUMMER 2018

Publication of the Syrian Orthodox Church in America on United Nations Affairs. In fulfilling the UN Mission of SOCA, both Orthodoxy and Ecumenism are involved. SOCA is an NGO associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information. This publication is disseminated to the entire membership of the Church throughout the world on a quarterly basis. Please bring this information to the attention of your parishioners and all those under your care. The Earth is holy and a manifestation of God. Pray for peace and the UN.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: It is necessary through the collaboration of NGOs to raise awareness among communities as we promote peace. If you will, the need for community consciousness is a way we can connect parties and others. It is important at this time that all parties begin to realize that they are a part of a larger picture, that they are in it together and they have common concerns. If there is a conflict all parties have contributed to the conflict and they have the power to come together to develop a non-violent intervention to result into a resolution. It is time for us as people to acknowledge that there is something more that exceed our own individual positions and needs. The United Nations, religious institutions and NGO can be an avenue to promote community consciousness to encourage global consciousness, clear and realistic decisions as they promote non-violent solutions to conflicts!

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Our Work at the United Nations

Dr. Riccitelli, Our NGO Representative Served On In 67 DPI/NGO Workshop Committee To Set Guidelines For Workshop Submissions



The 67th UN DPI/NGO Conference “We the People...Together Finding Global Solutions”

Wednesday, August 22-23, 2018, United Nations Headquarters, New York

The UN DPI/NGO Conference is the premier event in the NGO calendar at the United Nations. This year it attracted over 1000 delegates from 400 NGOs and from 80 countries. Among the nations represented were Bangladesh, Chile, China, Honduras, India, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Poland, Puerto Rico, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sudan, United Kingdom, and United States of America. SOCA representative Dr. A. M. Riccitelli served on the 67th Conference workshop committee which began meeting in May 2018 to set guidelines for 67th Conference Workshop submissions. Workshops selected by the committee were organized by and for NGOs and allowed for closer examination, in small informal settings, of issues addressed in the plenary and roundtable sessions with an emphasis on effective practices that participating NGOs can take home and implement.

The conference contained a total of 41 workshops – 17 on day one and 24 on day two - programmed by the Workshops Committee and organized around the themes of the opening and closing plenary sessions and the roundtable sessions.

Those themes related to the Sustainable Development Goals and were: 1) Women and Girls mobilizing; 2) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 70; 3) Doing the Math: A Repositioned UN Development System; 4) Youth: Today's Leaders; 5) Shared Planet, Shared Prosperity; 6) Towards UN 75: Communicating the Case For Multilateralism. Over four months, Dr. Riccitelli attended weekly meetings of the Workshops Committee, reviewed all proposals submitted and made recommendations to other committee members. The committee voted on those proposals which best met the requirements set forth by UN DPI. The workshops were 75% of the conference programming.

At the conference closing plenary, it was announced by UN Global Communications Under Secretary Alison Smale that the 2019 UN DPI/NGO conference would take place in Salt Lake City, Utah from August 26-28, 2019. Ms. Smale introduced Mayor Jackie Biskupski, Salt Lake City's 35th mayor and its first openly gay mayor. Ms Biskupski then introduced Utah business and philanthropic leaders who traveled to New York to appear at the 67th UN DPI/NGO Conference closing plenary and were eager for the 68th UN DPI/NGO Conference to take place in Salt Lake City. Dr. Riccitelli was invited to and attended the September 20th Town Hall on the 68th UN DPI/NGO conference in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Report written by SOCA representative to UN Department of Public Information, Dr. A. M. Riccitelli.

For photo of opening plenary of UN DPI/NGO conference on August 22, 2018, click on link below:

https://www.flickr.com/photos/un_photo/30790652188

Mision Y Ecumenismo En Vías De Unidad Y Paz



Durante la segunda semana de julio de 2018 se ha realizado el evento para abordar la temática sobre las misiones y el sentido de la manera de cómo debemos ver las otras comunidades cristianas. De ahí, nace el deseo profundo de trabajar por una profunda renovación interior de cada creyente miembro de nuestras comunidades. Tal propósito causaría una unidad y una mayor experiencia de paz y amor.

La fuerza misionera desde una óptica más actual incluye



el constante dialogo al interno de la comunidad cristiana. Evaluando el proceder pastoral y las actitudes que contribuyen a la expresión de la fe cristiana. Muchos de los participantes son representantes de comunidades eclesiales. Especialmente ubicadas en el área Maya-Mam, Maya-Quiche, Maya Qanjobal.

Que Dios ayude en esta obra misionera, abundantes bendiciones siempre.

Fr. Pedro Martínez Pérez

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Huehuetenango, Guatemala, C.A.

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Your support requested for NGO/DPI Activities at the 67th DPI NGO Conference at the United Nations



**The Executive Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations
Associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information
P.O. Box 3382, New York NY 10163**

July 19, 2018

Dear NGO Colleague

This is an invitation for you to help shape the 67th DPI NGO Conference scheduled at UN HQ for 22 and 23 August, and also showcase the considerable expertise of NGOs to solving important issues related to U.N. operations.

Your contribution in any amount will make a big difference!

Specifically, the 67th conference will:

- Assess how the UN, Member States and NGOs, and others, are publicizing, facilitating, and enacting the 2030 Agenda
- Identify platforms, approaches and technologies for NGOs to transmit the 2030 Agenda
- Explore ways to tackle global perceptions regarding the UN's accomplishments and failures that have shaped attitudes toward the values the U.N. represents

As you know, this conference is a partnership of NGOs and the UN Department of Public Information (DPI), and it is a major gathering of Civil Society representatives to share and discuss critical global issues. Now more than ever, NGO's contributions, which include workshops, exhibits, and financial sponsorships are needed in order to ensure the success of critical elements of the conference.

We are inviting you and/or your NGO to play an important role in these efforts and make a financial contribution to the conference. Contributions can be made to help defray general expenses, as well as for specific components. These include

- Supporting the Opening and Closing Performances
- Supporting Travel expenses to the Conference for Youth and other Delegates
- Supporting Travel expenses for Speakers
- Support to help defray the costs of Workshops and Exhibits
- Support to defray the cost of special services including CART for the hearing impaired

The topic of this year's conference is especially relevant to Civil Society because it affirms the vital role that NGO's play in promoting and supporting the UN's work. We need your help to ensure that the broadest spectrum of delegates can participate to present an impactful, memorable conference that will resonate at all levels within the United Nations.

Contributions may be made online at [Network for Good](#) or by check made out to "NGO DPI Executive Committee" and mailed to PO Box 3382, New York NY 10163. **As a special thank you for a donation of \$200 or more, the NGO DPI Executive Committee will send you a handmade ornament made in Ghana.**

For information on wire transfer please contact us and we will give you instructions.

We thank you in advance for doing your part to making the conference a success

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Knotts', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Bruce Knotts
Chair

The NGO/DPI Executive Committee Affiliated with United Nations Department of Public Information
is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization www.ngodpiexecom.org

SOCA NGO Mission to Guatemala to alleviate suffering during armed conflict

Sipacapa una nueva misión Iglesia Siro-Ortodoxa de Antioquia.



Sipacapa es un municipio con su identidad cultural como su idioma propio. Llamado sipacapense, y haya su origen en el imperio Quiche. Recientemente, se ha integrado una comunidad a la iglesia. Al venir a la iglesia ellos sienten un fuerte deseo de hacer misión. Un deseo profundo de compartir su fe con los demás. Ya que muchas familias viven en pobreza y en abandono religioso. Ello hace que se cumpla el mandato del Señor de ir a los necesitados.



Como misionero y parte de la Iglesia Apostólica Siro-Ortodoxa, me siento comprometido con tal misión. Le rogamos a Dios para que otorgue los medios necesarios materiales para seguir realizando esta obra espiritual.

Dios bendiga a este pueblo sipacapense que durante el conflicto armado sufrió mucho.

Inside Major UN Actions & Events

UNAI July Update

Dear UNAI members and friends,

Please find below the latest update from the United Nations Academic Impact and its members, as well as of other parts of the UN System.

In this issue you can find information about the newly released [Annual Bullying Survey 2018](#) and you can [take our new quiz](#) on the fourth UNAI principle: Access to Higher Education. Our #SDGsInAcademia article series is currently featuring [Sustainable Development Goal 9](#): Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. [Read this article](#) to learn what our incredible members are doing to promote this goal!

Enjoy the read,
Your UNAI Team

Religions for Peace and UNICEF for the World's Children



(Bangkok, 10-12 July 2018) As part of the ongoing Religions for Peace (RfP)-UNICEF Global Partnership, UNICEF and RfP launched a new initiative entitled “Faith for Social and Behavior Change Initiative” at a global workshop in Bangkok from 10-12 July 2018, in partnership with Joint Learning Initiative (JLI) and Rissho Kosei-kai (RKK). The workshop brought together UNICEF country offices and faith-based organizations from more than 30 strategically selected countries.

The initiative is aimed at developing UNICEF’s global programming framework for its headquarters and country offices’ focused, systematic and at-scale engagement with religious communities and actors to influence positive social and behavior change towards improving lives of children from early childhood through the lifecycle, as well as their families, particularly the most marginalized. This historic initiative will strengthen the global evidence base, establishing a co-created programming framework among UNICEF country offices and strategic religious actors and key government counterparts, and will develop a global UNICEF technical guidance for partnership with faith-based organizations (FBOs).

In the opening session, His Majesty Sultan of Sokoto Muhammad Sa’ad Abubakar III, Co-President of RfP International, Rev. Kosho Niwano, Co-Moderator, RfP International, and Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary General, RfP International, offered opening addresses, and representatives of RfP affiliated Interreligious Councils of Sierra Leone, Liberia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand were present among select religious actors to present their concrete cases of religious and

interreligious engagement for social behavior change communications for the protection and flourishing of children.

[UN DESA Voice August 2018: E-government advances, Landmark migration agreement, Geospatial information](#)

E-government – using technology to reach those furthest behind



While artificial intelligence, robotics and other new technologies are sparking what some call the Fourth Industrial Revolution, large parts of the world are yet to enjoy the benefits of the first three. Such basic necessities as clean water and electricity are still elusive for billions of people. But a new survey by UN DESA analyses how the latest technologies can benefit even the furthest left behind – through e-government.

Landmark agreement on Global Compact #ForMigration



International migration brings both opportunities and challenges to countries of origin, transit and destination. According to the latest estimates by UN DESA, the number of international migrants worldwide reached 258 million persons in 2017, an increase of almost 50 per cent since 2000.

What happens where: A new integrated geospatial information framework



Everything that happens, happens somewhere, but how do we know what is happening where? when? and why? The answers lie in geospatial information. That means information that pinpoints the location of geographic features, such as settlements, mountains or lakes, on the Earth and describes their relation to other features. It allows us to create a digital image of our world, in which all social, economic and environmental activity takes place.

International Youth Day – Safe Spaces for Youth

What are safe spaces?

The theme of this year's International Youth Day on 12 August is "Safe Spaces for Youth". Celebrations on the day will highlight various types of safe spaces and their role in contributing to youth empowerment, inclusion and development.

Challenges and opportunities for indigenous peoples on the move

The theme of this year's International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is "Indigenous peoples' migration and movement." Despite the popular image of indigenous peoples as rural inhabitants, cities are now providing home for increasing numbers of indigenous populations. In some countries of Latin America, as much as 80 per cent of all indigenous peoples live in urban areas.

A sense of optimism and urgency, as annual review of SDGs progress wraps up

July saw more than 2,000 representatives of governments, businesses and civil society come together to assess progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) with a record of 125 Heads of State, Deputy Heads of State and Government, Ministers and Vice-ministers. The Forum gauged our current position on the way to 2030 and identified the areas where more work needs to be done.

International Youth Day (12 August)

What is International Youth Day?

[International Youth Day](#) was established in 1999 by UN General Assembly Resolution [A/RES/54/120](#) and aims to celebrate young people as positive agents of change that provide meaningful contributions to society through inclusion and social justice. As stated by Secretary-General António Guterres: "Peace, economic dynamism, social justice, tolerance – all this and more, today and tomorrow, depends on tapping into the power of youth."

International Youth Day 2018 - Safe Spaces for Youth

Today there are 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 in the world - the largest youth population in history - of which one in ten is living in conflict zones. Political instability, labour market challenges and limited space for political and civic participation have led to increasing isolation of youth in societies. This is why this year's International Youth Day seeks to support the creation of safe spaces as places of inclusion and support where young people from all backgrounds can come together to exchange ideas and foster a meaningful dialogue.

How can you get involved?

To mark this day UN Member States encourage youth to organize and participate in activities where young people can come together to voice their opinions on issues that affect them or that they are passionate about in their communities. Youth can submit descriptions of any planned activities for the Day to youth@un.org to be featured on the program's homepage. For inspiration take a look at the International Youth Day [Toolkit](#) and follow #YouthDay and #SafeSpaces4Youth.

Budget 2018: \$426,800

Special Envoy in Burundi

Leading and coordinating the United Nation [political efforts](#) to promote peace and sustainable development in Burundi.

Special Envoy: Michel Kafando (Burkina Faso), appointed 5 May 2017 ([S/2017/396](#), [S/2017/397](#))

Established: January 2016 ([S/RES/2248](#))

Staffing: 31 staff (7 national and 24 international)

Budget 2018: \$6,835,241

Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region

Supporting the implementation of the Peace Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

Special Envoy: Said Djinnit (Algeria), appointed 17 July 2014 ([S/2014/503](#), [S/2014/502](#))

Established: February 2013 ([S/RES/2098](#))

Staffing: 27 staff (8 national, 19 international)

Budget 2018: \$3,706,600

Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan

Supporting the establishment and maintenance of good and peaceful neighborly relations between Sudan and South Sudan.

Special Envoy: Nicholas Haysom (South Africa), appointed 18 March 2016 ([S/2016/259](#), [S/2016/258](#))

Established: August 2011 ([S/2011/474](#) and [S/2011/475](#))

Staffing: 9 staff (4 national, 5 international)

UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS)

Supporting an inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation process to strengthen democratic governance and work towards consensus on key political issues.

Special Representative: José Viegas Filho (Brazil), appointed 4 May 2018 ([S/2018/420](#), [S/2018/421](#))

Established: January 2010 ([S/RES/1876](#))

Staffing: 142 staff (68 national, 63 international, 11 UN Volunteers)

Budget 2018: \$17.9 million

UN Office to the African Union (UNOAU)

Enhancing the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union and providing coordinated and consistent UN advice to the AU.

Special Representative: Sahle-Work Zewde (Ethiopia) appointed 27 June 2018

Established: June 2010 ([A/RES/64/288](#))

Staffing: 45 staff (17 national, 28 international)

Budget 2018: \$1,957,100

UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA)

Carrying out good offices role in the Central African region.

Established: March 2011

Special Representative: François Louncény Fall (Guinea), appointed 14 February 2017 ([S/2017/137](#), [S/2017/138](#))

Staffing: 41 staff (12 national, 29 international)

Budget 2018: \$7,114,400

UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS)

Responsibility for UN preventive diplomacy, good offices and political mediation and facilitation efforts in West Africa and the Sahel.

Established: 2002

Special Representative: Mohammed Ibn Chambas (Ghana), appointed 18 March 2016.

Staffing: 63 staff (25 national, 38 international)

Budget 2018: \$7,114,400

UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL)

Supporting the Libyan political process through mediation and good offices.

Established: September 2011

Special Representative: Ghassan Salamé (Lebanon), appointed 21 June 2017 ([S/2017/527](#))

Staffing: 278 staff (75 national, 198 international, 5 UN Volunteers)

Budget 2018: \$71,619,500

UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)

Supporting political reconciliation and peacebuilding through contacts with the Federal Government of Somalia, its federal member states and civil society.

Established: June 2013 ([S/RES/2102](#))

Special Representative: Michael Keating (United Kingdom), appointed 23 November 2015 ([S/2015/900](#), [S/2015/901](#))

Staffing: 277 staff (112 national, 161 international and 4 UN Volunteers)

Budget 2018: \$95.91 million

UN Verification Mission in Colombia

Verifying the reintegration of former FARC-EP members and implementation of measures of protection and security for communities in territories most affected by the conflict.

Established: September 2017 ([S/RES/2366](#))

Special Representative: Jean Arnault (France), appointed 8 March 2016 ([S/2016/227](#), [S/2016/226](#))

Staffing: 391 staff (153 national, 153 international, 85 UN Volunteers)

Budget 2018: \$70.7 million

Special Envoy for Myanmar

Providing UN good offices to Myanmar to make the peace process more inclusive, improve the lives of its peoples and secure greater empowerment to them.

Established: April 2018

Special Envoy: Christine Schraner Burgener (Switzerland), appointed 26 April 2018.

Staffing: 5 staff (1 national, 4 international)

Personal Envoy for the Greece-Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia talks

Leading UN efforts aimed at resolving the name dispute between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Established: 1993

Personal Envoy: Matthew Nimetz (USA), appointed 21 December 1999 ([S/1999/1286](#), [S/1999/1287](#))

Special Adviser on Cyprus

Providing UN good offices to assist the sides in the search for a comprehensive and mutually acceptable settlement to the Cyprus problem.

Established: March 1964

Special Adviser: currently vacant

Staffing: 21 staff (5 national, 16 international)

Budget 2018: \$2,792,100

UN Representative to the Geneva International Discussions (UNRGID)

Supporting the Geneva international discussions on security and stability and the return of internally displaced persons and refugees in Georgia, following the hostilities in 2008.

Established: February 2010 ([S/RES/1866](#))

UN Representative: Ayşe Cihan Sultanoğlu (Turkey), appointed 6 July 2018.

Staffing: 7 international staff

Budget 2018/2019: \$1,772,600

Special Envoy for Syria

Leading the Geneva process of organizing intra-Syrian negotiations focusing on the schedule and process for drafting a new constitution and precise requirements for UN-supervised elections.

Established: February 2012 ([A/RES/66/253](#))

Special Envoy: Staffan de Mistura (Italy/Sweden), appointed 10 July 2014.

Staffing: 92 staff (31 national, 61 international)

Budget 2018: \$16,706,200

Special Envoy for Yemen

Exercising good offices to facilitate a negotiated settlement to end the conflict in Yemen and enable the resumption of a peaceful, inclusive, orderly and Yemeni-led transition.

Established: June 2012 ([S/2012/469](#) and [S/2012/470](#))

Special Envoy: Martin Griffith (United Kingdom), appointed 16 February 2018 ([S/2018/126](#), [S/2018/127](#))

Staffing: 95 staff (34 national, 61 international)

Budget 2018: \$13,051,800

UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

Assisting the Afghan people and Government in laying the foundations for sustainable peace and development.

Established: March 2002 ([S/2002/157](#))

Special Representative: Tadamichi Yamamoto (Japan), appointed 18 March 2016 ([S/2016/261](#), [S/2016/260](#))

Staffing: 1,529 staff (1,112 national, 356 international, 61 UN Volunteers)

Budget 2018: \$151,418,000

UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)

Providing advice, support and assistance to the Government and the people of Iraq in advancing inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation.

Established: August 2003 ([S/RES/1500](#))

Special Representative: Ján Kubiš (Slovakia), appointed 24 February 2015 ([S/2015/130](#), [S/2015/129](#))

Staffing: 868 staff (518 national, 350 international)

Budget 2018: \$114,579,800

UN Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA)

Assisting and supporting the five Central Asian countries in building conflict prevention capacities through enhanced dialogue, confidence-building measures and genuine partnership.

Established: December 2007 ([S/2007/279](#))

Special Representative: Natalia Gherman (Moldova), appointed 13 September 2017 ([S/2017/785](#), [S/2017/786](#))

Staffing: 30 staff (22 national, 8 international)

Budget 2018: \$3,019,600

Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO)

Supporting peace negotiations and the implementation of political agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

Established: October 1999 ([S/1999/983](#) and [S/1999/984](#))

Special Coordinator: Nickolay Mladenov (Bulgaria), appointed 5 February 2015 ([S/2015/89](#), [S/2015/88](#))

Staffing: 65 staff (35 national, 30 international)

Budget 2018: \$8,776,700

Office of the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL)

Carrying out the Secretary-General's good offices assisting Lebanese parties to reach peaceful and consensus-based solutions to contentious issues.

Established: February 2007 ([S/2000/718](#))

Special Coordinator: Pernille Dahler Kardel (Denmark), appointed 22 November 2017 ([S/2017/984](#), [S/2017/983](#))

Staffing: 82 staff (62 national, 20 international)

Budget 2018: \$8,228,100

Source: <https://dpa-ps.atavist.com/the-uns-special-political-missions>

Religions for Peace Mourns the loss of H.E. Kofi Annan

Religions for Peace (RfP) International joins people around the world in grieving the passing of His Excellency Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of the United Nations. He was a remarkable servant of peace. In addition, he was a long-term partner of *Religions for Peace*.

In the words of *Religions for Peace* Honorary President Bishop Gunnar Stålsett, "As we mourn the loss of one of the greatest leaders on the international stage, we remember with deep gratitude his understanding of the role of religion for peace-building. In our recent work in Myanmar, we have supported and found Kofi Annan's Report to be a constructive and comprehensive road-map towards peace. It is encouraging that State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi is committed to the implementation of these recommendations."

Our partnership with H.E. Kofi Annan stretched back to *Religions for Peace's* conflict resolution efforts in the midst of the civil war in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s. H.E. Kofi Annan reported in 1999 to the UN Security Council his enthusiastic support of *RfP*-Sierra Leone's help to end the bloody conflict, writing: "The peace talks have started off well, with the two parties expressing their firm commitment to the peace process and determination to work together to resolve the conflict....*Religions for Peace* Sierra Leone... played a particularly active role. President Kabbah has proposed that the Council (*RfP* Sierra Leone) whose role has been appreciated by both sides, should become one of the moral guarantors of the peace agreement.

In addition, the *Religions for Peace* International Secretariat and a number of *Religions for Peace* Co-Presidents were privileged to have an ongoing constructive relationship with H.E. Kofi Annan, that often included his helpful and encouraging informal assistance.

Religions for Peace recalls with gratitude and admiration H.E. Kofi Annan and his tireless and principled dedication to peace. He was a servant of peace.

Dr. William F. Vendley

Secretary General

Religions for Peace

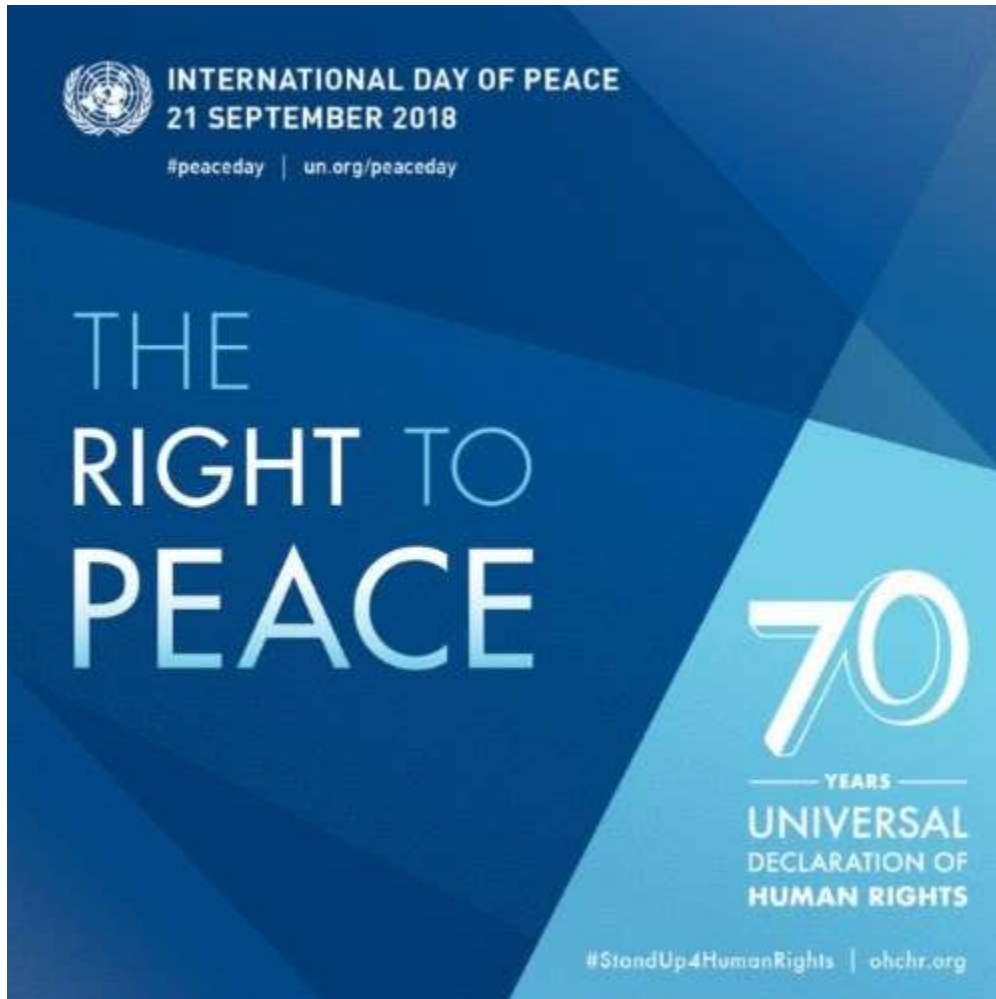
International

International Day of Peace (21 September)

What is the International Day of Peace?

The [International Day of Peace](#) was established in 1981 by the United Nations General Assembly through Resolution [A/RES/36/67](#). Since its adoption, every year the 21st of September is devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace amongst people and communities all over the world. Peace is

paramount not only in ensuring access to justice for all, but also in shaping a sustainable environment. As stated by Secretary-General António Guterres; "...let us re-double our efforts to address the root causes of conflict and advance our work for the Sustainable Development Goals, including by promoting inclusive societies, providing access to justice and building accountable institutions."



Religious News From Around The World

Shining a Light on the Plight of Persecuted Christians



Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, the Diocesan Legate and Ecumenical Director, will lead a panel of experts in Washington, DC, later this month, in an examination of the ongoing plight of Christians in the Middle East.

"Addressing the persecution of Christians and religious minorities in the Middle East is more important today than ever before," explained Archbishop Aykazian, who will moderate the panel comprised of his fellow leaders in the ecumenical community.

These include James Winkler of the National Council of Churches; Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe of the United Methodist Church; Kent Hill of the Religious Freedom Institute; and Shaun Casey of Georgetown University and the Berkley Center.

"Having worked and traveled with the panelists on earlier occasions, I know their firsthand knowledge of interacting directly with people who are victimized on a daily basis due to their Christian faith," said Archbishop Aykazian, who is a former president of the NCC, is a founding leader of Christian Churches Together, and served on the Presidential Advisory Committee on Faith-Based Initiatives.

The panel discussion titled "Christians At-Risk in the Middle East" will be part of the [National Advocacy Conference](#) of the Armenian Assembly of America, meeting in Washington, DC, on September 24.

Other Related News

Against Identity Politics

Beginning a few decades ago, world politics started to experience a dramatic transformation. From the early 1970s to the first decade of this century, the number of [electoral democracies](#) increased from about 35 to more than 110. Over the same period, the world's output of goods and services quadrupled, and growth extended to virtually every region of the world. The proportion of people living in [extreme poverty plummeted](#), dropping from 42 percent of the global population in 1993 to 18 percent in 2008.

But not everyone benefited from these changes. In many countries, and particularly in developed democracies, [economic inequality](#) increased dramatically, as the benefits of growth flowed primarily to the wealthy and well-educated. The increasing volume of goods, money, and people moving from one place to another brought disruptive changes. In developing countries, villagers who previously had no electricity suddenly found themselves living in large cities, watching TV, and connecting to the Internet on their mobile phones. Huge new middle classes arose in China and India—but the work they did replaced the work that had been done by older middle classes in the developed world. Manufacturing moved steadily from the United States and Europe to East Asia and other regions with low labor costs. At the same time, men were being displaced by women in a labor market increasingly dominated by service industries, and low-skilled workers found themselves replaced by smart machines.

Ultimately, these changes slowed the movement toward an increasingly open and liberal world order, which began to falter and soon reversed. The final blows were the global financial crisis of 2007–8 and the euro crisis that began in 2009. In both cases, policies crafted by elites produced huge recessions, high unemployment, and falling incomes for millions of ordinary workers. Since the United States and the EU were the leading exemplars of liberal democracy, these crises damaged the reputation of that system as a whole.

Indeed, in recent years, the number of democracies has fallen, and democracy has [retreated](#) in virtually all regions of the

Source: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/americas/2018-08-14/against-identity-politics>

Ignatius University with Sofia University offers degree programs in Theology, Philosophy, Psychology and Diplomacy.

International School for Mental Health Practitioners offers programs in Pastoral Counseling and Psychoanalysis. The psychoanalytic program leads to NYS License.

American Institute for Creative Living offers the Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor program (CASAC). This program leads to NYS License (OASAS)

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