



# GNRC Fourth Forum Report

16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

**Ending Poverty, Enriching Children:  
INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE.**



Arigatou International  
G N R C



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“The Child’s Name is Today”

*We are guilty of many errors and faults,  
But our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life.  
Many things we need can wait, The Child cannot.  
Right now is the time bones are being formed, Blood is being made, senses are being developed.  
To the Child we cannot answer “Tomorrow,” The Child’s name is Today.  
(Chilean poet, Gabriela Mistral)*



## Foreword



Africa was honored to host the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children. Four hundred and seventy (470) participants gathered in the historic city of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012, and together, addressed the three most distressing challenges that have become the major causes of poverty—corruption and poor governance; war and violence and unequal distribution of resources. The participants delved into these causes in great detail, made commitments and came up with recommendations to fight poverty.

The outcomes of the Forum were the Dar es Salaam Declaration and the launch of the poverty initiative. In these documents, participants drawn from 64 countries from around the world, committed to contribute concretely to tackling what has become the gravest global injustice in the world today—poverty. Children, too, contributed substantively to the deliberations and the outcomes of the Forum.

The participants declared their obligation to address not only systemic and structural causes of poverty, but also ways to find lasting solutions to its roots in the human heart—greed, ignorance, hatred and fear. The Forum launched a new initiative, *Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty*, whose implementation will focus on building partnerships with other sectors of the society to address poverty affecting children, and taking concrete actions at the grassroots to fight poverty.

The Fourth Forum emphasized rekindling the spiritual awakening, and to focus on the ethical imperative that no child lives in poverty. The participants underlined our collective religious and moral responsibility to protect all children, and made commitments to address the root causes of poverty caused by unequal distribution of resources, war and violence, poor governance and corruption. By working individually and collectively through the new initiative of *Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty*, and the other two—*Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education* and the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*—it is possible to make this world a much better place for children.

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali

Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders  
Chairman, GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee

## Introduction



The Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) was held from 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, under the theme of “Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE.” Four hundred and seventy (470) participants from 64 different countries around the world, including 49 children and young people, engaged in spirited discussions focused on what the world’s faith communities can do together to end child poverty.

The members of the GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee, chaired by Dr. Mustafa Ali, wisely guided the preparations for the forum, and their excellent planning was put into action by the Local Hosting Committee, chaired by Sr. Jean Pruitt. Countless others are deserving of our profound gratitude for making the forum a success, not the least of which are the Fourth Forum Co-patrons H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim and His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini, the African Council of Religious Leaders, and the Forum Secretary General Abubakar Kabwogi. All of the staff and the wonderful volunteers worked very hard to ensure our time together in Dar es Salaam, the “Haven of Peace,” would lead to a wonderful outcome.

Most of all, I am grateful that a significant new global initiative was forged at the Forum: *Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty*. This represents the fulfilment of the last of the three pledges made by Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto to the United Nations General Assembly at the Special Session on Children in 2002. Together with our ethics education program, *Learning to Live Together*, and the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*, which is our specific contribution to realizing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, I believe that the new initiative to end child poverty will significantly energize the global, regional, and local work of the GNRC.

In producing this report, every effort has been made to ensure that it reflects the passion, solidarity, and depth of the deliberations we had in Dar es Salaam. I believe that it has captured for readers the spirit we shared. Most of all, I hope this report will provide a firm foundation for implementing all three initiatives, reminding us of the Dar es Salaam Declaration and what we together have promised the children of the world.

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto  
President, Arigatou International

## Acknowledgements

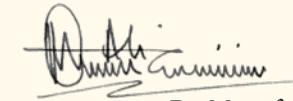
The journey to the Fourth Forum started in October 2010 in Tokyo, Japan, when Rev. Keishi Miyamoto announced that the Forum would be held in Africa. With the full support and sponsorship of Arigatou International, we assembled a team for the Organizing Committee that planned for, organized and supervised the Forum. I want to express my deep gratitude to the GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee comprising Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne (Sri Lanka), Ms. Martha Palma (Chile), Ms. Mercedes Roman (Ecuador), Rev. Dr. Qais Sadiq (Jordan), Ms. Evi Guggenheim Shbeta (Israel), Mr. Abubakar Francis (Tanzania), Sr. Jean Pruitt, (Tanzania), Mr. Stephen Hanmer (UNICEF), Mr. Filipe Furuma (the African Union), Mr. Atsushi Iwasaki (Arigatou International, Japan), Ms. Agneta Ucko (Arigatou International, Geneva) and Ms. Meg Gardinier (Arigatou International, New York). This team worked hard to develop the themes for the Forum. The committee delivered a robust program that ensured the excellent outcomes that you will read about in this report. The GNRC Coordinators particularly played key roles in the overall success of the Forum.

The Co-Patrons of the Forum, H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim and His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini, and the Local Hosting Committee consisting of the many religious leaders and partners of the GNRC, chaired by Sr. Jean Pruitt, did a marvelous job in ensuring the participants and guests of the GNRC were well taken care of, and entertained—African style, during the Forum. Deep thanks to the many, many volunteers that I am unable to call by name in this short space. You all served smiling, and cheerfully, even when situations clearly made it difficult for you to smile. You were the heroes of the Forum. And we salute you all, deeply, for your heroic efforts.

This Forum would not have been successful were it not for the selfless service of the GNRC Fourth Forum Secretariat Team led by Mr. Abubakar Francis Kabwogi, the Forum Secretary General. Together with your staff team, Joyce Mushi, Emmanuel Mathias, and assisted by the GNRC Africa staff team led by Elizabeth Mwase and Khamis Mohamed, you did splendid work.

I am grateful to the Arigatou International team led by Secretary General Mr. Shozo Fujita, Mr. Atsushi Iwasaki, Mr. Peter Billings, Ms. Miyuki Sato, and all the volunteers who flew half way around the world to Tanzania from Japan, to simply touch the lives of children in Africa and beyond. Thank you all! To UNICEF Tanzania and Headquarters in New York, and all the partners who supported the Forum, we are deeply thankful. From rapporteurs led by Abdulrahman Wandati, to the journalists who covered the Forum, the Media team led by Edmund Mudibo and Hawa Noor, the African Council of Religious Leaders staff, videographers, and all; I am deeply thankful for your efforts in making the Forum a huge success.

I was privileged to work with such a truly wonderful, committed and diverse team of individuals and groups from around the world to make the GNRC Fourth Forum a resounding success. I look forward to seeing you again on the occasion of the GNRC Fifth Forum.



Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali,  
Chairman, GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee



## Organizer and Sponsor

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto  
President, Arigatou International

## The GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee Members

### Chairman

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali  
Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL—RfP)

### Members

Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne (Sri Lanka), GNRC Coordinator for South Asia  
Mr. Abubakar Francis (Tanzania), GNRC Fourth Forum Secretary General  
Mr. Atsushi Iwasaki (Arigatou International, Japan), GNRC Secretary General  
Mr. Filipe Furuma (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia), Policy Officer, Civil Society, African Union  
Mr. Stephen Hanmer (Paraguay), Civil Partnerships, UNICEF, New York  
Ms. Agneta Ucko (Arigatou International, Geneva), Director, Arigatou International, Geneva  
Ms. Evi Guggenheim Shbeta (Israel), GNRC Coordinator for Israel  
Ms. Marta Palma (Chile), GNRC Coordinator for Europe  
Ms. Meg Gardinier (Arigatou International, New York), Director, *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*  
Ms. Mercedes Roman (Ecuador), GNRC Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean  
Rev. Dr. Qais Sadiq (Jordan), GNRC Coordinator for Arab States  
Sr. Jean Pruitt (Tanzania), Trustee, Dogodogo Center

### Co-Patrons

H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim  
His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini

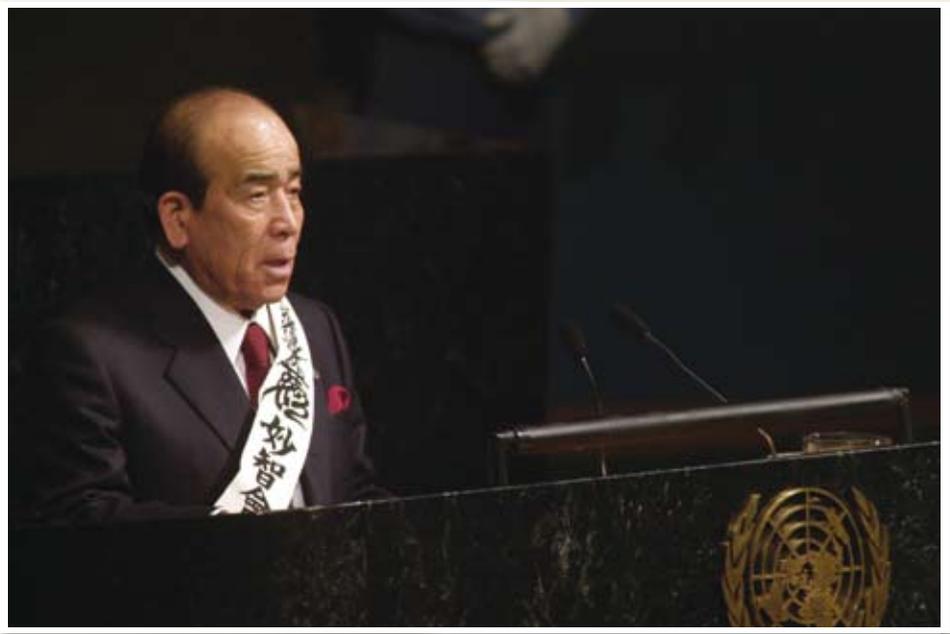
### Partners and Supporters

African Council of Religious Leaders  
Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty  
Dogodogo Center  
Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children  
Islamic Foundation, Kenya  
Maryknoll Sisters  
Norwegian Church Aid  
Pax Christi International  
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)  
World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

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### The Ethical Imperative that No Child Lives in Poverty

The Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 16–18 June 2012. The theme of the Forum—“Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE.”—was designed to discuss the launch and implementation of the last of the three commitments made at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children in 2002 by Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, President of Arigatou Foundation, which was to address poverty affecting children. The first two commitments were promotion of ethics education for children and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the decade since then, these have both been addressed by dynamically growing global initiatives: *Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme of Ethics Education* and the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*. In Dar es Salaam, the time had come to take strong action on the third.



Four hundred and seventy (470) participants including representatives from different religious constituencies—Buddhists, Bahais, Christians, Hindus, practitioners of Indigenous Traditions, Jews, Muslims, Shintoists, Sikhs and others—gathered together with representatives from the United Nations and its agencies, the African Union and other multi-lateral institutions, civil society organizations, government officials and children from around the world to address the challenge of poverty and its devastating consequences on children around the world.

The Forum focused on three concrete areas considered as main causes of poverty—corruption and poor governance, war and violence, and unequal distribution of resources. Recognizing the enormous potential diverse religions and faith traditions have for the fight against poverty, the GNRC sought to mobilize these assets—spiritual, social and moral. The GNRC Fourth Forum *INSPIRED* all of us—people of faith and people of good will everywhere—to *ACT* to *CHANGE* the current trends of corruption and poor governance, war and violence, and unequal distribution of resources.

The Forum engaged faith communities and their leaders, and working together with and for the 49 children and young people present to find ways to address poverty. During the Fourth Forum, the youth engaged in dialogue among themselves and with senior religious, political and social leaders, developing their knowledge and understanding of the world’s key challenges and proposing inspiring new ideas for tackling poverty. The faith communities shared best practices on eradicating poverty, proposed ways to partner with development agencies, and called on governments, multi-lateral and bilateral agencies including the United Nations, the African Union, the World Bank and others to join hands with them in fighting poverty.

To fulfil the third promise, the Forum forged and launched a new initiative on poverty, *Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty*. This global initiative will emphasize spiritual awakening to address the root causes of poverty. It will challenge the unequal distribution of resources, war and violence, poor governance and corruption. At its core, the initiative will address the root causes of poverty in the human heart—greed, ignorance, hatred and fear. We call on all people of goodwill to rise to the challenge of the ethical imperative that no child should live in poverty.

Arigatou International

## Executive Summary

Four hundred and seventy (470) participants consisting of representatives from the Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, Shinto, Sikh and Traditional Religious groups, together with representatives from the United Nations and its agencies, the African Union and other multi-lateral institutions, civil society organizations, government officials and the children from around the world, convened on the occasion of the GNRC Fourth Forum from 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The Forum was officially opened by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2012, coinciding with the *Day of the African Child*.

Forty-nine (49) children from Africa, Arab States, Asia, Europe, Israel, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America who represented diverse religions and cultures preceded their participation in the Forum with a pre-meeting from 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> June. The children prepared themselves for active participation in the GNRC Fourth Forum. The children interacted among themselves and made significant contributions to the Forum. They challenged the adult participants to, among other things, change their attitude from 'working for children' to 'working with children'.

Through Plenary, Panel and Group Discussions, a Roundtable, Meetings and Regional Consultation Sessions, the Forum Participants addressed the theme of the Forum—poverty, and its devastating consequences to children. It focused on three concrete areas—corruption and poor governance, war and violence and unequal distribution of resources. Presentations highlighted the need and challenges of building enduring partnerships for, and commitment to, addressing the effects of extreme poverty, understanding corruption and all its facets, including children, the marginalized and excluded in the development

agenda, applying the religious teachings about child poverty and understanding the place of governance in addressing public good.

Presentations also addressed the responsibility of humanity in saving, protecting and nurturing children, the economic costs inherent in violence (especially against children) and the consequences of greed in the vicious cycle of war and poverty. Other concerns examined included: what religious leaders can do to tackle poverty, how children are affected by poverty in the home, and in all continents, how children benefit where poverty has ended, the moral and social justice dimensions of the concern for the wellbeing of children and the need to act urgently to prevent the deaths of 22,000 children every day.

The potential to change the world was conceived as the responsibility of all countries and all living forces to fight poverty as a collective enterprise. Also discussed were the perspectives of various faiths on the alleviation of poverty among children and the negative effect of the current economic model on the spiritual lives of the people—poor as well as the rich.

Participants had the opportunity to witness the noble work done by faith communities for the welfare of poor children in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania by visiting 10 sites. The Forum also received reports of the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children* and the Ethics Education program. Fifteen (15) faith-based and other development and social organizations working with, and for children, were invited to the Roundtable to reflect on opportunities and strategies for partnership to address poverty. The GNRC Fourth Forum adopted a global initiative on poverty—*Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty*. The Forum also adopted the Dar es Salaam Declaration.



## The Dar es Salaam Declaration

### Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE.

We are religious leaders, members of different spiritual traditions and faith communities, educators active within and beyond our communities, civil society organizations, youth and children from 64 countries meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012 on the occasion of the Global Network of Religions for Children Fourth Forum.

We believe all are equally dignified sisters and brothers in one human family, the destiny of which is inseparable from the well being of each and every child.

We see poverty as the gravest global injustice, the worst and the most extensive form of violence. The reality of children in poverty brought us together to address: unequal distribution of resources; war and violence; corruption and poor governance. The values on which our religious traditions are built compel us to respond to the challenge of child poverty.

We are obliged to address not only systemic and structural causes of poverty, but also its roots in the human heart—greed, ignorance, hatred and fear—to find lasting solutions. Challenged by the presence, questions, and ideas of the children among us, we commit ourselves to pray and work with children and young people.

We will act through three global initiatives, each of which leverages inter-religious cooperation to address child poverty, and when coordinated and combined, can generate synergies. In doing so, we will work within our individual religious traditions, cooperate on interfaith projects, and partner with civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, educators, governments, development banks, businesses, media, and people of good will.

### *Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Program for Ethics Education*

We will increase our efforts to implement and disseminate *Learning to Live Together*, a curriculum that engages children in a self-driven learning process exploring the values of respect, empathy, reconciliation, and responsibility. Ethics education gives children an opportunity to change the legacy of poverty and deprivation.

### *The World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*

We will expand the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*, a global initiative that mobilizes religious communities to promote children's rights. As we celebrate the World Day every year, we will address child poverty by taking action against all forms of violence and harmful practices against children within our communities and beyond.

### *Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty*

Today we launch a third global initiative that will emphasize spiritual awakening to address the root causes of poverty and challenge the unequal distribution of resources, war and violence, poor governance and corruption. It will utilize interfaith advocacy and grassroots action to overcome poverty.

Envisioning a world where no child will live in poverty, we will actively engage children as full participants and actors as we advocate and act at every level to shape and promote policies that address injustice against children. In doing so, we will reaffirm human dignity and seek to influence the global development agenda beyond 2015.

Finally, in the fellowship of our interreligious network, we thank Arigatou International and other partners supporting this Forum for enabling us to come together and renew our promise to children.

**Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

## A New Global Initiative

### Statement on the Launch of the GNRC Poverty Initiative at the Fourth Forum

#### Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty

Extreme poverty is the gravest global injustice of our times, especially when considering that there is enough in this world for everyone, but grossly and unjustly distributed. It is the worst and most extensive form of violence in the world. There is therefore, an urgent ethical imperative that we commit ourselves to a vision that no one, especially children, should live under conditions dictated by extreme poverty. With the resources of our religious and spiritual traditions, we can take action to foster conscience, increase empathy, promote just structures and make governments responsible to their people in eradicating poverty.

Partnerships specifically addressing child poverty must go beyond the MDG's 2015 target year. They must go beyond the conventional economic approaches to addressing poverty. For these partnerships to be sustainable and effective, they must address not only the systemic structures but also the human and spiritual roots of the problem in the human heart—greed, ignorance, hatred and fear.

The overall objective is to establish a long-term global initiative that will contribute to ending poverty by addressing economic injustices at their core.

And so today, at the Global Network of Religions for Children Fourth Forum, we launch a global scale initiative that will emphasize spiritual awakening to address the root causes of poverty. This initiative will challenge the unequal distribution of resources, war and violence, poor governance and corruption. It will utilize interfaith advocacy and grassroots action to overcome poverty.

As we launch this global campaign—which seeks to bring together children and young people, religious leaders, faith communities, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, educators, governments, development banks, businesses, media, and all people of good will—we rededicate ourselves to building a world where no child has to live in poverty.

## Pre-Meeting for Children

14<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012



Forty nine (49) children from Africa, Arab States, Asia, Europe, Israel, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America representing diverse religions and cultures gathered at the Tanzania Episcopal Centre for two days, from 14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012, to learn from one another, and prepare for an active participation in the GNRC Fourth Forum. The interaction among the children from various regions of the GNRC network provided rich outcomes as inputs to the Fourth Forum.

Involving children as participants in the GNRC Fourth Forum provided them the opportunity to share their own experiences, express their needs and views and argue for their own interests. It was also an occasion to express the vision and principles of GNRC concerning the rights of children, and their participation in the decisions that affect them.

#### Narrative Report on the Proceedings

Ms. Agneta Ucko, the main facilitator, formally welcomed the children to the GNRC Fourth Forum pre-meeting. After a silent moment (of individual reflection), Sr. Jean Pruitt, the Chairperson of the Local Hosting Committee, conveyed a special welcome to the children and their Chaperones. The Norwegian Ambassador to Tanzania, H.E. Ingunn Klepshvik, delivered her remarks before the pre-meeting was formally inaugurated.

During the two days, the children worked with the facilitators to know one another, share experiences, reflect upon the theme of the Forum and discuss how to effectively participate in the Forum. They did all this through games, role-plays, songs, discussions and other participatory

methodologies. The methodologies used during the Pre-Meeting for children were based on the ones suggested in the ethics education manual *Learning to Live Together*. All sessions were based on experiential learning, hence engaging participants in a process of discovery and reflection.

After the opening session, the chaperones left the children in the hands of the facilitators, who began with a session to get to know each other “Who am I? Who are you? Where are you from?” and to solicit children’s expectations. The first activity, which was run almost without words, allowed the children to discover where the others were coming from and their names. Everyone had fun and ended up laughing and mixing with new friends, better understanding commonalities and differences among them.



In the session after the break, children explored different dimensions of poverty. A mandala and the outcome of the Consultations with Children on Poverty were used to allow children to share their different realities and articulate why it is important to Inspire—Act—Change. The children shared their experience and knowledge on poverty and the facilitators learned what poverty meant for the children. The experiences shared by the children were very deep and remarkable. The sharing and the dialogue opened the minds of the participants to realities they had not seen or heard of before. They revealed feelings, described situations and discussed controversial issues they rarely have the opportunity to discuss with others.

The morning was concluded with an inspirational dialogue between His Lordship Bishop Method Kilaini and one of the young resource persons, Ms. Bissan Salman. During this dialogue they shared their experiences and what influence GNRC had had in their lives. The children engaged and exchanged views with both of them.

During the lunch there was already a new group dynamic in place and most of the children joined new friends to continue sharing experiences and stories. After lunch, the children were introduced to the three sub-themes through an interactive session where they were challenged to learn more about the subthemes. This was an “aha” moment for some of the children, who for the first time came in contact with realities different from the ones they themselves live in. It was an interesting dynamic of dialogue and discovery since the children became curious and began asking questions.

During the break, children taught each other some games and songs. For the last session of the day, the children were divided into three groups in order to unpack and struggle with the three sub-themes. The group on Poor Governance analyzed governance at three levels: family, community and national. Each sub-group was given a context and asked to make a role-play. They had to agree on how to split the budget among them. As an example of the context at the family level, they were told that the father was the only one with a salary and he claimed most of the money for him. At the concluding reflection at the end of the session they had to explain the criteria they used to divide the budget and share the challenges they faced.



In the group on Unequal Distribution of Resources, the children got one minute to grab as many as possible of the 120 coins that the facilitators had spread in the room beforehand. Dependent on the number of coins each child had, they were classified into a category, from the highest level where they lived in excellent conditions to the lowest level where they had difficulties to survive. One of the challenges addressed to the children was “do you think you can share the coins you have with someone that might be in need?”

In the group on War and Violence, the activity of picture sharing was used. Children had to express “how they see the world” by looking at some magazines and newspapers brought by the facilitators from all around the world. They were asked to choose images and sentences that could reflect the way they see today’s world.

They also did drawings and placed them on the wall and inserted pictures from the newspapers. During the reflection time, children discussed, reflected and shared why they had chosen the images, sentences or drawings they had. For the second part of the session children were invited to express “how they would like to see the world”. The discussion allowed children to enter a worldwide perspective, working with the different magazines and newspapers from all around the world.

All the children went to dinner full of energy and enthusiasm looking forward to the cultural evening. The cultural evening arranged on the first day proved to be an important moment where children had the opportunity to share their traditions from their respective countries, through songs, dances, videos, costumes, prayers, food, etc. It was a special and important



situations, and address social and economic inequalities.

They were divided into the groups and built on the work they started the previous day. In the group on Poor Governance, the children discussed how they could contribute to good leadership in the family, in the community and at national level. In the group on War and Violence, children were challenged to reflect and discuss “peace with yourself, peace with others and peace with nature”. In the group on Unequal Distribution of Resources, children discussed how they could contribute to fair distribution of resources.

After the tea break it was time for the children to explore creative ideas for the presentation of their experiences and challenges to the Fourth Forum. They explored together different formats they thought would be appropriate for them. Many ideas came up and the children finally decided to use most of the work they did during the previous day and during the morning.

After lunch, it was time to prepare the presentations to the Fourth Forum. Children agreed among themselves to present their experience, concerns and challenges to the Fourth Forum through artistic presentations at the opening ceremony as well as at the sub-theme plenary sessions. They agreed to make a call for real commitments and sustainable actions to fight poverty affecting children.

evening full of happiness, fun and discovery, full of new sound, colors and tastes. Facilitators and chaperons shared this moment with all the children.

The second day began by the children listening to a song called “Change” by Tracy Chapman. It was followed by some minutes of silent meditation. During this time the participants were asked to remain quiet, observe their breathing, trying to be focused and reflecting on the content of the song.

After this moment of meditation children continued working in their groups, this time to explore ways in which they could be involved to support good leadership, contribute to transformation of violent

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto visited the Pre-meeting and had a special recap session with the children, during which they expressed how they had felt during the Pre-meeting, what they had learned and whether their expectations were met.

The Closing of the Pre-meeting was organized in collaboration with UNICEF and begun with closing remarks by H.E. Ms. Dorothy Rozga, the UNICEF Country Representative to Tanzania, after which Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President

of Arigatou International, addressed the children, encouraging them to actively participate in the GNRC Fourth Forum. Ms. Agneta Ucko, Director of Arigatou International, thanked the speakers and concluded the Pre-meeting by thanking all for very active participation, and the facilitators for their dedicated work with the children, and the interpreters and volunteers for their contributions to make it possible for all to communicate and work together.





## Opening Plenary

16<sup>th</sup> June 2012

### COMPREHENSIVE REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012

The GNRC Fourth Forum was officially opened by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, at the Dar es Salaam Serena's Kivukoni Hall on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2012. Coming at a time when, and with the backdrop of the on-going youth-led non-violent transformations in various parts of Africa and Asia, demanding for better life, better governance and more access to opportunities, the GNRC Fourth Forum held in Dar es Salaam Tanzania was historical in a number of aspects. For the first time in the history of the GNRC, the Forum was held in Africa, and was solely dedicated to address poverty. The Forum commenced on 16<sup>th</sup> June in honour of the thousands of courageous children who on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1976 were ruthlessly gunned down by the Apartheid Regime of South Africa for demanding better education, livelihoods and an end to the imposed poverty.

Four hundred and seventy (470) participants consisting of representatives from different religious constituencies—Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, Shinto, Sikh and Traditional—together with representatives from the United Nations and its agencies, the African Union and other multi-lateral institutions, civil society organizations, government officials and the children from around the world, took part in the Forum. They addressed the theme of the Forum—poverty—and its devastating consequences for children. The Forum focused on three concrete areas perceived as main causes of poverty—corruption and poor governance, war and violence and unequal distribution of resources.



**Prayer for Peace by His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini, Auxiliary Bishop of Bukoba and Co-Patron of the GNRC Fourth Forum**



O Lord God Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, we religious leaders and children from various faith communities and spiritual traditions of 64 countries in 5 continents; gathered with political leaders and social workers particularly from the UN organizations, UNICEF and UNESCO, as we meet here in Dar es Salaam, the Haven of peace, from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012 on the occasion of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) Fourth Forum;

We humbly pray you Lord God to inspire this gathering to act and change the state of poverty and misery of our children today.

Our theme is “Ending Poverty; Enriching Children; INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE.” As we start our Forum, today celebrating the day of the African child, thirty-six years ago, innocent children in South Africa shed their blood, killed with brutality by the apartheid regime for coming out courageously to ask for their right to live with dignity, get education and food. Their blood, which was spilled on this African soil, was not shed in vain. Let it inspire the world to fight to bring a new dignity, a new

life, a new hope and a new expectation to the children today not only of Africa but of the whole world.

Lord God bless this Forum that it may come out with an inspiring message to the leaders of this world, to act and change the evils that have negative effect to our children. Let the religious leaders come out of this Forum with a commitment to use their spiritual, moral and social resources that are in their faith communities and spiritual traditions to courageously stand and fight against war and violence; corruption and greed; immorality, the unequal distribution of resources and poor governance. Make us tools of liberation for children and tools of peace.

God Almighty we pray for peace in the world starting with peace in the families, communities, places of work and in all our countries.

O Lord God bless this Forum to a successful end. Amen

**Introductory Remarks by Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders, (ACRL—RfP) and Chairman of the GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee**

We have come to this Forum to address poverty, in particular, a segment of our society that is worst hit—the children. Extreme poverty humiliates. Children’s vulnerability to deprivation harms, and negatively impacts their long-term mental, physical, emotional and spiritual growth. Over the last 18 months, we have been preparing for this occasion, with the help of a wonderful team of the GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee.



Please join me in acknowledging the following members of this committee, and support from the Arigatou International offices in Tokyo, Geneva and New York:

Ms. Martha Palma, Chile; Ms. Mercedes Roman, Ecuador; Rev. Dr. Qais Sadiq, Jordan; Ms. Evi Guggenheim Shbeta, Israel; Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne, Sri Lanka; Sr. Jean Pruit, Tanzania; Mr. Abubakar Francis, Tanzania; Mr. Stephen Hammer, representing UNICEF; Mr. Atsushi Iwasaki, Arigatou International, Tokyo, Japan; Ms. Agneta Ucko, Arigatou International, Geneva, Switzerland; Ms. Meg Gardinier, Arigatou International, New York; Mr. Filipe Furuma, from Mozambique, representing the African Union; The Co-Patrons of this Forum, H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim and Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini, thank you for accepting to lead us in this work.

The Organizing Committee identified three areas for us to discuss at this Forum; these are: War and Violence, Poor Governance and Unequal Distribution of Resources. These themes were carefully chosen, after three exhaustive meetings; the first one in Amman, Jordan; the second in Caux, Switzerland and the third here in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Our Forum was purposely planned to begin on this day, 16<sup>th</sup> June, the Day of the African Child. This is significant.

It was during the leadership of H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim at the African Union, that the Day of the African Child was memorialized, and marked all over Africa, every year, in honor of our children.

We thank H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim for this work.

In these three remaining countdown years to the MDGs target, let us think beyond the year 2015, and address what has become the gravest injustice to humanity, the injustice that children should still die of causes that we can easily prevent. Let us, at this Forum, build enduring partnerships that will address the effects of extreme poverty, especially those affecting children.

Thank You all.

**Welcoming Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Former Secretary General, Organization of African Unity (African Union), Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation and Co-Patron of the GNRC Fourth Forum**

As a Co-Patron for the Global Network of Religions for Children Fourth Forum, I wish to take this opportunity to welcome you all our esteemed friends of different faiths from different parts of the world to our country and especially to this opening of the Fourth Global Forum of Religion for Children. I would like also to extend a special welcome to Rev. Keishi Miyamoto of Arigatou International and other friends

from Japan. To all you distinguished participants and guests KARIBUNI SANA.

At this juncture, may I also take this opportunity to thank the organizing committee and the secretariat, for organizing and preparing this very timely Forum in our country. We are appreciative for the honour given to Bishop Kilaini and myself to be Co-Patrons of this forum.

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen

In a world of so many challenges where in some cases immorality, hate and bigotry have raised their ugly heads, a gathering like this of esteemed religious leaders together with other personalities is a significant event. Religious leaders by the very nature of their day-to-day involvement in their communities, and their sensitivity to the concerns and aspirations of the people are clearly in a position to understand the magnitude of our social problems. They are well aware what poverty does to our societies and can use effectively their moral authority to support our respective national efforts in the struggle against poverty.

This forum is the visible sign of committed leadership by the world major religions in the fight against poverty. It is also an eloquent testimony of the important role of the interfaith institutions like the Global Network of Religions for Children in building bridges, understandings and cooperation between different faith communities.

The opening of this Fourth Forum falls on the Day of the African Child. The occasion is celebrated all over Africa as endorsed



by the African Union. It is important to underscore the significance of this day for Africa and for the world. For Africa it symbolizes resistance of the young people to oppression, suppression and humiliation as dramatically manifested in the Soweto uprising of 1976.

I was in New York in that time where I was representing my country in the Security Council. The extent of brutality and callousness to human life exhibited by the security forces including using armoured personnel carriers and all sort of weapons against unarmed children and youth enraged the international community and re-energized the supporting efforts aimed at ending the apartheid system. The observance of this day as the day of the African Child is also in a way a tribute to the resistance and sacrifices of those young people and children.

Mr President,

The theme of this forum, *Eradicating Poverty, Enriching Children*, comes at a most timely period. The significance of the three thematic areas identified; unequal distribution of resources, ending wars and violence and corruption and poor governance need not be over emphasized. In all these, children are often the most affected.

None of us here need to be reminded that we are still surrounded by children languishing in poverty, children whose families are not able to even give them one meal a day. Neither has technology taken us to a point where we have glasses dark enough to prevent our eyes from seeing the tears in the eyes of many children in Africa, crying because of the abuse, violence, neglect and hardship they are subjected to. Nor can we forget the plight of children who are denied their normal childhood development as they are forced to kill or be killed as child soldiers; nor for that matter the plight of those children forced by circumstances to loiter in the streets without any meaningful prospects that when the sun goes down they will have a place to put their heads or something to put in their mouth.

It is my hope and expectation, that in your deliberations you will come up with practical solutions, that will guide our religious groups and other partners to be able to discover, tap and utilize the enormous and untouched assets right from our villages to all corners of the globe for the eradication of poverty among our children.

Thank you for your kind attention and I wish you successful deliberations.

**Remarks by His Eminence Jean-Louis Cardinal Tauran, President, Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue (delivered by His Lordship Bishop Augustus Shao, Bishop of Zanzibar)**

Dear Friends,

It is a special joy for me to greet you all gathered in Dar es Salaam to participate in the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) under



the theme, *Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change.* and to assure you of the spiritual closeness of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

On this occasion, allow me to convey my special concern about the gap between the rich and the poor, which has become more marked, even in the most economically developed nations, the destruction of our ecosystem, the disappearance of family values and the conflicts due to ethno-religious differences. The time has come for us to work together to address the challenges raised by these problems, each of us drawing on the strengths of our own religious tradition as we endeavour to translate moral obligation into effective action.

An awareness of globalization should alert us to the spiritual and moral implications of these issues, urging us in our dealings with the poor, to set out from a clear and certain recognition that we all share in a single divine plan: we are called to form one human family in which all—individuals, peoples and nations—model their behaviour according to the principles of universal fraternity and responsibility.

The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, expressed his concern for poor children in

his Message for the celebration of World Day of Peace 2009. He said “When poverty strikes a family, the children prove to be the most vulnerable victims: almost half of those living in absolute poverty today are children. To take the side of children when considering poverty means giving priority to those objectives which concern them most directly, such as caring for mothers, commitment to education, access to vaccines, medical care and drinking water, safeguarding the environment and above all, commitment to defense of the family and the stability of relations within it. When the family is weakened, it is inevitably children who suffer. If the dignity of women and mothers is not protected, it is children who are affected most.”

Dear Friends, it is my hope that this forum will inspire people of all beliefs and of good will everywhere to act in ways that will bring about a positive change in the current trends of corruption, poor governance, war, violence and unequal distribution of resources and thus put an end to the poverty of children, enabling them to become builders of a more just and spiritually abundant world for all of us.

I am convinced that this important forum, which has gathered outstanding leaders from different religions in various parts of the world, will truly contribute concretely to the betterment of our society and humanity. In a world often filled with despair and injustice, we share a common hope and desire to work together to bring about reconciliation, justice and peace. I pray that you find in your respective religious traditions inspiration and strength to overcome poverty and to make all lives, especially those of children a living glory of



God and to the spiritual edification of the entire human family.

With my best wishes to you all!

**Remarks by Rev. Dr. Ofelia Ortega, President from the Caribbean/Latin America, World Council of Churches**

The Mexican theologian Rebeca Montemayor brings us into a new imaginary from childhood by using the term PER-PENSAR. This is a new educational approach which includes the syllables per from perceive, sen- from sensation, and sentimiento (Spanish for feeling). And then the word comes up from adding and deleting letters and syllables, per-pensar.



According to Eduardo Galeano, it is the same feeling of the fishermen from the

Colombian coast, who invented the word *senti-pensante* (feeling-and-thinking) to express the relation between the body and the reasoning of the heart.

Today we should ask ourselves, how can we perceive children's ideas and motivations? How can we experience the feelings that permeate their lives and that help them to survive in the midst of extreme poverty? Will it be possible to feel-and-think with them?

One of the most positive experiences related to Caribbean childhood I have recently lived has been the participation in the Ecumenical Call for Peace, organized by the World Council of Churches in Kingston, Jamaica in May last year.

As the pedagogical material for the preparation of the workshops with children we used the ethical text “Learning to Live Together”, published by the Arigatou Foundation in collaboration with UNESCO and UNICEF.

We celebrated three workshops in Cuba and three in Jamaica during the Call. The most interesting thing was that the children in the process of formation and dialogue told us, “We want to sing to achieve peace!”

Then we organized a Children's Choir with 65 voices coming from schools of poor children of Jamaica, who wrote their songs and learnt them in English and Spanish.

They sang in the three most important plenary sessions of the Call, and in every word, in every movement of the music we felt the desire of children to live in peace, without having to be slaves of work or war, or of human trafficking or of poverty.

We wanted to teach them how to live in peace; they taught us how to sing to find a just peace.

We are aware that in our Latin American and Caribbean regions poverty, penury, and the negation of life in its multiple facets is part of everyday life; but children long for peace, equality, liberty, dignity, justice, love and respect.

When we speak of the “street children” in Latin America we are speaking of boys and girls abandoned, impoverished, famished, sick, homeless, and unwanted.

As an educator, I remember that in the Bible, in Mark's Gospel 10:14 is the only place where it is said that Jesus was angry: at those who did not allow the boys and girls come to him.

It is evident that in the text the disciples were amazed at the reaction of the Master. Instead of being enraged at those who brought the children, He was angry at his blessed disciples. Speaking of the children who had been brought into His presence, Jesus said, “The kingdom of God belongs to these and to other fellows of the children”.

At that moment, the children received the greatest gift possible to be received, the Kingdom of God, which is a present and future reality.

Jesus made a symbol of this gesture by taking them into His arms. The Greek verb used for this action is used only twice in the Second Testament, and both times in reference to the children. This gesture of tenderness and protection is the counterpart of Jesus' anger. All the Gospel reveals to us this mysterious flavor

of infancy, with the absolute confirmation that it is God's will that not even one of these little ones is lost. (Mathew 18:14).

When children do not have the minimum conditions to face survival, to guarantee their protection, to achieve their development, they become human beings at risk of losing their potential, of losing their physical, emotional and intellectual integrity, even to lose their lives.

We can point out three groups of elements which must be fulfilled so that children live in adequate conditions: 1. Those which guarantee survival; 2. Those which guarantee protection; 3. Those which guarantee their development.

**SURVIVAL:** childhood requires a series of attention and care in order to guarantee their life, such as feeding, nourishment, integral health care, drinkable water, immunization, a worthy and clean home, a family or adults to tend to their necessities to be satisfied on a daily basis.

**PROTECTION:** adequate protection in the face of threats related to any kind of abuse, abandonment, child labor, sexual exploitation, and the like.

**DEVELOPMENT:** there must be a set of services and care which will allow them to increase and potentiate their integral emotional, artistic, recreational, and spiritual capacities, especially the intellectual ones.

When the environment does not allow for these capacities to be guaranteed, then childhood is denied the possibility to develop the abilities, the resources and the talents with which it was created.

It is necessary to mention that the economic situation, especially poverty culture, is a direct risk factor for childhood. This is especially true with the impossibility of poor people to find employment options, economic alternatives which may allow them to satisfy their basic needs, and thus take advantage of the conditions for development.

There are social elements, such as family rupture, intrafamily violence, and children's expulsion from their homes, which make this situation worse. The lack of ethical values must be analyzed too, which prevents society from being able to find appropriate directions for the individual, the family and the community.

That is why the situation of childhood at risk cannot wait, nor solutions be postponed. Our "faiths" invite us to give, and it has to be now. Waiting for tomorrow will be late, because we will have lost the opportunity to rescue this generation.

Let's remember this Biblical thought:

*Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street. (Lamentations 2:19)*

According to recent ILO statistics over 215 million children are employed in different kinds of work, most of them full time jobs. Out of this figure, a big group is exposed to the worst conditions, such as places which endanger their lives, doing work which requires an effort superior to their physical capacities, participating in illegal activities, including drug trafficking and prostitution.

Extreme poverty forces families to send children to find jobs to maintain the family economy. Another sad destiny is that of around 300,000 children who have been transformed into soldiers, who often are the principal victims of wars and local conflicts around the world.

I come from Cuba, where despite the economic limitations we are suffering, UNICEF has acknowledged that there is no such thing as exploitation of boys and girls in our country.

**Message from Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary, World Council of Churches.**

Dear participants of the GNRC Fourth Forum,



I am sorry that due to long standing engagements in China I am not able to be with you at this important meeting of the Global Network of Religions for Children. I am particularly sorry because I am aware that among other speakers and panelists are a number of people with whom we at the WCC have recently been working on our interreligious initiatives in Nigeria. However, I am grateful to Rev. Dr. Ofelia Ortega, the World Council of Churches' President for Latin America

and the Caribbean, for representing the WCC at this gathering and for bringing my greetings to you. Ofelia's presence here is a valuable reminder that concern about the impact of poverty on the lives and well being of children is not restricted to one continent alone—but it is a challenge in many parts of our world. In our Christian tradition we proclaim that the good news of Jesus includes his pledge to bring life in abundance, life in all its fullness. In communities ground down by poverty that pledge becomes more difficult to fulfill. It is therefore a gospel imperative to work for structural change so that all children in our world may be able to realize that promise of fullness of life.

I mentioned that I have recently been in Nigeria. The WCC collaborated together with the Royal Jordanian Aal Bayt Institute to send a joint international delegation of Christian and Muslim religious leaders to look into the challenges and problems being faced at the present time in that country. We hoped by our presence there as a joint delegation to signal a model of interreligious cooperation. I will not deny that we found deep rooted difficulties and challenges. We could see for ourselves how interreligious tension and conflict in that land interfaced with and exacerbated other problems in Nigeria, not least corruption. But one thing became very apparent—namely that the children and young people of that country were paying a very high price. Their future was being held hostage by problems such as inadequate access to education and lack of employment possibilities. In turn these issues were contributing to the country's intercommunal strife. Yet those children and young people could also potentially provide such a rich resource for the country's

wellbeing and development. It is for such as the children of Nigeria that peoples of different faiths need to work together in prayer and action to transform the future, praying in the words of the prayer that is undergirding the coming WCC Assembly in Busan, Republic of Korea , ‘God of life, lead us to justice and peace’.

And in the words of a prayer written and first prayed on this continent we say:

God bless Africa; Guard her children;  
Guide her leaders;

And give her peace, for Jesus Christ’s sake;  
Amen.

We wish you all the best and trust that the times will be spirit filled, enriching and productive.

**Remarks by Mr. Anthony Okara, Deputy Chief of Staff, African Union (AU)**

I stand here on behalf of His Excellency, Mr. Jean Ping, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and his Deputy, His Excellency, Mr. Erastus Mwencha, delighted to be present at the opening of the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC).

We are delighted to note that this is the first time that the Forum is held on African soil. We congratulate and appreciate the Government and people of the great Republic of Tanzania and home to one of the great sons of Africa, Julius Kambarage Nyerere, for offering to host this meeting in the beautiful and historic city of Dar es Salaam.

It is indeed a great honour for our continent and for the African Union in particular.



We thank the GNRC through its Organizing Committee for organizing these Global Fora since its inauguration in May 2000, with the support of the Arigatou Foundation. The foresight in bringing together an interfaith network of organizations and individuals who are dedicated to securing the rights and well being of children cannot be gainsaid.

One of Africa’s top priorities remains the fight against poverty. This has been the case for decades. We have experienced challenges in this regard at state, regional and continental levels. But we have also experienced some important gains. We need to build on the momentum of the last decade. The African Union Commission therefore wholeheartedly welcomes the decision to select the theme on “Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change”.

The African Union shares in the broader commitment of making the world in general, and the African continent in particular, a better place for all children to enjoy their full range of rights. The right to a better life, security and safety, education and generally a higher quality of life.

Your Excellency, standing in our way to the goals are a number of major threats and obstacles. One and perhaps the greatest is

conflict. It is a sad fact that areas rich in natural resources have been embroiled in conflict and have affected young people many of whom have become involved in armed conflict. As some notable scholars have stated, “A major cause of conflict, poverty became ironically its inevitable result. Once the cycle commenced, breaking it becomes a challenge.”

We must however note that Africa has in the last decade experienced a significant reduction in conflict. The African Union through the Africa Peace and Security Architecture has made its contribution in this regard and remains steadfast and committed to the cause. To complement this approach and to give the children in areas emerging from conflict the hope and chance for rehabilitation and re-engagement into continental and global community in a meaningful way, the African Union developed and adopted the policy on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development, which is now being rolled out.

Your Excellencies, Eminencies and Reverends

Another major challenge on the continent as with most of the developing world is state development. Building strong institutions and governance capacity to meet and realize the people’s needs and aspirations has been another major goal for decades. Again, the last decade has seen great strides in this regard. Africa has embraced good governance ideals, the protection and promotion of human rights and we are currently developing an African Governance Architecture to help in this regard.

In the midst of these and more hurdles lie opportunities. Africa is a mineral rich continent, whose vast resources, if properly valued, can be attained and put to effective use, would possibly wipe out poverty once and for all. This is a real possibility.

Africa has been experiencing economic growth rates in excess of 5% for the last 10 years, with some of the states being among the top 5 performers of the world. More states have embraced democracy as a means of governance and exchange of power.

To build on these gains and mitigate against the challenges, it is imperative that the cooperation and collaboration between the Union and the spiritual leadership is enhanced. The Union’s philosophy of a people centred and people driven organization provides the opportunity to make this concrete and real on the ground. The religious network reaches places where some governments are not fully functional and therefore the partnership that can be forged in this regard and for the sake of the fight against poverty and enriching children can have a fighting chance.

In this context, the decision to establish the AU Interfaith Dialogue Forum in Abuja, Nigeria, 15-17 June, 2010 reflects the Union’s commitment to such a cooperative arrangement. This forum will allow the involvement of the Faith Based Organizations to be involved in the activities of the African Union and also participate in the processes of policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It is our conscious attempt to reach out to our religious communities as part and parcel of this effort.

The partnership we are forging together, we plan to work together very closely and assiduously within the Steering Committee framework in order to jointly develop and map out a plan and program for the dialogue. In this regard, pertinent attention should be drawn to the need to strengthen multi-religious institutional structures and processes for ensuring this effort is mainstreamed as a continuous input into the AU agenda. The AU again assures you that it will go the distance with you in the effort to build up the desired platform and partnership, which needs to be nurtured as a serious sustained enterprise that aligns and then deploys our deeply and widely shared concerns for the good of Africa and beyond.

In its drive to warrant African Children Rights, the African Union went further to establish the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC), which has its secretariat based at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The mandate of this committee is embedded in Articles 32-46 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which was adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the OAU on 11 July 1990 and came into force on 29 November 1999. The functions of the Committee include amongst others to: promote and protect the rights enshrined in the Charter; cooperate with other African International and Regional Institutions and Organizations concerned with the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of the Child. One of the key milestones in the ACERWC's promotional work has been the celebration of the Day of the African Child (DAC) on 16 June each year. For this year, the theme is: "Rights of Children with Disability: Duty to Protect,

to Respect, to Promote and to Fulfil". Each and every African country should take stock of the progress made and the difficulties encountered in the protection of children with disability, more so as most States have not yet adopted policies relating specifically to children with disability. On the other hand, African countries should reflect on what activities they intend to carry out to mark the African Decade for Persons with Disability, such activities could be envisaged in terms of concrete and urgent measures in favour of children with disability.

The African Union aligns itself with the objectives of the GNRC Fourth Forum in building a worldwide movement of faith-based and secular organizations dedicated to delivering on the ethical imperative that no child will live in poverty. We welcome and support all initiatives that will help alleviate poverty especially for children. The key presentations on the GNRC Forum Themes, Corruption and Poor Governance, War and Violence and Unequal Distribution of Resources, deemed as principal causes of poverty, are real issues that impede the rapid development of the continent. The latter causes need to be addressed by the implementation of positive measures that will bring in improvements for a better continent to its children. Our poverty alleviation policies must be child-centred and should be able to address the main causes and find better solutions to the problems.

The African Union is faced with challenges to firstly develop and sustain an active process of dialogue among Africa's major faith-based groups that would facilitate integration and development in Africa. Secondly, to promote interconnectivity

between faith-based groups and other important stakeholders within the African Union family that will support this process. Thirdly, there is a need to define together the parameters and guidelines for this partnership including a precise agenda and plan of action, which we have started working on. The purpose of the partnership between the African Union and Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) is to promote peace, security and development on the continent of Africa. We have started some consultations with our partner (ACRL) on how to go forward and come up with some concrete actions kicking off with the establishment of a Permanent Steering Committee (PSC). We hope to resume with these consultations very soon because there is a need to consolidate what we have started since before the Abuja launching meeting.

This is a the moment to thank all religious leaders engaged in the peace-seeking processes in many of our countries, and also to encourage them to go ahead and help the political decision-makers in finding pacific solutions so that peace and harmony can prevail on our motherland.

I wish to thank the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, through its esteemed President, Mr. Jakaya Kikwete, for their considerable support and hospitality. Again I also want to thank the Arigatou Foundation and the GNRC Africa, and the local GNRC Committee for all their effort to bring us here and debate on issues related to Child Rights.

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto has suggested that the greed prevailing in the human heart and the raw pursuit of profit is a major contributor to the global poverty situation.

Dr. Mustafa Ali argues that poverty is man-made and therefore there is an ethical imperative to reverse the prevailing trend.

Be that as it may, it is our sincere hope that we will be inspired by the important exchanges in the next 2 days, by the participation of moral and spiritual leadership.

Too many times, conferences and fora such as this do not lead to the desired ACTIONS. Let this not be one of those. Let us ACT.

We are in a constantly changing environment. We must adapt. More importantly let us promote the change that will lead in the break of non-productive habits.

We should all say at the end of the day, Let's End Poverty, Enrich Children, By Inspiring, Acting and Changing.

Thank you.

**Remarks by Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary General, Religions for Peace International**

Thank you, Rev. Miyamoto and GNRC. We gather here called by you, but also urged by our faiths to work together for children. We want to work together to help save, protect and care for the child and this includes his or her possibilities for a life of committed religious faith. Wisely and happily this is noted in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

I want to reflect on three points: First, the special state of childhood:



Rev. Miyamoto, in 1990 you and I were among the many religious people who gathered with UNICEF in Princeton, New Jersey, to put children at the centre of multi-religious cooperation. The religious leaders there—echoing UNICEF—stated: “As religious men and women, we dare to assert that the state of childhood ... founds a principle that the human community must give children’s basic needs a priority over competing claims—and a ‘first call’—upon the human and material resources of our societies.”

This is a major point. Some may ask why children should get a “first call” on our resources—both social and financial.

In answering, the religious leaders stated the obvious: children are—they noted—“vulnerable, dependent and full of potential.” Today, the words “vulnerable” and “dependent” can sound negative in some ears. Another way of saying what these words mean is to say that children are “relational” in a very fundamental sense.

In fact, we are all relational. As religious people we know that we are—in the most radical sense—related to God or Buddha. And, we are related to one another and the natural world. And, being relational is a core concern of our religious traditions,

which teach—each in their own way—that we “find” our true selves by “going beyond” ourselves in caring for the other. Alas, we often forget this deep truth.

But children in their own ways can’t forget it (being relational). They depend on it. They will die if they are denied relationship. Their survival and the unfolding of their lives require relationships of all kinds. Children arrive naked in the beauty of having to depend on others. They arrive into our arms. Children deserve a “first call,” because their lives and their potential depend initially so utterly on others. In a different way, this is still true of us. We too are relational. We need to be in relationship with the vulnerability and potential of children if we are not to deny who we are as people.

Second, let’s reflect on our moral responsibility.

We grieve when we lose a child to an incurable disease, but we hold our heads down in shame when we lose a child to preventable disease or violence. All but the coldest of hearts know that such loss should not happen, that it is even worse than “senseless,” that it is morally wrong, grievously wrong. This is true also in terms of poverty: Some children live in poverty that currently lies beyond our control, and we grieve for them. But many, many more children are abandoned to poverty that need not be, and their sufferings shame us all.

So it is that UNICEF has rightly argued that moral responsibility grows with our increased capacity to save and nurture children. Moral responsibility and capacity are directly related. Because we can save,

protect and nurture children, we must. This is moral reasoning that we religious believers can applaud, and it is a spur to action for all of us. We have capacities to act. We must engage them.

Today almost 30,000 fewer children die every day from where we were in the early 1960s. And yet, we still lose 20,000 children every day. Most of these deaths are preventable. Many could be saved by behaviour changes that can be promoted and taught by religious communities. Just a couple of days ago (14 June) at the Child Survival Call to Action Summit in Washington, DC, Religions for Peace helped to launch, along with the Center for Interfaith Action, a global multi-religious campaign on behaviour change called “Ten Life Saving Behaviours—Ten Gifts to our Children.” Religious actors around the world can promote these life saving behavior changes.

I mention this because child survival is directly and deeply linked to overcoming poverty and achieving equity. Child survival is an incalculable value in itself. It also initiates a cascade of development that can honor more fully the dignity of each child.

Third and finally, I would like to say a word about our religious responsibility.

We have religious responsibilities to care for children. Indeed, caring for children is a litmus test of our fidelity to our own religious convictions.

We need to pray for the spiritual will to more fully engage the power of our respective religious communities’ teachings on the ultimate worth of every child.

And we can encourage one another by our respective efforts to do so, for “good calls out to good.”

Let me conclude by quoting a text from the Jewish Bible. The Prophet Ezekiel writes:

“And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh.”

Let us reject the heart of stone that abandons children, hides from their sufferings, rationalizes our inaction, and refuses to do the doable.

Let us unite with a single heart to help our children.

We need a heart large enough to respect our religious differences, strong enough to sustain our cooperation, humble enough to learn from every quarter and loving enough to care for every child.

So, let us try our best. Let us commit to doing what we can do. For, the Lord Himself has promised that our hearts of stone will become hearts of flesh.

Thank you.

**Remarks by H.E. Alhajj Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania**

From the outset let me admit that I am at a loss as to what language I should use at this occasion. But please allow me to use my national language to welcome you to Tanzania:

KARIBUNI SANA.



Let me take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the GNRC Fourth Forum organizers for hosting it in Africa, and in our country.

As I stand up and speak before you, millions of children will go hungry today. Unfortunately, this will be the same case tomorrow. And days to come. This is an issue of social justice. It is a moral issue. It is a moral issue because we have sufficient resources to ensure that no child goes hungry, but they do.

It is a social issue because of the ethical imperative that no child should live in conditions dictated by extreme poverty.

We have sufficient resources to educate each and every child that cannot afford education. But due to a number of reasons, including war and violence, unequal distribution of resources and poor governance, we have found ourselves in this rather unfortunate situation.

And this is where you, the religious leaders and faith communities, have a major role to play.

Your standing in society and the issues that you address touch on social justice. I am sure that all sacred texts of all religions demand that we care for one another. They demand for social justice.

Extreme poverty affects not only children but also communities they live in. We are all poorer if we cannot take care of our children. I am appealing to you, religious leaders, to lead a global campaign to ensure that primary education is provided free of charge all over the world, and to all our children who cannot afford primary education.

Poor children and communities have no future because they cannot afford education. This creates a vicious cycle of poverty. And if we do not educate our children, we harm our future.

Your Excellency, dear participants. I want to request our Japanese friends to work closely with us, share with us your impressive work ethic. Your hard work and commitment has made it possible for you to rise from the ashes of the Second World War sixty years ago, to a highly developed and sophisticated country.

This kind of cooperation will add value to the good work being done by religious institutions and governments. I want to thank the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for putting in place enabling policies to address poverty, and welfare of children and young people.

I also want to thank UNICEF and other UN agencies for the good work you have done for the children in the areas of survival, development of education and social services, protection and ensuring children's participation according to their evolving capacities.

I am appealing to you to work with religious leaders and faith communities to reach the most vulnerable in our societies. I suggest that at the end of this meeting,

you come with a strong declaration that will be binding and commit yourselves to the children of the world. Finally, I wish to thank the Arigatou International for thinking of a global-scale initiative on poverty, to be spearheaded by religious leaders and faith communities.

I want to appeal to my brothers and sisters in Africa, the continent most affected by poverty, to work hard to get out of this situation. With the assistance from well-meaning individuals and institutions, we will come out of poverty.

In this regard, I can see that global-scale initiative on poverty will readily find a home in Africa, and from where we, ourselves, must lead the fight against poverty.

Thank You All.

**Remarks by Mr. Elhadj As Sy, Regional Director, Eastern and Southern Africa Office, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**

It is a great honour for me to join you at this Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children.

This important conference comes just in time. We only have three and a half years left, before we reach the target line for the Millennium Development Goals—and we all know that we still have a long way to go to catch up with our promise to build a better world by 2015.

When agreeing on the MDGs, world leaders for a good reason put poverty reduction on top of the list: Poverty is the cause for many ills of our time, including



high mortality rates among children and women, the spread of diseases like HIV/AIDS, and the lack of access to basic services such as clean water and adequate sanitation. Poverty however is also the result of many of these problems including under-nutrition, lack of education and exploitation and abuse.

I am therefore glad that this important forum deals with major causes of poverty and aims to recommit ourselves to join forces to end poverty and to build a better world, a world that is fit for children.

Children are at the heart of all development processes—simply because they are most affected by poverty and the consequences of unbalanced and insufficient development—today as children and tomorrow in their future lives as adults. Development begins with children, therefore most of the MDGs actually relate directly to the well being of children.

Two days ago in Washington, we saw the launch of an unprecedented Call to Action to renew our promise to children and improve their opportunities to survive and grow up healthy. Through the initiative “Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed” partners under the leadership of the United States, Ethiopia and India, and with support from UNICEF vow to make

best use of today's knowledge, technical know-how and affordable tools to end preventable child deaths.

As part of this initiative many faith-based organizations and religious communities joined in a multi-faith pledge with concrete actions they will undertake for the well being of children and I hope others will also join.

UNICEF has a long history of working across the globe with religious communities of all faiths on far ranging issues that affect children: from partnering with imams in Mauritania to eliminate corporal punishment, to joining forces with Buddhist monks in Cambodia to support children affected by HIV and AIDS, and working with churches in Brazil and the Inter-Religious Council of Kenya to address child survival and maternal health.

Religious communities are an indispensable partner in UNICEF's work to advance children's rights and enhance their well-being. Such partnerships are especially important in UNICEF's renewed focus on reaching the poorest, most vulnerable and hardest to reach children and families.

A concrete outcome of the Third Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children four years ago was the launch of the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children bringing together religious communities and other key partners, including UNICEF, to foster the care and protection of children. Last year, as part of the initiative, UNICEF partnered with religious communities in 37 countries in concrete activities to address violence against children. I would like to congratulate the GNRC and Arigatou

for their leadership in this important initiative.

One group that is among the most marginalized in Africa are children with disabilities. They are often particularly at risk of becoming victims of violence and they are also the ones most affected by neglect and poverty. The beginning of the Fourth Forum coincides with the Day of the African Child, which this year is dedicated to children with disabilities. In its efforts to reach the most disadvantaged children, UNICEF will increasingly also focus on children with disabilities, and I hope we can strengthen our collaboration with religious partners also in this area.

In fact, we at UNICEF are committed to partner with religious communities in all areas of child well-being and development. I hope and I'm sure that the Fourth Forum will pave the way to further our collaboration.

I wish all participants fruitful discussions. Thank you

### Presentation of the Children's Challenges to the Forum

During their first presentation (made during the official opening of the GNRC Fourth Forum and before H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete) the children shared experiences of refugees from Somalia, which to a large extent consisted of deprivation and exposure to abuse. The presentation raised questions of governance. The children also shared the plight of poor children and the trouble they have to go through just to access basic necessities and affirmed that poverty is the worst form of violence.



In this presentation to the Plenary, the children reflected upon and shared their understanding of 'Transparency', 'Participation', 'Campaigning', 'Rule of Law' and 'Good Governance'. They characterized transparency as involving truth telling, speaking out, and honesty. They characterized participation as inclusive interventions especially of the children due to their vulnerability. According to them the Rule of Law is manifest where all people—regardless of their status—observe the law.

In this presentation, children demonstrated that for their dreams to be fulfilled, they need the requisite room and space to familiarize themselves with their environment before being engaged in any proceedings. They challenged the adults to change their approach from 'working for children' to 'working with children'.

The children declared that the greatest forms of poverty have got to be war and violence and that it is optimistic to think about peace with oneself and others. Peace with others is possible through showing them love, respect and honesty. They noted that ending war and conflict against children would give peace to the world. They challenged the Forum to end poverty and enrich children. They shared a quotation from the Holy Quran 13:11 that states in part that '...Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls)...'

Perhaps the most touching incident shared by the children concerning poverty and violence was the story of Aisha—a Somali woman and mother fleeing the war in Somalia (Mogadishu) heading to Kenya (Dadaab Refugee Camp). She lost her 6-month-old son because she had nothing to feed him on. She had no water, food, clothing and no shelter for a long period of time. Her son died while she was on her way to the refugee camp. She carried the corpse all the way unaware that he was dead. Aisha could not believe her son was dead so she took him to a local doctor in the camp who confirmed the child dead. Aisha with her husband moved out of the doctor's room devastated and took the corpse to a tent where dead bodies were kept. To identify her son from other dead children, she tied a red ribbon on the toe of his left leg. She had to find a place to bury him hoping against hope that one day no child will die of starvation, malnutrition and diseases which can be cured. Truly (as already stated by Mahatma Gandhi), poverty is the worst form of violence.

Performance by Children



Remarks by the Forum Organizer, Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President of Arigatou International



First of all, let me express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for making the journey from all over the world to come to Tanzania for the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children. It is particularly fitting that we gather here in Tanzania, a country with such a strong devotion to its bright and wonderful children. As you all know, under the outstanding leadership of His Excellency President Kikwete, Tanzania was the first country in Africa to undertake the survey in response to the United Nations Secretary-General's World Report on Violence against Children. President Kikwete demonstrated his very personal commitment to Tanzania's Children's Agenda by meeting with the children themselves to hear about their hopes and aspirations. Mr. President, I am honoured to have this opportunity to express my gratitude to you in person for your commitment to children, and for so actively supporting this GNRC Forum.

At the closing ceremony of the GNRC Third Forum in Hiroshima, in 2008, I announced our commitment to further strengthening the regional GNRC networks as an expression of the continued growth of the GNRC. I said that part of this new course of action could include holding global GNRC forums in the regions. I am most gratified to see this come to fruition today, with this Fourth Forum being the first held in and by one of the GNRC regions. I am filled with gratitude. We are all here today thanks to the tireless efforts of everyone at GNRC Africa, the precious support of Forum Co-Patrons His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini and His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim and our many valuable partners, and the active commitment of all the esteemed African religious leaders here with us today.

We have gathered here today in a shared commitment to "Ending Poverty" and "Enriching Children." Poverty has been

identified as a root cause of many challenges children face. While we of the GNRC have pledged ourselves to the fight against child poverty, we recognize that this is an enormously complex battle. Poverty is multidimensional and multi-generational. However, unless we solve this problem, we will never be able to realize a world truly fit for children. This is the reason Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, the President of the Arigatou Foundation, declared we would dedicate ourselves to eradicating poverty, as one of the three commitments he made when speaking on behalf of the GNRC at the United Nations Special Session on Children in 2002.

As many of you know, the other two commitments he made were that we would pursue ethics education for children and promote implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, or CRC. The first of these, ethics education for children, is being promoted using Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education, a unique learning tool we developed in cooperation with UNESCO and UNICEF to foster children's innate potential for spirituality. Learning to Live Together is being used in many countries around the world, and has been translated into 9 different languages.

To fulfil the second commitment, implementation of the CRC, we have designated November 20, the anniversary of the most universally embraced human rights treaty, the CRC, as the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children. Every year since 2008, World Day events around the world have been helping to realize children's rights with specific actions and prayers. Last year alone, over 230,000 people participated in prayer gatherings and action events organized in 97 countries,

under the theme of "Stop Violence Against Children."

Thanks to the deep commitment and unceasing work of all GNRC members and our valued partners, we have been able to launch these two global initiatives successfully with tangible outcomes. Now is the time to specifically and comprehensively tackle the third commitment, the eradication of child poverty.

It is my strong desire that these three initiatives pledged by Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, the spiritual visionary who started the GNRC, continue to be the backbone of the GNRC. If we implement the three in close collaboration, doing together rather than doing separately, we can generate synergies and have a much greater impact. I believe this is the best way we can help build a world fit for children.

For this great purpose, we stand in need of all the profound experience, expertise and wisdom of each and every one of you here at this forum. Trusting in your heart for children and your continued support, I can confidently call for a dramatic new global initiative to end child poverty. We are here for this Forum in Africa, where poverty eradication is at the top of the agenda. If we all together at this Forum can rise to the challenge of launching a new initiative to end child poverty, I am certain we will take a great step toward a world fit for children by adding this new initiative. I count on your spirited engagement over the next three days to help shape this new GNRC effort against poverty, and all of our work for children in the months and years to come.

I would also like to say that I am particularly delighted today about all the children and

young people from Africa and the rest of the world who are here today. Yesterday at their pre-meeting, I encouraged them all to participate fully and confidently in the Forum because I am certain that they can be a new hope and powerful force for changing the world through these three initiatives and the GNRC. Through the experiences we all share at this forum, working together, children and adults alike, I am sure we can shape an even more dynamic GNRC.

Finally, let me conclude these brief remarks with my heartfelt prayer that, with the blessing and wisdom of the Divine Presence, these three days at the GNRC Fourth Forum would be a meaningful, productive and inspiring experience for all of you.

Thank you very much

#### Appreciation by Mr. Abubakar Francis Kabwogi, GNRC Fourth Forum Secretary General



The Secretary General of the GNRC Fourth Forum Mr. Abubakar Francis Kabwogi appreciated the participants for attending the GNRC Fourth Forum, and more especially H.E Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete for honouring the invitation to officially open the Forum.

He requested the president to honour and appreciate the efforts of Rev. Keishi Miyamoto (for outstanding work in the support of interfaith work and children globally), H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim (for his efforts in ensuring children's issues are focused on by policy and decision makers, especially during his leadership at the African Union) and Archbishop Dr. John Onaiyekan (for his tireless, consistent African-wide efforts in bringing Muslims and Christians closer together in dialogue and common action).

#### Introduction of the President of the United Republic of Tanzania by Hon. Ms. Ummu Ally Mwalimu, Deputy Minister of Community Development, Gender, and Children

Honorable Ms. Ummu Ally Mwalimu, Deputy Minister for Community Development, Gender and Children formally introduced and invited H.E.



Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete (on behalf of Hon. Madam Sophia Simba, the Minister for Community Development, Gender and Children) to make his address to the delegates and formally open the GNRC Fourth Forum.

Official GNRC Fourth Forum Opening Address by H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania



Reverend Keishi Miyamoto, President of the Arigatou International;  
H.E. Alhaji Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania;

H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Co-Patron, GNRC Fourth Forum;  
The Right Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini; Co-Patron, GNRC Fourth Forum;  
Dr. Mustafa Ali, Chairman of the GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee;  
Mr. Abubakar Francis Kabwogi, Secretary General of the GNRC Fourth Forum;  
Elhadj As Sy, UNICEF Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa;  
Eminencies, Excellencies; Invited Guests;  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Allow me to join those who spoke before me in thanking God Almighty, the Merciful and Compassionate, for enabling us to meet here this morning. I would also like to

thank Reverend Miyamoto, Dr. Ali and the entire Organizing Committee for affording me this rare opportunity of being part of the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children.

This is the first time the Forum is being held in Tanzania. Indeed, it is a great honour for us to play host to distinguished participants from 64 countries and representatives of UN agencies. I know you have already been welcomed, but let me add my voice in welcoming you all to Tanzania, and to Dar es Salaam in particular. I hope you will have a comfortable stay. Please feel at home and I encourage you after the meeting, to see a bit of the country and experience what Tanzania has to offer. I am sure you will be appetised enough to come back for a longer safari and beach experience.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I commend the organizers for choosing a very opportune theme for this Forum, "Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change." It is a statement of fact that where poverty has been ended, children benefit. They are happy and grow to realize their potentials and ambitions in life. On the contrary, where poverty abounds, children suffer the most and all their hopes and aspirations are dashed. Indeed, poverty is the world's biggest development challenge of our time. We must fight it and win; losing is not an option because the situation is not good at all.

The UNICEF estimates that 22,000 children are dying each day due to a host of deprivations because of poverty. Many die quietly in some of the remotest and poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny of the watchful eye and the conscience of the world. It is equally sad to note that about 67 million children of primary school age in the developing world do not attend school and around 300 million children go to bed hungry every day. The sad story does not end there as 650 million (1 in 3) live without adequate shelter; 400 million (1 in 5) have no access to safe water; and 270 million (1 in 7) have no access to health care services.

Excellencies; Your Lordships; Ladies and Gentlemen;

Overall, out of 2.2 billion children on this planet, nearly half are severely deprived of at least one of the essential goods and services they require to survive, grow and develop to fulfilling adulthood. So many

children are losing their lives to easily preventable diseases or malnutrition, and others are being murdered in armed conflicts. Unfortunately, a number of these conflicts are caused by religious extremism and fanaticism. Furthermore, intolerable numbers are dying from HIV/AIDS before reaching adulthood and many more suffer from discrimination, hostility and violence, just because of being children. In conflict areas, the situation is worse and too ghastly to contemplate.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

These statistics are a stark reminder of the magnitude of the challenge we are faced with. They confirm that too many of our children in both developing and industrialized countries are living in deplorable conditions. As a result of this, too many children are denied their basic rights such as education, healthcare, nutrition, and protection from harm and exploitation. As a consequence children's mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual development is inhibited. Rural children are more affected than those living in town because of the dichotomy between rural and urban development. Sadly, also, the girl child is worse off than the boys, mainly because of bad cultural practices. Indeed, these deprivations greatly undermine children's ability to achieve their full potential when they grow up.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am sure every responsible and well-meaning person should be concerned with the well-being of our children and young people. All of us must appreciate the need and be ready to do something useful for the

sake of our children. It is heart-warming, indeed, to note that this world is not short of such people. Those of you gathered here today and this organization, the Global Network of Religions for Children, are clear attestation to that assertion of mine. I wish we could have more people and organizations like yours in this world. Surely, this world would be a great place to live in for us, our children and children's children.

I am happy with the increasing global awareness and readiness to take action to fight and improve the lives of children. There are many international, regional and national conventions, protocols, proclamations, instruments and laws, which are geared toward addressing the many challenges and needs for children on this planet. The challenge is about ensuring the objectives of these instruments are implemented to the letter and spirit. We are beginning to witness positive results, but a lot more needs to be done. There are too many children who are still left out, which calls for continued concerted efforts at national, regional and international levels.

In my view, tackling child related poverty requires two pronged interventions. The first one is to assist families of the children to become prosperous so that the children will live in a poverty free environment. The second is actually informed by the fact that it may take time before poor families can become prosperous. In this regard, children should not be left to wait for so long. This therefore, behoves humanity to look for ways to directly assist children from poor families to get the necessities of life they are deprived of because of being born

and living in poor families. Such children need nutrition, education, health care and protection so that they can live in dignity, survive and grow to become productive human beings in society.

This is the responsibility of every one of us, parents, all people in their communities, governments, civil society and faith based organizations. We must properly anchor the promotion of children's rights and needs in our plans, programmes and activities. We need to make children a priority in our plans and programmes to reduce and eradicate poverty.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I would like to state clearly and honestly that we, in Tanzania, are also facing similar challenges as our counterparts in developing countries. In a country where 33 per cent of the people live below the poverty line, certainly there are many children affected and suffering from poverty. The Government has been taking a number of measures to address the challenges of poverty in the country and child poverty is being given particular attention. We have adopted an all inclusive approach because this matter is multi-stakeholder in character and involves many actors.

First and foremost, we have a fully fledged Ministry dealing with children's affairs. It champions the formulation of policies, plans and programmes guiding action on child development in the country. The Ministry oversees their implementation. As a result, we have enacted laws protecting the rights of children, we have the National Child Development Policy (2008), the Child Act No. 21 (2009), the National Costed Plan

of Action for Vulnerable Children (2007-2010), and the National Policy Guideline for the Health Sector Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence (2011), all dedicated to the welfare of children. We also have other related policies include the National Education Policy (1995) and the National Health Policy (2010).

Excellencies: Ladies and Gentlemen;

I am happy to mention as a result of these efforts, many indicators are showing that we are now making progress in reducing child poverty. For example, child enrolment in primary schools has reached 97 per cent, which makes us well on track to reach the MDG target by 2015. Furthermore, between 1999 and 2010 child malnutrition has been on the decrease, but we need to do more work in this area.

We are on track with regard to gender parity in primary and secondary schools. Unfortunately, that is not the case with higher education where there are more boys than girls. However, the government is working hard to ensure that the number of girls in higher education is increasing. Education is a critical key to development and success. With the appropriate education a child is empowered with a very effective lever to break the poverty cycle and live a fulfilling life. The various special mechanisms to support students from poor families to get education have been very useful. We are committed to do more so that all get access to get education.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Based on our own experiences, we have learned that tackling child poverty requires

strong partnership of all stakeholders including development partners, private sector, civil society, faith based organizations and persons of goodwill. It is not a matter for government alone. This is a cross-cutting matter, which requires the involvement and participation of many actors besides government. However, government has to assume the leadership role of formulating policies and putting in place measures which will guide actions of various stakeholders with interest in the welfare of children.

Religions and faith based organizations have a unique role to play. Working in solidarity with governments and other stakeholders for the advancement of children, much more can be achieved. In essence, religions have the unenviable duty of guiding and helping people to be good citizens on this planet. Enable them to live harmoniously, peacefully, lovingly and in cooperation with other people within and across the religious, racial and other social, economic and political divides. Religion guides people to become responsible citizens in the sense of knowing their purpose in life as well as their duty and what is expected of them in life.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

There are no better persons for religions to dedicate efforts to impart these values than our children. I know schools are doing it but religions in their own right have a unique role and a very special way of doing it. The two systems should complement each other. If through both systems we can succeed to make our children understand these important values of life, adapt them and live by them, we will have succeeded

in creating model global citizens. Indeed, many of the problems our societies and nations are facing today will be eased.

We will get responsible parents and good mannered children. We will get good citizens, friendly to all people, hard working and doing the right things. This way we will fight poverty in families and among children in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. Children will be born in families free from poverty and a world that is caring. They will get time to pursue their studies instead of being forced to engage in child labour to make ends meet for themselves or their families.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I humbly appeal to all religious leaders and followers of the different religions to play their rightful role to enable our children to become responsible citizens and empower them to fight poverty. We should also remember that it begins with parents and it involves governments and everybody else in society including the private sector, civil society and religions. All should play their roles properly. So working together with all players is a matter of essence. Let us all do it for the sake of our children, nations and the world.

Indeed, the work of the GNRC speaks volumes about what can be done by religions and faith based organizations in efforts to create a society where children are valued, respected and happy. A society where children can be given the opportunity to grow to their fullest potential and become good and productive citizens. Allow me to take this opportunity to commend the GNRC for its initiatives

and programs on promoting child poverty eradication, children's rights, protection of the environment, ethical and peace education, and empowering children and young people. I implore you to continue the good work you are doing. The good thing about it is that it crosses the boundaries of faith. Please keep up the good work.

Excellencies; Invited Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen;

Before I conclude my remarks, I want to assure you that my Government and I are satisfied with the invaluable contributions of the GNRC in pitching for the advancement of our children. I pledge our readiness to strengthen the cooperation with your Organization and work with you towards the realization of our shared goal of ensuring that Tanzanian children get the opportunity to live and grow in a conducive and secure environment, an environment that supports them to reach their fullest potential.

I am aware that this is not easy and neither is it an overnight thing. But, I am confident that it is doable especially when we remain steadfast in pursuit of this noble cause and direct requisite resources to that end. That is what we are exactly doing. We are confident and inspired when we have partners like the GNRC, development partners and other national and international stakeholders ready to work together with us. For sure we will overcome and attain our lofty goal of making our world a good place for our children and our children's children to live in.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

At this juncture, the words of my good friend Bono, the lead singer of the U2 band, are resonating in my ears, "God is in the slums, in the cardboard boxes where the poor play house. God is in the silence of a mother who has infected her child with a virus that will end both their lives. God is in the cries heard under the rubble of war. God is in the debris of wasted opportunity and lives, and God is with us if we are with them". These words, Ladies and Gentlemen, mean so much to what we are doing right here at this Forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

After those many words, it is now my singular honour and pleasure to declare the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children officially open. I wish you very fruitful deliberations and every success in your endeavours.

God Bless Africa!  
God Bless Tanzania!  
God Bless Children of the World!

I thank you for your attention.

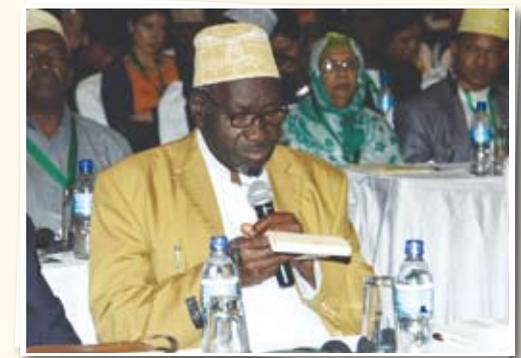
### Vote of Thanks by His Holiness Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji, Sri Puthige Math



His Holiness Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji, Sri Puthige Math expressed gratitude to everyone for attending the GNRC Fourth Forum.

### Closing Prayer by H.E. Sheikh Issa bin Shaban Simba, the Mufti of Tanzania

The Mufti of the United Republic of Tanzania H.E. Sheikh Shaban Simba concluded the opening ceremony with a prayer.





Participants had the opportunity on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2012 to witness the noble work being done by faith communities for the welfare of poor children in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania by visiting sites under the following religious constituencies: National Muslim Council, Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT), Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC), and other institutions.

The sites under the National Muslim Council which 3 groups of delegates visited are described first in this section.

### Salafiya Islamic Centre

This centre located in Kinondoni Municipality was established by the National Muslim Council in 1998 to create education (both spiritual and secular) opportunities for Muslim orphans and children, some rescued from the streets, within the age groups of 6 to 25 years at risk as well as cater for their other basic needs. The children and youth fostered by the Centre through the support of local community and society at large currently consist of 300 orphans and 500 destitute children and young people from various regions of Tanzania. The 800 children and young people of the centre—some of whom have become multilingual—receive spiritual and secular education from pre-school to secondary as well as college level education at this centre. Others are undergoing training in carpentry, tailoring, multimedia, and film production or fire brigade skills. The centre also works to rehabilitate the



children through behaviour change with the aim of re-unifying them with their parents once they have been trained and kitted to enable them to start income generating activities. A number of the centres 'old boys/girls' have secured employment.

### Ibn Jazary Education Centre

Established in 2005 by the Qur'an Memorization Charitable Trust, Ibn Jazary Education Centre is located in Mkuranga District, Coast Region. Its purpose is to help the community by enabling Muslim children, children at risk and from other organizations to preserve the Qur'an through memorization and additionally, to give an opportunity for secular education. At the time of the visit, the centre had 400 children aged between 3 and 18 years and in classes ranging from nursery to Grade 7 after which some of them concentrate on memorizing the Qur'an. A variety of courses (including electrical engineering, masonry, carpentry, computer studies) are offered at the centre with some of the children working well enough to get places in university and others joining the ranks of religious leaders and teachers. A number of the 'old boys/girls' return to assist at the centre upon completion of their studies.

### Dar ul Arqam Orphanage Centre

This Centre was established in 1993 in Tandika - Temeke Municipality to provide the basic needs of, as well as education to orphaned children (Muslim) from all over the country, and to support Muslim orphan children cared for by family members. The children in the centre are aged between 5 and 18 years. The children

at the centre have access to integrated schooling in government primary schools as well as computer studies. Some of the centre's students did go all the way to University and successfully contributed to the manpower/human resource within and without the country.

The site under Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) and visited by 1 group of delegates is describe next.

### Mtoni Deaconic Lutheran Church

With the purpose of holistically supporting male and female children—of all faiths—with disabilities (specifically mental disability) and to create opportunities for these children to receive special education and training for skills, the Centre was established in Mtoni Mtongani, Temeke Municipality in 1993. The support to the children with mental disabilities is a relief to poor parents and at the same time enables the children to serve themselves e.g. dressing up, undressing, going to toilet etc. Through skills training, children with disabilities are able to make carpets, batik, table mats (hand crafts). The society is now educated so they are no longer hiding children with disabilities and is rather cooperating with those able to support the Centre. The Centre provides special and basic education and sports following the special education curriculum under the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and has managed to reintegrate children with disabilities into normal primary school. In 2002 the centre started a Home Visiting Program (HVP) in one Municipality of Dar es Salaam and extended to all three Municipalities in the city.

The sites under Tanzania Episcopal Council (TEC) and other institutions visited by 6 groups of the delegates are described next.

### **Msimbazi Children Home**

Msimbazi Children Home was established in 1953 to create opportunities for children aged between 1 day and 2 years (up to 5 years for emergency cases) at risk and orphans to receive their basic needs and receive an education. For over 5 decades, the centre has saved the lives of many orphans. The Centre currently cares for 42 children—providing them with proper parental care and guidance, rescuing many from risk of violence and abuse. The Centre is however challenged by some parents/relatives who abandon their responsibility and want the children to stay at the centre beyond the 2-year term—hindering the Centre from admitting new children. The support in cash and in kind, which the Centre receives, is very limited. The Centre is seeking to collaborate with people of goodwill with initiatives for the wellbeing of orphans.

### **Centre for Peace and Joy**

The Centre for Peace and Joy is located at Mburahati - Kinondoni Municipality. It was established in 1976 to provide basic needs, education and life skills to needy children at risk—especially orphans, abandoned children, children with disabilities and elderly persons in need. At the time of the visit there were 55 children, 22 children with disabilities and 42 elderly persons being cared for at the Centre. Since its establishment the Centre has provided education and care to a number of children—many of

whom are now gainfully employed both inside and outside Tanzania. The needy are made to value/have hope and most of them make this their home. The Centre rescues two to three abandoned children weekly.

### **The Village of Joy**

The Village of Joy located in Mbweni - Kinondoni Municipality was established in 2002 by the Virgin Mary Mother of Orphans constituents to host and help 1,000 HIV/AIDS orphans. At the time of the visit there were 110 children aged between 3 and 16 years in the Village receiving education in order that they may help themselves in the future. While in the village the children are assured of psychosocial support, parental care and guidance with a school program that is progressing very well. The children's performance in the school (where they are also entertained by a choir) is encouraging.

### **Pastrol Activities and Services for People with AIDS Dar es Salaam (PASADA)**

PASADA was established in 1992 to reach the poorest of the poor living with and affected by HIV/AIDS and to provide them with holistic care and support services ranging from HIV counseling and testing for adults and children, Home-Based Care and Palliative Care. PASADA also offers training to community members, government institutions and partner organizations. Although PASADA which is located at Chang'ombe opposite Police Station—Temeke supports infected and affected children between the ages of 1 day and 18 years, their services are often extended to those above 18 years if they

are still in school. PASADA's services in Dar es Salaam and the Coast Region are available to people of all faiths. These services have been de-centralized using a network of Diocesan dispensaries, health centers and hospitals. The services are currently available in 24 facilities in Dar es Salaam and Coast region. PASADA has recorded a significant reduction in mortality and morbidity and indeed improved quality of life among the orphaned and infected children as a result of the services provided by PASADA. Stigma and discrimination in the family and from the larger community, high population of orphans and vulnerable children in need of support services beyond PASADA's capacity, prevalent poverty that constrains the parenting capacity in most homes and the difficulty in re-uniting siblings distributed among relatives in the bid to spread support among them as much as possible continue to challenge the work of PASADA.

### **Tandale Social Development Centre (TASODEC)**

TASODEC—established in 2009—is located at Tandale Sokoni - Kinondoni Municipality with the purposes of providing opportunities for people around Tandale area (especially children and youth aged 4 to 20 years) to get pre-secondary education in collaboration with parents/guardians, and courses in tailoring, carpentry, artistry, salon, computer, hotel management, health services and counselling. Through its activities, TASODEC (with an interfaith staff) has witnessed close relationship between Christians and non-Christians (Muslims) and strengthened relationship between orphans and HIV positive

children and guardians. TASODEC Programs have also seen disadvantaged children getting education with some reaching advanced secondary education. TASODEC has also established community services (medication and meals) education for adults who are under CARITAS.

### **Dogodogo Multi-purpose Training Centre**

This Centre is located in Bunju A - Kinondoni Municipality and was established in 2003 as progressive efforts from Dogodogo Centre Street Children Trust (DCSCT) founded in 1992. The purposes of the Centre are to provide vocational training for skills to former street children from DCSCT not selected to join secondary education, those directly withdrawn from the street, children in need and from relevant organizations and those from quarry mining and to facilitate family reunifications. The Centre works with children aged between 15 and 18 years. The achievements of the Centre include the rescue and training either in carpentry, tailoring, multimedia, film production or firefighting of 380 street children/youths at risk, rehabilitation of the children's behavior and reunification of some of the children with their families. The children are kitted with necessary tools by which they can practice their skill and generate income. Children at risk have secured employment (e.g. some are employed at Real to Real film production) after completing training. Twenty (20) children and youths with 4 members of staff have benefited from the fire brigade exchange program since 2008. The Centre also has an entertainment group from the Multimedia Unit.

## Cultural Evening

**Guest of Honor: Mama Maria Nyerere, Former First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania**



The opening day of the GNRC Fourth Forum was concluded by the cultural evening and dinner hosted by the Local Hosting Committee of the GNRC Fourth Forum at the grounds of the Dar es Salaam Serena. Delegates sat in circles

around an evening fire to encourage story telling, sharing and simply listening to the sounds of the night.

The second part of the evening consisted of witnessing captivating

performances from a group of Maasai Moran reflecting (through song and dance), social occurrences within their cultural setting such as recovering stolen livestock, love and stereotyping other communities and music, dance and poetry produced by children living in very difficult circumstances. The children from Dogodogo Centre, Tandale Social Development Centre, PASADA and Baba

Watoto, directed by the internationally renowned Tanzanian singer, Carola Kinasha, supported by the Kikwetu Band, displayed breath-taking dancing and acrobatic routines. Sr. Jean Pruitt conceptualized the cultural evening, while Ms. Kinasha and children's choreographer Aida Comenero Diaz from Spain directed the performances.

### Lyrics of two songs played during the Cultural Night

#### Why are we Drowning?

Guys attribute it to Biology  
Others insist it is Geography  
Now they are claiming it is Psychology

Yet we know it is History  
AFRIKA the land of pride given to us by  
the Creator  
It has become an Ocean hit by a storm  
For what is this war we fight?  
Which is this Hunger by which we are  
pressed?  
Who are we on the Map?

Where is the Ark? Why are we  
drowning?  
Some call it Free Trade  
They claim the village has become global  
LONGIDO and NEW YORK  
Now have equal rights  
Yet we know there is no equality  
To protect ourselves we barricade our  
Doorways  
Fear has increased  
Pistols in the houses  
For what is this war? ....  
Where is Noah? Why are we drowning?

All that is ours is rated useless and all  
that is theirs better!  
Our cultures useless... theirs better!  
Our prayers useless... theirs better!  
But we know that this is but business  
Which is this, their superior culture that  
I know nothing about?  
Which is this God who dislikes peace?  
Whose war is this?  
Where is KINJEKETILE? Why do we  
drown?  
Where is MIRAMBO?  
Where is MKWAWA?  
Where is SOKOINE?  
Where is NYERERE?  
Where is SAMORA?  
Where is NKRUMAH?  
Where is LUMUMBA?  
Where is BANTU BIKO?  
Where is MAKEBA?  
Where is FELLA KUTI?  
Where is CHACHAGE?  
Where is HAROUB?  
Where is MWALIMU?  
Where is Thought?

## The Time is Now

Mother consolation is on her way  
She is going to Hospital  
Her Health is in doubt  
Because she no kick-back to give to the  
Doctor  
Neither does she have any bribes to give  
to the Nurse  
Distress is at home  
He is an accomplished University  
Graduate  
His life is in doubt  
Because he has no kickbacks to give to  
the employer  
Neither does he have any bribes to give  
to the Capitalist  
In the Estates People are destitute  
They are on the verge of picking stones  
The Citizen is destitute  
He is crooked the one towards whom we  
look

This situation was and is still there  
He is the true Enemy let us deal with  
him decisively

We can no longer be afraid  
It us our collective responsibility  
Let us all citizens together be  
accountable  
Our Unity is our only weapon

Remorse is a prisoner  
He is serving one and a half years  
For an offence he knows nothing about  
Except that he has no kickback to give to  
the police  
Neither bribes for the Judge

JUMA VEDASTO is also suffering  
He has stored his songs in his house  
The Fans are seeking to know why?  
But VEDASTO has no dollars to give to  
the DJ

Neither does he have a fruit for the  
Promoter

In the Newspapers they have penned  
Transparency is with us  
Our Wealth has been obliterated  
It is our Overseers reap the blessings  
This situation was and is still there  
He is the true Enemy let us deal with  
him decisively

HAWA lives in suffering  
Her neighbors raped her  
The community on its part only but  
laughs at her  
Because she has no kickback to give to  
the representative  
Neither does she have bribes for the  
County Secretary

Lady Nutritionist is also in tears  
Her business is in dire straits  
She did not succeed at the Bank  
Because she has no kickback for the  
Manager  
Neither does she have any bribes for the  
sentry

Corruption, my Brethren, is not a  
wound  
That we may term a 'core problem'  
It is your and my responsibility  
It is your and my disease

This situation was and is still there  
He is the true Enemy let us deal with  
him decisively  
Speak now; do not await the New Year

The Time is now

## Second Plenary

### Causes of Poverty



### Keynote Presentatons on the Sub-Themes

#### SESSION CHAIR:



**His Grace Archbishop Dr. John Onaiyekan, Catholic Bishop of Abuja, Co-Chair, African Council of Religious Leaders**

### Poor Governance: Building Partnerships to End Corruption

*Speaker: Prof. P.L.O. Lumumba, Former Director General, Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission, and Advocate, the High Court of Kenya and Tanzania*

### War and Violence: Ending Violence Against Children

*Speaker: Ms. Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative to the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children*

### Unequal Distribution of Resources: Giving Every Child a Fair Chance

*Speaker: Father Leonidas Ortiz Losada, Priest of the Catholic Church, Executive Secretary General, Latin American Episcopal Council—CELAM*

Corruption and Poor Governance, War and Violence and Unequal Distribution of Resources—perceived as main causes of poverty—have conspired to cause a contrasting situation of unprecedented global economic growth in many parts of the world, while significant parts still remain in absolute poverty. These three conditions agreed upon by the GNRC Fourth Forum as intricately related to poverty were comprehensively examined both in Plenary and Group Sessions—indeed during the opening and closing ceremonies and cultural night.

Under each of the thematic strands, i.e. Poor Governance: Building Partnerships to End Corruption, War and Violence: Ending Violence against Children, and Unequal Distribution of Resources: Giving Every Child a Fair Chance, distinguished speakers (a former Director General of an Anti-Corruption Commission, a Special Representative of the (UN) Secretary General on Violence against Children and a Senior Officer of a Catholic Episcopal Conference) shared knowledge, experiences, aspirations, commitments and recommendations.

### Poor Governance: Building Partnerships to End Corruption

*Speaker: Prof. P.L.O. Lumumba, Former Director General, Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission, and Advocate, the High Court of Kenya and Tanzania*

Professor P.L.O. Lumumba commenced by drawing parallels between the developmental realities of African countries during the periods of colonialism, the development aspirations of their elite as they struggled for independence and the present situation as they struggle to find their true place on the world stage. Having declared (at independence) their focus on fighting ignorance, poverty and disease, most African governments today are still defined by low levels of development characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment, insecurity and general social and moral decay. Bad governance reflected in misrule and corruption is partly blamed for all the developmental problems Africa is experiencing. That Africa—the richest in the world in terms of natural resources—is today at the bottom of global governance and development is indeed a paradox!



According to Professor Lumumba the root causes of corruption are related to prevailing political, social, economic and cultural circumstances. He warned of the challenges that must be confronted by all those, like religious leaders upon whom the obligation to fight corruption has been placed, for 'fighting corruption is not of the faint hearted'. He asserted that corruption affects all sectors of society.

'Corruption is an impediment to political, economic and social development, it hinders administrative development and performance, impairs economic efficiency, leads to brain drain, discourages foreign investments, undermines effective utilisation of natural resources leaving the affected countries vulnerable and dependent on outside interests, subverts democracy, undermines the state legitimacy, leads to capital flight, increases and skews public expenditure

on basic needs such as healthcare, education and infrastructure, leads to environmental degradation, erosion of social values, stifles local initiatives and enterprise and intensifies other social problems such as crime, unemployment, poverty and ethnicity.

Corruption also reduces the productivity of public investment and the country's infrastructure through misallocation of talent and other resources, reduces government revenue due to tax evasion, resulting in high taxation of the public, and reduces a country's competitiveness at the international level particularly with regard to trade, currency stability and investment. These consequences have an overall negative distortion on a country's development'.

For the full text of his remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)



### War and Violence: Ending Violence Against Children

*Speaker: Ms. Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative to the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children*

Ms. Marta Santos Pais addressed the sub-theme of War and Violence: Ending Violence against Children. She implored the religious leaders present at the GNRC Fourth Forum to recognize the sense of urgency and marshal their influential advocacy and critical support to ‘break the conspiracy of silence around violence against children, and generate visibility and concern at the negative impact of neglect, ill-treatment, abuse and exploitation of boys and girls.’ She urged the leaders to show concern over the fact that currently only 5% of the world’s children are protected from all forms of violence and ‘mobilize support, for the

introduction of national, explicit and comprehensive legal ban on all forms of violence against children.’

Ms. Santos Pais contended that the principle of eliminating violence against children is very clear and that problems arise at the stage of implementation. In her experience vulnerable children—because they find it difficult to articulate violence around them and/or are usually not understood when they do—remain at the greatest risk of violence. In what may be a surprise to many, 90% of homicides are not the result of war. A study by UNICEF found that 75% of children from the age of 5 years suffer from various forms of violence.

Poverty should not be an excuse for violence. Children are frustrated by violence. Children may be vulnerable to any of the following forms of violence:

1. Forced and early marriages,
2. Human trafficking,
3. Labour exploitation and poor working conditions,
4. Amputation,
5. Capital punishment,
6. Sexual abuse, and
7. Punishment in school

Girls from poor households are at greater risk of early marriage, as they suffer from lack of crucial information. Boys too suffer from violence.

She cited a study conducted in the United States of America in 2011, which concluded that a large majority of parents now recognize that violence is not necessary for a child’s upbringing. Children have ideas on how adults can prevent violence against them and should therefore be consulted.

Violence, according to Ms. Santos Pais has economic costs and has to be tackled in a sustained manner that generates sufficient concern and debate. This is however undermined by a serious dearth of data on violence against children.

Ms. Santos Pais similarly directed the attention of the Religious Leaders towards the ratification of the Optional Protocols on the Rights of the Child – which about 38 countries are yet to ratify. She concluded by requesting them to take interest in the global survey on violence against children being conducted by her office.

For the full text of her remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)

### Unequal Distribution of Resources: Giving Every Child a Fair Chance

*Speaker: Father Leonidas Ortiz Losada, Priest of the Catholic Church, Executive Secretary General, Latin American Episcopal Council—CELAM*

Fr. Leonidas stated that what united all human beings was ‘faith in the divinity, love of life, the defence of human dignity’ among others, as well as ‘the incessant longing for authentic joy, the capacity to welcome others, and tolerance in our relationships’. Fr. Leonidas underlined the special opportunity that interfaith dialogue offered human beings in cultivating mutual trust and understanding. In the Catholic Church, Fr. Leonidas said that interfaith dialogue is considered ‘beyond its theological nature’ and that ‘it is of special significance to the construction of a new humanity.’

He challenged the conventional economic model as the only way to address poverty, saying that even though there has been growth in Latin America, there were still segments of the population that were excluded. “It is no longer simply a phenomenon of exploitation and oppression, it is something new: social exclusion. This affects the very root of belonging to a society that one lives in, because one is no longer below, at the fringe or disempowered, rather one is separate. The excluded are not only “exploited,” they are treated as “scraps” and “disposable,” Fr. Leonidas noted.

On the Millennium Development Goals, Fr. Leonidas noted that while this was a good way to bring back the ‘excluded,’ more should be done to sustainably include all human beings, particularly ensuring children, are protected and provided for their basic needs. He



summarized what different faiths stated about the need to give every human being and children as a matter of course, a fair chance. Unequal distribution of resources, Fr. Leonidas lamented, was something that should be addressed urgently.

He concluded by reminding the faith communities to do more to advocate for change geared towards equal distribution of resources that assures that all children are given a fair chance in society. "It is about giving children a fair chance through comprehensive human development. Our beliefs inspire us to build a more just society. Our religious practice leads us to act quickly and efficiently in a world marked by indifference. Only then can we change the terms of relationship that our present day globalized society work by."

For the full text of his remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)

## RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FORUM

### Recommendations to Address Poor Governance and to Build Partnerships to End Corruption

Governance is a medium for advancing the common good and participation is a crucial element of good governance. Bad governance is both caused and reflected in over-stay in power, selfishness and nepotism. Other causes and manifestations of bad governance are lack of transparency, mis-understanding and mis-application of international structures of government and/or national need, domination, manipulation and opaqueness in the conduct of public affairs.

Fighting corruption requires multifaceted and multidisciplinary approaches and strategies, which target its political,

economic, legal, administrative, social and moral aspects. This calls for coherent, consistent and broad based approaches with long term perspective such as to:

- a. Declare corruption a national disaster that has undermined and will continue to undermine our development efforts to alleviate poverty and suffering among our people.
- b. Generate and demonstrate sufficient political will to tackle corruption.
- c. Strengthen the policy, legal and institutional framework to fight corruption. The UNCAC and the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption spell out clear benchmarks and measures for the effective, prevention, education and enforcement.
- d. Clean up the political party system and machinery: the power of setting an example by properly structuring and well governing the political party system if it is to effectively champion the broader public good.
- e. Increase transparency and access to information that provides a basis for government accountability and raises the barriers against capricious, self-serving intervention. Without accurate and detailed information it is difficult to assess company and board performance, set targets and allocate capital efficiently.
- f. Conduct life-style audits and bar corrupt officials and businesses so as to name and shame the corrupt, expose corruption to the public and boost public confidence in the fight against corruption.

- h. Protect whistle-blowers, witnesses and anticorruption fighters.
- i. Increase citizen activism and engagement in the fight against corruption by introducing citizens' or community forums directly corresponding with departments to keep a watch over corruption and service delivery in departments and monitor the progress of complaints.
- j. Set up independent anti-corruption institutions across the continent.
- k. Foster values that reject corruption that must reward honesty and discourage dishonesty. Importantly, political leaders must also be seen to adhere to these values.
- l. Introduce merit into political system that will go a long way to reduce the patronage system of jobs for pals, which fosters the environment for corruption.
- m. De-ethnicise and de-racialise the corruption debate which undermines the fight against it. These tendencies must be eliminated to ensure that when leading public figures are charged with corruption, the process of investigation and prosecution are devoid of ethnic or sectarian accusations such as 'my tribe or race is being finished'.

Religious leaders can effectively address bad governance through sustained advocacy for good governance and effective delivery of social services, fair and just economic policies and for more investment in agriculture. They should also advocate for the ratification, domestication and enforcement of protocols on the rights of the child.

Representation, accountability, transparency, respect for the rule of law, and effectiveness and efficiency in the management of public affairs should be the other areas that the religious leaders campaign around.

Good governance can also be enhanced by promoting knowledge and ethical principles within which young people get proper education with sincere interfaith cooperation, space for change is allowed, corruption is outlawed or made costly at all levels, spiritual renewal/change of attitude is encouraged and decadent cultures are discouraged, and manufacture and sell of arms is controlled, and illegal transfer ended.

Religious leaders must finally advocate for accountable government and participation of citizens aware of their rights and obligations, for institutions with integrity and cultivation of good leadership capable of implementing and maintaining good policies.

### **Recommendations to Address War and Violence: Ending Violence Against Children**

Religious communities can:

- a) Use their influence to encourage positive discipline and effective alternatives to violent forms of conflict resolution and break the conspiracy of silence around violence against children.
- b) Mobilize support for the introduction of a national, explicit and com-

prehensive legal ban on all forms of violence against children.

- c) Advance the campaign for the universal ratification of the Optional Protocols to the Conventions on the Rights.
- d) Reflect on good practices and factors of success, and support countries in their efforts to overcome persisting challenges.
- e) In addition to that, collective measure can be taken to pass legislation criminalizing violence against children.
- f) Ratify and respect all Covenants and treaties guaranteeing the rights of the Child.
- g) Complete Surveys being conducted to 'assess the direction to which we are going' should be completed urgently.

The group that addressed this topic added the following as the main causes of war and violence to include: competition over land and other resources, religious, ethnic and political intolerance, irresponsible media, poor family planning, and ignorance are seen as the main causes of war and violence. These in turn cause poverty, child and gender abuse, diseases, brutality and death.

War and violence can be addressed by the promotion of religious, cultural and universal dialogue and through use of social network media to share best practices of different communities to achieve peace.





# Third Plenary

## Panel Discussions



Reflections From Different Religious Traditions on How Poverty Affects Children

**SESSION CHAIRS:**



H.E. Rev. Mitsuo Miyake,  
Chief Senior Minister, Konko  
Church of Izuo



H.E. Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia,  
Ecumenical Envoy to Sudan

## Panelists:

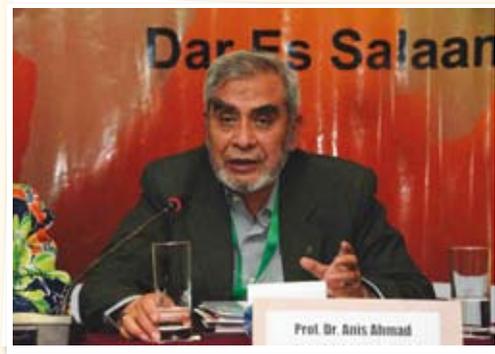
- a. Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of the Riphah International University, Pakistan
- b. Sr. Janice McLaughlin, President of the Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, USA
- c. Dr. Mrs. Kala Acharya, Director, K. J. Somaiya Bharatiya Sanskriti Peetham, India
- d. Rev. Hidehito Okochi, Chief Priest of Juko-in Temple, Japan
- e. Ms. Evi Guggenheim Shbeta, GNRC Coordinator for Israel

Six presentations were made highlighting the teachings about poverty and children from the perspectives of the Christian, Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh and Jewish traditions. A panel of eminent scholars of religion, academicians, authors and religious leaders explored *Reflections from Different Religious Traditions on how Poverty Affects Children*.

*“Religions, in cooperation with one another, can do a great deal to rehabilitate mankind and give to life meaning, purpose, and value. This can also do much for the establishment of peace in the world. Where politicians have failed, religions may succeed, provided they cooperate and recognize their mutual worth and potentialities; and provided they pool together the tremendous resources of religions and channel them in the direction of world peace. The major world religions, in cooperation with one another, may bring out the latent treasures hidden in each religion and help humanity at a time when it is facing one of the most acute spiritual crises in history.”*

## Reflections from the Islamic Tradition

*Presenter: Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of the Riphah International University, Pakistan*



Professor Dr. Anis Ahmad, founder and Vice-Chancellor of Riphah International University, Islamabad, Pakistan considered Poverty Alleviation Among Children: The Islamic Perspective. In his view, religion and its leaders do have a role in ‘saving the future citizens of the world from poverty, disease and corruption’. For the adherents of the Islamic faith, a response to the challenge of global poverty, disease and ignorance can be found in the Qur’an and the (traditions of) the Prophet (P.B.U.H).

Though through Zakah help is given to the poor and destitute and other categories of needy persons in the society, it suffers from a general mis-understanding among the givers and recipients who see it either as a tax or charity. Zakah, ‘is not a tax but a means of spiritual enhancement, a worship (‘ibadah’), disciplining of means of earning and spending, and a pre-requisite to complete one’s faith.’

Poverty and ignorance can be removed with the humble efforts of those who, being conscious of their social responsibility, do so without expecting any reward for their work except from the Lord of the universe.

For the full text of his remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)

## Reflections from the Christian Tradition

*Presenter: Sr. Janice McLaughlin, President of the Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, USA*



Sr. Janice McLaughlin, the President of the Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, USA, prefaced her presentation the Christian Perspective of How Poverty Affects Children with a proverb from the Tonga people of Zimbabwe to the effect that ‘the one who walks alone by the stream gets eaten’. Because the Tonga people live along the banks of the Zambezi River where they face the danger of floods, of crocodiles and hippos, of elephants, leopards and lions daily, the proverb guides them through the difficult and dangerous environment, besides emphasizing the importance of cooperation.

Children are especially vulnerable to many dangers in the world today which include a growing gap between rich and poor, crippling debt, corruption, HIV/AIDS, war, nuclear weapons, environmental destruction, human trafficking and mass migration, hunger, poverty and disease which stunt their growth, hinder their development and kill their spirits. Walking together to end child poverty is the only way to avoid being eaten!

The gathering at the GNRC Fourth Forum—perhaps the only Forum where the children’s voices have space—proves that another world is possible. It is a world ‘where children grow up in loving and safe communities; where they have enough to eat, clean water to drink, a roof over their heads, affordable and available health care, a good education and employment opportunities when they finish school.’

According to Sister Janice, the role of today’s adults is to ‘combat dehumanizing poverty by calling for a more just economic order. This new order will entail a radical change of life style for all but especially for those from the industrialized nations who consume the lion’s share of the earth’s resources. It will demand that all people learn to live sustainably on this planet, using only the resources that are necessary rather than depleting them. We cannot walk alone if we hope to realize this new vision. Only then will we be creating the conditions in which children can survive and keeping alive the flame of hope. Only then can something be done about the gap between the ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’ and the ‘powerful’ and ‘powerless’—a situation referred to by

Archbishop Desmond Tutu as “a new kind of global apartheid.”

For the full text of her remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)

### Reflections from the Hindu Tradition

*Presenter: Dr. Mrs. Kala Acharya, Director, K. J. Somaiya Bharatiya Sanskriti Peetham, India*



Dr. Mrs. Kala Acharya, Director, K.J. Somaiya Bharatiya Sanskriti Peetham, India discussed How Poverty Affects Children: the Hindu Perspective and stated that not many references regarding child-related poverty can be found within the Hindu scriptures. This is because a child within the Hindu religion is deified in the person of Lord Krishna—who is worshiped as a child. The second reason relates to the system of charity through which the Hindu religion addresses the needs of the needy children. From a Hindu perspective, the basic needs that are addressed through charity are food and education—for which both the seeker and giver of knowledge remain in need and therefore legitimate recipients of charity. The Hindu faithful are inspired to give charity by the Agni Purana (one of the Sacred Hindu Scriptures) when it

says: “One who gives wealth to a teacher and food to students earns the merit of making all the gifts”.

The system of joint (extended) family still in vogue in India—especially in the rural areas—has ensured that orphaned children still find support within the family (among relatives) thus significantly reducing the enormity of the problem. While food is considered the most significant gift in Hinduism, educating the children is considered more practical than charity.

For the full text of her remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)

### Reflections from the Buddhist Tradition

*Presenter: Rev. Hidehito Okochi, Chief Priest of Juko-in Temple, Japan*



Exploring Reflections from a Buddhist on How Poverty Affects Children, Rev. Hidehito Okochi, Chief Priest of Juko-in Temple, Japan highlighted the potential to change the future and re-make the world ‘because we are connected to everything else’. Using the recent experiences of Japan as an entry point, Rev. Okochi pointed out that economic development and globalization are directly linked to the

problem of child-poverty currently being experienced in Japan. Poverty may be much more related to the distribution of, rather than the simple lack of resources that are necessary to live like a human being. While suffering may be seen as the essence of life and craving, anger and ignorance as its root cause, human greed may be the real cause of poverty.

In his view, society will have to embrace human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in order to overcome the top down structures of domination that are manifested by poverty and discrimination. It is necessary to recreate out of this a ‘society free from the tyranny of money, exemplified by many indigenous peoples that have lived in harmony with nature—a flat society that respects all people equally, including children... because we are connected to everything, we are able to change the future and remake the world. This is the hope I want to share with the children.’

For the full text of his remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)

### Reflections from the Jewish Tradition

*Presenter: Ms. Evi Guggenheim Shbeta, GNRC Coordinator for Israel*

Ms. Evi Guggenheim Shbeta, GNRC Coordinator for Israel, shared with the Forum the concept of Poverty From the View of Judaism and highlighted the commandment “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” as central in the



teachings and practices of the Jewish religion in respect to fighting poverty and deprivation—a condition that is seen as a challenge both to the needy and those with the means to assist. She added that the Biblical basis of tackling poverty from the Jewish perspective is found in Deuteronomy 15: 5-7 and emphasized the importance of preserving human dignity while giving.

Ms. Shbeta explained that in Judaism, charity Tsedakah is understood and approached as righteousness involving the caring for and giving to the poor. It is a responsibility and duty that is manifested in the payment by the adherents of 10% from their income to maintain the needy. While giving to the poor is a duty, working to eradicate poverty is an even higher calling.

‘It is through providing people with the means to maintain themselves with dignity that we fulfil the highest goal of “Tsedaka”—righteousness—charity, and it is through righteousness, teaches the Bible and the Jewish Tradition, that we bring redemption for humankind’.

For the full text of her remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)



### Roundtable Consultations on Partnership to Address Poverty

Partners Present: Aga Khan Development Network, African Council of Religious Leaders, Arigatou International, Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty (CIFA), Finn Church Aid (FCA), the Islamic Foundation Kenya, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Religions for Peace*, and World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD)

#### SESSION CHAIR:

**H.E. Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, Ecumenical Envoy to Sudan**



Fifteen (15) faith-based and other development and social organizations working with, and for children, were invited to the Roundtable. They met to reflect on opportunities and strategies for partnership to address poverty. The Chair acknowledged the apologies of the World Bank, the IMF, the African Union and the Young Women Christian Association, which were unable to attend and

in his opening remarks emphasized the need for faith-based organizations to work together.

People of faith work towards achieving the same goals and hence need to address the issue of 'how we can all partner'. In her introductory remarks, Dr. Katherine Marshall took over the chair from Rev. Dr. Kobia as he had to leave early.

*Introductory Comments and Remarks by Dr. Katherine Marshall, Executive Director, World Faiths Dialogue and Development*



#### The Challenge and the Problem

*The focus of this discussion can be framed in terms of MDG 8, the ambitious Millennium Development Goal, formulated in the year 2000 during the historic Summit at the United Nations, that focuses on partnerships and on mobilizing the resources needed to end poverty and work towards global equity. This goal addressed the many complex challenges in the path of progress, including insufficient and unpredictable aid flows, the tendency to work in silos (public or private sector, NGOs, business, and philanthropy), intricate links among aid, trade, and private investment climate, and the*

*challenge of achieving in a meaningful way to define and follow strategic frameworks that are country or government led (as well as the tensions between those two ways to frame the objective—who decides which is which?).*

*Agreement that religious institutions, their members, and their leaders should be front and center in achieving the MDGs is readily achieved. Fighting poverty and achieving social justice is in many respects what religions are about, a truth going back millennia in time. Compassion for the poor and outcast, especially children, unites very different faiths. Praiseworthy efforts to engage religious institutions as partners for the MDGs include work by Religions for Peace, the Micah Challenge, and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. However, the stark truth is that religious institutions have not been and are still not central partners in the global efforts. And the MDG deadline of 2015 is fast approaching. Indeed the central challenge now may be the participatory process of framing the goals that will succeed the MDGs after 2015. How religious institutions will participate is a central question.*

*Why has religion been less than central to MDG efforts and why have the MDGs been less central to religious framings of global challenges? The reasons are complex and include failures in various directions, including the technocratic framing of the MDGs and religious reticence about the development community's language and governance. An example turns around data and its uses and flaws. We heard often that 22,000 children die each day of preventable causes yet must recognize that these are faceless estimates. If we can report daily, if not hourly on stock prices,*

surely a real tally of children's welfare is an attainable goal.

Various efforts to engage religion more actively include path-breaking work by UNICEF and UNFPA. Many institutions have partnerships but these are generally episodic. The World Bank's World Faiths Development Dialogue, launched in 1998 under the leadership of its president, James D. Wolfensohn and the then Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, encountered doubts and active opposition that is instructive of the difficulty of building systematic bridges but also of the importance of the effort. Overall there has been progress on many fronts but achievements are partial and they are fragile.

### Complications

Seven priority issues deserve attention by the Global Network of Religions for Children and its members.

- a. Preconceptions of religion by secular development actors, and of development actors by religious leaders and institutions are a barrier and they reflect considerable mutual skepticism, indifference, and at times hostility. For many the "secular bias" which assumes that religion belongs in the private sphere with clear separation of religion and state prevails. The technocratic language of development-speak and its perceived association with capitalist market forces and the dominant world powers can be obstacles to dialogue and partnership.

- b. The complexity of the religious world defies simple solutions and the importance of religious roles and their contributions in terms of ideas and operational practice are often ignored in part for that reason.
- c. Information and data about religious efforts, especially at the community level but beyond, is poor and what exists is scattered. A prime example is work on health. Country by country knowledge of who does what with what resources and what impact is poor. Without this knowledge systematic strategic work and efforts to learn from both positive and negative experience is next to impossible.
- d. Governments in countries where development work is a priority rarely if ever look systematically and creatively at their religious communities as central partners in formulating strategies and working towards implementation. Either religious roles are taken for granted or there is unease or at times hostility. Politics often enters the picture.
- e. Aid coordination is a central problem. Tanzania is often used as an example of the ludicrous total number of reports the government alone must file annually with donors (one estimate is at least 25,000). Religiously inspired development work may be among the most difficult to coordinate and the least coordinated.

- f. Evaluations of the quality of religiously inspired interventions have generally been weak: what impact, what lessons? There can be bias against systematic evaluation as bureaucratic and low priority, but it is increasingly important, as development results are a focus. It is also critical for accountability.
- g. Partnership is notoriously difficult to do well. There are countless frustrations about erratic and unbalanced partnerships; too often the party who pays drives the agenda. New models of partnership that are built on true mutual respect are needed in many areas but especially with community driven religiously inspired development efforts.

### Towards Solutions

Among the many solutions the following offer promise.

1. Taking seriously the need for real dialogue on tough issues. Examples are the challenges of economic strategy: narratives that posit growth as the sole solution for jobs versus growth as deadly for the environment and society; and gender issues and changing roles of women in families. A controversial and practical issue like orphan care might be a way to open dialogue.
2. Mutual lack of understanding can be addressed both by working together and by systematic efforts towards both "religious literacy" and "development literacy".

3. More focus on evaluation is critical.
4. Mapping of work being done by religious institutions on development and good case studies to enable learning are critically needed.
5. Interreligious work holds promise. It may be less problematic for both development partners and governments as no one religion is favored. It can yield double benefits, first in achieving a specific goal like child vaccination, while also improving understanding among communities and building social capital.
6. Using technology creatively, for example reporting through cell phones on problems and progress, working with Facebook as well as radio and television.
7. Tackling partnership frustrations by elaborating clear principles and highlighting true success can help pave the way towards truly complementary and integrated programs.

### Roundtable Summary

A rich exchange among some 15 different organizations (religiously inspired and non-religious) highlighted the diversity and richness of approaches and the groundwork and affirmed many of the issues highlighted in the introduction. Several areas are of central concern:

- i. Highlighting and documenting successful work and especially

its innovative dimensions in furthering human development can open doors for new partnerships. They can help in furthering the critical elements of knowledge and trust that are vital for successful work generally and creative partnerships in particular.

- ii. Many affirmed the benefits of interreligious efforts, as a way to achieve the double benefits of inclusive programs and alleviating tensions among different communities. This applies both for dialogue and for common action, preferable with links between the two.
- iii. Concerns about the current weakness of partnership principles and models are shared.
- iv. The problems of poor coordination, overlapping efforts, and working at cross-purposes are indeed acute.
- v. The silo phenomenon was underscored. In particular the discrepancy between vertical models,

sector by sector, that dominate in the secular development community, versus horizontal, integrated visions and approaches that tend to dominate religiously liked approaches.

- vi. Ethics, ethics, ethics: good governance (and fighting corruption) are about integrity and ethics. Religious institutions should have much to contribute.
- vii. Ethics and accountability are intrinsically linked.
- viii. Knowledge gaps are a critical constraint and should be addressed, through networks, sharing information, and solid analytic work.
- ix. There are common values that run as a thread through most religiously inspired development work, that offer much to build on. Concern for children is a prime example. Common values can underpin advocacy work for important causes.

## GNRC Around the World

### GNRC Regional Sessions



#### SESSION MODERATORS

##### GNRC Africa:

*Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali (Kenya), GNRC Coordinator for Africa*

##### GNRC Arab States:

*Rev. Dr. Qais Sadiq (Jordan), GNRC Coordinator for Arab States*

##### GNRC Europe:

*Ms. Marta Palma (Chile), GNRC Coordinator for Europe*

##### GNRC Israel:

*Ms. Evi Guggenheim Shbeta (Israel), GNRC Coordinator for Israel*

##### GNRC Latin America and the Caribbean:

*Ms. Mercedes Roman (Ecuador), GNRC Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean*

##### GNRC South and East Asia:

*Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne (Sri Lanka), GNRC Coordinator for South Asia*

GNRC members from various world regions under the facilitation of regional coordinators met over 3 sessions (17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012) during the Fourth Forum to reflect upon the efforts made by different actors (in their respective regions) to address the challenges facing children across the world. They also made commitments for their next interventions as regions and individual organizations.

The regions that met included GNRC Africa, GNRC Arab States, GNRC Europe, GNRC Israel, GNRC Latin America and Caribbean and GNRC South East Asia. Below are the summaries of the outcomes from these regional sessions.

### GNRC Africa

Participants discussed various issues that contributed to Africa's seemingly perennial vicious cycle of poverty. Participants reiterated that poverty was the gravest injustice in Africa. The injustices resulting from poverty were reprehensible, ignominious and unconscionable, as Africa was richly endowed with natural resources, but exploited for the benefit of a few in the continent, and others from outside the continent. Corruption and poor governance was particularly cited as one of the most serious issues affecting African countries, and contributing to poverty.

GNRC Africa members noted that poverty was both the cause and result of wars and violence in many African countries. It is therefore an imperative that faith communities and religious leaders are mobilized to prevent wars and violent conflicts, and address structural

conflicts before they turn violent. Singling out particularly the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes Region and the Mano River Basin countries, GNRC Africa members underlined that those conflicts were preventable, and called upon governments and multi-lateral institutions to act. Faith communities should be at the forefront to address the conflicts from the family levels, all the way to the national and regional levels.

While faith communities were noted to be working hard to address poverty at the grassroots through social services including education and health services, GNRC Africa members thought that it was necessary to ensure governments in Africa were responsive to the needs of their people. The participants noted that there were sufficient resources in the continent for every man, woman and child, and extreme forms of poverty would be made history if these resources were put to good use. Further, exploitative economic models that only considered growth in numbers in forms of statistics and profits did more harm than good to all. Therefore a campaign to dissuade companies from following these models and embrace ethical principles and practices, including genuine corporate social responsibility, was necessary. Governments should put in place mechanisms that protect the vast majority of Africans from exploitative economics, unfair trading practices and plundering of resources, it was emphasized in the Africa sessions.

Participants underlined the man-made nature of poverty, and its transformation into a complex phenomenon, but that solutions were within reach. To see what faith communities and organizations

were doing to lift their communities from poverty, members received and discussed presentations from the IRCU—Uganda, the Aga Khan Development Network, The Women of Faith Network—Nigeria and a children project in Zimbabwe. The presentations from Nigeria and Zimbabwe were done by video. The following were presented.

1. Care and treatment of children with HIV—including psycho-social support for children living positively, prevention of mother-to-child infection, and promotion of abstinence among the youth as a faith-based method of preventing spread undertaken by the Interreligious Council of Uganda (IRCU). Other interventions are supporting former child soldiers, and training and equipping young people with skills through vocational training.
2. Infrastructural development and provision of social services to those in need across the world by the Aga Khan Development Network—a faith inspired development organization that does not discriminate on the basis of religion. The economic model of Aga Khan Development Network is famed for its community—driven nature, and professionally run in sustainable manner.
3. Conflict transformation and peacebuilding work performed by the Africa Women of Faith Network—Nigeria. The Network that enjoys the support of religious leaders conducts interfaith sessions through which they enhance their unity in diversity and commitment to shared security—since all religions teach peace. The Network has denounced acts of

violence that are currently going on in Nigeria where innocent human lives are taken due to selfish interests by some violent groups. The Network stands out as a role model.

4. Improvement of the lives of vulnerable children—including orphans and children with disability—in Zimbabwe. The project to support the wellbeing of the children is carried out through agricultural activities—growing and selling vegetables—to raise income for the programme. After the discussions and presentations, the participants and members of GNRC committed to do the following;

#### Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC)

- a. Agreed to establishing GNRC Country Committees in each and every Country in Africa
- b. Where possible, introduce GNRC at the grassroots, especially to those community organizations working for children
- c. Recruit more members into the GNRC movement
- d. At the GNRC committees and groups, conceive poverty alleviation programmes related to the theme of the Fourth Forum at the grassroots
- e. Work with other interfaith and faith organizations to address the many challenges affecting the children of Africa
- f. Renewing commitment with a clear vision and focus towards addressing challenges that affect their communities especially the children.

- g. Encourage team-work through community mobilization, making innovations in what they are currently doing, as a possible way of moving towards addressing the challenges in Africa
- h. Starting with what they have, coupled with great consistency and determination towards achieving success

#### Ethics Education for Children

- a. Introduce the Ethics Education for Children toolkit to our communities at the grassroots, regions and countries, including schools and learning institutions
- b. Build and develop a pool of trainers for the Ethics Education for Children resources guide, who in turn will train children and young people in their communities on the use of the resource guide
- c. Promote the African ethical teachings and philosophy of Ubuntu as a part of the promotion of the universal Ethics for humanity
- d. Work with religious leaders to harness faith-based resources to promote Ethics Education for Children

#### World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

- a. Introduce and mark the Day of Prayer and Action to our communities, schools, mosques, churches, temples and to governments and other organizations
- b. Introduce the celebration of the World Day to more countries in Africa

- c. Plan for concrete actions to benefit children while marking the World Day

#### Poverty Initiative

- a. Strengthen poverty eradication work that members were already doing
- b. Initiate new programs to eradicate poverty, especially extreme poverty affecting children
- c. Support the new initiative on poverty eradication proposed by Arigatou International launched at the GNRC Fourth Forum
- d. Especially work to advocate for good governance, ending wars and violence and better distribution of resources, as first steps towards eradication of poverty
- e. Find ways to concretely work individually and collectively to address corruption, unequal distribution of resources, war and violence and poor governance
- f. Focus the GNRC Poverty Initiative on advocating for fair trade and economic justice
- g. Campaign for the eradication of all harmful practices affecting the lives of children at present and in their future
- h. Put pressure on African countries' governments to implement promises already made, (such as the Abuja Declaration) related to the health and educational expenditures at the national levels, while reducing expenditures related to purchase of arms

- i. While strengthening ongoing development work, educational and health programs, economic activities and peaceful coexistence, consider an African-wide campaign to cancel remaining unsustainable debts, and re-channel them into development of social services

The GNRC Africa session ended with closing remarks from the GNRC Coordinator for Africa, Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, who then announced the recognition of two outstanding individuals who had contributed to the welfare of children in Africa. Sr. Jean Pruitt and Bishop Method Kilaini were honoured by the GNRC Africa for their dedication to the work of children, and were awarded the Lifetime Achievement Awards. The GNRC Africa, in a citation read by Ambassador Madeira, recognized Dr. Mustafa Ali's Coexist Prize that was awarded to him earlier in March in New York by Coexist International. He cited such achievements as examples of the positive work people of faith, and interfaith collaboration, can do for Africa.

Two hundred (200) participants from Africa attended the GNRC Africa program at the Forum. The Africa Group Program was divided into three sessions taking place on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> June. GNRC members and participants from Africa came from Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The members thanked Arigatou International and the Global Network of Religious for Children for the opportunity to work together, share and plan for joint actions.

#### GNRC Arab States

The GNRC Arab States met and agreed to conduct workshops in their respective nations to:

1. Report on the GNRC Fourth Forum,
2. Introduce the Poverty Initiative, and
3. Working with the stakeholders, assess poverty issues at the national level

All the planned activities will target GNRC youth groups, teachers and educators, GNRC member organizations, religious leaders, civil society organizations (CSOs) and governmental organizations.

The activities will be implemented as follows:

- July 2012 – Jordan
- September 2012 – Palestine
- October 2012 – Lebanon
- November 2012 – Sudan
- January 2013 – Egypt
- January 2013 – Syria

Except for Palestine and Sudan the GNRC Arab States Secretariat will share with the GNRC Local (national) Committees the responsibility to ensure that the planned activities are implemented.

The members also drafted a very detailed regional action plan (available online at [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport.html](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport.html)).

#### GNRC Europe

The discussions during the regional meetings took place in the context of the growing poverty and marginalization

affecting children and young people in Europe. This can be summarized as follows:

- 19% of children in Europe are at risk of poverty compared to an average of 16% for the total population. Some 15% of children leave school without achieving a secondary education. The main groups of children at risk are: children in one-parent families, those with unemployed or under-employed parents, children in families of immigrant and ethnic minorities and disabled. Young people who have participated in GNRC activities have found a safe space and effective tools for addressing these issues.

### Recommendations and Commitments

In this context the participants reaffirmed a vision that no child should live under conditions dictated by poverty. We share a commitment to making the world a place where every child can be assured not only of their right to survive, but also be given the chance to make positive contributions to a world of justice, peace and dignity for all.



- Family violence claims the lives of four children under the age of 14 each day in the European region, some 1,300 every year, according to WHO

data. Violence in schools is one of the most visible forms of violence against children.

- There is no country in Europe that has not been affected by human trafficking, either as an origin, transit or receiving country, or a combination of some or all of these. Every city in Europe has street children. They are visible—they live and work in the streets—yet there is no reliable data regarding their numbers or their identity.
- Xenophobia and marginalization are growing in all European countries. In many occasions, families and religious communities respond to this problem by restricting the possibilities for children to participate in inter-faith programs.

The main strategies for the GNRC Europe will focus on responding to the issues of poverty affecting children; ethics education and the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*. The empowerment of young people will be a transversal priority for all GNRC work done in the region. Youth will have a leading role in all the activities developed by the GNRC Europe.

Within these three strategies the group made the following regional recommendations and commitments:

- Give a central and privileged place to children and young people in the implementation of the initiative on poverty, promoting their empowerment and citizenship; listening and learning from their experiences and ideas in dealing with poverty.

- Empower children and youth for doing advocacy through specialized training and the use of the *Learning To Live Together* manual.
- Raise awareness about the situation of poverty and marginalization affecting Roma People in Europe.
- Promote the use of the *Learning to Live Together* manual as a tool to eradicate poverty, promoting values of solidarity and creating a critical thinking about the dominant patterns of accumulation and consumerism.
- Build awareness among religious communities about poverty affecting children as an issue of justice and equity and offer them opportunities for positive action.
- Build partnership with religious communities and NGOs in advocacy actions in the struggle against poverty.
- Involve children in concrete solidarity actions in order to have an impact on eradicating poverty.
- Create a solidarity fund for the creation of small-scale projects improving the lives of children in Europe.

The GNRC Europe will explore alliance building with other organizations, especially with *Religions for Peace* in Europe, MIDADE (Catholic Apostolic Children's Movement) and the Muslim Scouts in France for the celebration of the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*, the Poverty Initiative and the Campaign on Water (promoted by *Religions for Peace*)

The Convention for the Rights of the Child will continue to be a central framework for the GNRC Europe and this will be implemented mainly through our participation in the World Day. In Europe the World Day will continue focusing on violence against children. The issues of water and the whole concern for the environment will be an important component of the initiative on poverty.

GNRC Europe will also share methodologies for working with youth and children between partner organizations. We took note about the importance for children to work together in partnership with adults and with families in order to achieve positive changes. We strongly recommend the preparation of materials and methodologies for doing this.

GNRC Europe will also incorporate ethics, cultural and spiritual dimensions in the struggle against poverty, looking for equity and harmony in our relationships with other living beings and nature.

### GNRC Israel

Even though Israel is in the Region of the Middle East the Israeli delegation was prepared in advance that during the Regional Sessions they would just meet with the Israeli delegation. There was satisfaction that in the preceding working groups about Education and Violence against children there was a common meeting and working with delegates from the neighboring states of Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan. The Regional meeting was taken very seriously, seen as an opportunity to talk about future plans and options for GNRC activities in Israel.

It was agreed that there was going another Massa-Massar workshop to be organized in cooperation between Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam and The Open House in Ramle.

The idea of initiating and conducting an international Massa-Massar came up. This international Massa-Massar should include youth from other conflict areas in the world. The thought behind this is that the Land of Israel/Palestine is conceived by the three monotheistic religions as being the “Holy Land” therefore would attract people from different religions. Studying the conflict of someone else provides a different view on one’s own conflict and thus opens the mind and enables a different perspective towards it.

It was agreed to go on organizing study days at primary schools about children’s rights on DPAC.

Israel has a lot of refugees especially from African countries. They mostly live in Tel Aviv in very poor areas and are often being harassed. The idea to initiate activities with the children of these refugees was conceived at the Forum. Part of the Israeli delegation committed itself to act in this direction, in order to achieve change in the negative attitude towards this population and help empower these children.

Work has already started in this direction by one of the delegates.

For more detailed reporting from GNRC Israel, see [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport.html](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport.html)

## GNRC Latin America and Caribbean

The hegemonic economic model in our region promotes the concentration of wealth in small elite groups, and strips the rights to basic welfare and dignity from the majority of the population. Our region is embedded in a global market economy, where the generation and concentration of wealth is managed by private markets, leaving the State with little capacity to invest in policies for the public good.

This model is structured economically, politically, as well as culturally in contradiction to our religious principles; it questions and runs up against people’s true spirituality. Our communities of faith are obliged to make an ethical and prophetic commitment in the face of these structures, through advocacy, with the active and conscious participation of the population, not merely by responding through charity.

A quick overview of poverty and its impact on children in our region reveals two national situations that call us to reflect. One is Brazil, a country where income has been historically characterized by extreme inequality, but which over the last decade has been able to lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty. The other is Cuba, with a socialist system that focuses on generating public policy that favors the social welfare of its entire population—a country UNICEF has declared the only one in the region that can truly celebrate the fulfilment of the rights of children.

Brazil, with its new political and economic responses aimed at eliminating extreme poverty in its population, and Cuba, with its struggle to maintain a system whose economy responds to the needs of its entire population and not the individual gain of persons, both demonstrate that the wellbeing of children and the fulfilment of their rights are directly related to the political will of governments.

In this context, the economic embargo against Cuba is of regional concern. Cuba has become emblematic for the region and the world, by showing us that the wellbeing of all children in a country is possible, and is not tied to economic development per-se. In an intense process of globalization and transnational interdependence, the embargo is an act of aggression against the Cuban people, given the negative impact on its capacity for commercial and technological growth, and consequently on its national economy and the wellbeing of its people. It is also an act of aggression against efforts and hope for the construction of more just social systems.

As GNRC LAC and from the realities of our region, we reflect on the challenges and opportunities in relation to an initiative on poverty, taking into account the road traveled as a regional network, as well as the features of being an interfaith network that prioritizes ethics education, the wellbeing and rights of children, and their full co-participation in our work. This reflection leads us to:

Clearly define the roles of the State and of organized religion, as part of the private sector, with well-defined rules, seeking or creating the legal framework that respects the work of religious communities.

Educate our communities of faith, and particularly our children and youth, regarding the process of impoverishment, highlighting the evident linkages between poverty and inequality.

Listen to the children and to the people in the impoverished communities we work with. Their word must guide us, and it is our obligation to highlight their word in our political advocacy work with governments and in spaces for the participation of society.

Act with an outlook and attitude full of hope in the new generations. See the children and youth we work with as agents of structural change, in the awareness that values like compassion and solidarity are learned.

Encourage children and youth to develop a critical mind and spirit in the face of the values imposed by the system, the mass media, and the dominant culture; values that accept poverty as natural, as they promote consumerism, and in the end, do not reaffirm human dignity of all people, nor promote healthy development in childhood. In this regard, particular challenges among children and youth in our region are growing consumption of food with poor nutritional value, the use of drugs, and precocious sexuality.

Educate in values with a delicate balance in the use of language. On the one hand, it is important for ethics education to be free from excessively religious language, to emphasize values in a way that all people can put into practice. On the other, we cannot lose our identity as communities of faith; the sense of transcendence must not be lost when we educate from and for our religious communities.

Work on poverty and ethical values from a very young age, taking into account that early childhood is a crucial stage in a person's development. There is a need for tools to be created with this objective in mind, such as a manual for families and for early childhood, before the child is 11 years old.

Add elements directed at promoting leadership in children and youth when we work on ethics education and poverty, both to the tools we already have and to the ones that need to be created. Leadership and positive citizenship are interrelated elements in children and youth's responses to poverty.

Focus on the family as indispensable. We must work with and from families, taking into account new family models, seeing family as the first space for children's protection and comprehensive development, to which two fundamental rights must be guaranteed by the State: comprehensive and quality health and education.

Educate our children regarding our ethical and spiritual obligation to protect nature; promote awareness that we are part of a single ecosystem that we have to live with in harmony, and the responsibility that our actions bear on what we will experience in the future. Oppose economic development projects that do not ensure sustainable development; and, question policy proposals where poverty is solved through over-exploitation of natural resources.

Reaffirm the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as our working framework, as an instrument for raising awareness and promoting citizenship among children.

Work on the Convention through the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*, expanding the initiatives and focusing on violence as the cause/consequence of poverty.

In light of the aforesaid, as a region we commit to the following:

1. To mobilize our religious communities against the embargo of Cuba, given the impact of poverty on the Cuban people.
2. To work on the issue of poverty through Ethics Education, focusing on the family and promoting integral high quality education.
3. To promote participation and citizenship among children and youth, through *Learning to Live Together*, and by realizing the right of participation as a core principle of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.
4. To implement Ethics Education from early childhood. Until Arigatou International produces new materials with this objective, we will use those available in our partner institutions.
5. Reaffirm our work on violence against children through the World Day, linking violence with poverty and respecting national processes.

## GNRC South and South East Asia

### Introduction

The following report contains a summary of the GNRC South and South East Asia regional meetings that took place at regional times during the Fourth Forum of the GNRC that took place in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June,

2012. This is the first time that the region had partners from the South-East Asia region (from Myanmar and Indonesia) as part of the regional delegation—thus the region is highlighted here as GNRC South and South East Asia.

## GNRC South and South East Asia Regional Meeting

### Meeting Chair: Dr. Kezevino Aram

#### 1. Interfaith Prayer

The regional meeting was opened with an interfaith prayer lead by His Holiness Sri Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji, Ven. Medagoda Abhayatissa, Ms. Wati Wardani and an Indian-Christian minister who was present in addition to the regional delegation.

#### 2. Get to Know Each Other

Each participant had the opportunity to introduce themselves, their organization and the work they were involved in. A special welcome was extended to the new countries/partners represented from Maldives, Myanmar, Indonesia, Bhutan.

#### 3. Regional Overview

Mr. Suchith Abeyewickreme presented an overview of the key regional achievements and initiatives with some examples of activities from partners over the last few years. Also highlighted was that over the last couple of years the region has also welcomed partners from South East Asia and renewed partnerships in some countries in South Asia.

A question was raised why certain countries were not mentioned and it was clarified that this was due to the lack of proactive communication and GNRC activities from the partner organization.

The region reconfirmed the focus on the GNRC initiatives of *Learning To Live Together (LTLT)* and the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*.

Participants also made a request for an annual meeting of the country partners regionally to enable sharing and synergy.

The South Asia Secretariat introduced the idea of a GNRC regional youth group to be initiated with 2 or more representatives from each country.

Also highlighted was that GNRC's nature as a network is different from that of an organization and that especially should not be considered a funding organization.

#### 4. Initiative to Address Child Poverty

The participants went through the draft declaration and the poverty initiative concept paper to understand the proposed poverty initiative. Following the previous introduction to the poverty initiative the opportunity was provided to the participants to share their views.

- **Sri Lanka:** Opportunity for students from South and South East can be provided to enroll into the Institute thus providing a platform to live together

- **Bangladesh:** Violence against children. e.g. child marriage etc. programs must be enhanced on the existing programs. Some of the existing programs were providing shelter, vocational skills and education to street children.
- **Maldives:** Child marriage is the most prevalent issue due to Islamic extremists. This needs to be addressed. Similarly parenting programs also appears to be viable. It was recommended that *LTLT* manual can be incorporated into the leadership trainings program that is being conducted.
- **India:** Rural – urban youth exchange program was something that could be considered worth implementing. Also NGOs to secure funding from the government and to better their partnership relation with them.
- **Indonesia:** *LTLT* sustains the spirit of GNRC and therefore focus must be given to *LTLT*.

Programs that focus on birth certificates, child marriage and parenting came up as issues of concerns to address although the prevalence of these may vary from

country to country within the region.

The goal of the South and South East initiative in support of GNRC would be to work towards addressing and implementing the following:

- *Learning to Live Together*—Utilize the *LTLT* program to address issues of quality education and empowerment.
- The World Day—Child Marriage; address issues of violence against children through parenting programs, advocacy etc.
- Poverty Initiative—Broader set of initiatives at partner level addressing the issue of child poverty.

Initiative in support of GNRC will draw up a strategy that is practical and doable. Thus there was consensus among the regional partners that the GNRC's poverty initiative will enable them to synergize and strengthen their existing programs addressing issues related to child poverty. The partners from the region compiled the following programs that they implement addressing the issue of child poverty.

Country & Organization	Programmes and Activities
Bangladesh - Dhaka Ahsania Mission	Early childhood care and development Non-formal primary education Junior secondary education Drop-in centre for street children Prevention of trafficking of children Vocational/Skills training Child labour prevention program

	Child Rights promotions Prevention of violence against children Adolescent empowerment Healthcare and awareness Establishment of children's home for children of the age group 0-5 years Establishment of comprehensive rehabilitation centre for differently-abled children
Bhutan - Bhutan Youth Development Fund	We have a strong network of Young Volunteers in Action (Y-VIA) across the country  YVIA adopts a village (poor) and participate in community building (5 year action plan is developed) and then YVIA are mobilized from the community so that its sustainable.  YVIA has one income generating project to sustain the program.  A mind training plus leadership camp held every year. The camp focuses on life skills, local wisdom (through home stays in villages) and spirituality. Facilitators are youth who have been trained.  YVIA media and drama group  Advocacy through educational management and short documentaries
India – Shanti Ashram	We did... We are doing...  1. Ethics Education for Children and Youth  Workshops for children Training of Trainers for Young Facilitators Training Pre-school Teachers Ondru Seruvom ( Children's Parliament )  2. World Day of Prayer and Action for Children  Religious leaders and young people Weeklong program on the theme of CRC Birth Certificate verification Progress Card on Child Health

	<p>3. Youth Initiatives</p> <p>Summer camp for Rural Children Journey for Unity Food Bank Shramadan Programs</p> <p>We will be doing...</p> <p>1. Ethics Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On going workshops for Children</li> <li>- Nurturing young facilitators</li> </ul> <p>2. World Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plans to reach 20 states with advocacy and action oriented.</li> </ul> <p>3. Poverty Initiative</p> <p>Awareness Creation: Religious leaders to young people (Theme: Good governance)</p> <p>Activities : Children and Youth initiatives for poverty solution</p> <p>Nurturing GNRC India partners, reaching more states</p>
Indonesia - Ms. Wati Wardani (Teacher)	<p>Face to faith program—Tony Blair Faith Foundation: Connecting schools/students all over the world to learn together to have a dialogue on global issues from the perspective of their faith/religion.</p> <p>Conducting peace education. Workshops for student leaders from different schools.</p>
Myanmar - Phaung Daw Oo Monastic Education Highschool (PDO)	<p>We can commit to make the welfare and development of children through,</p> <p>Offering free education Child protection programme Love a child program Consortium for Children</p>

	<p>We can make the different ethnic children love and understand each other by giving a chance and opportunity of studying together, playing together, eating together, staying together.</p> <p>We can teach the children the essence of loving kindness, patience, tolerance, forgiveness and critical thinking. Creative thinking according to the Buddha teaching.</p>
Nepal - Shanthi Sewa Ashram/Hindu Vidyapeeth Nepal	<p>Regular Programs :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seeds of Peace</li> <li>Children's Study Centre</li> <li>Peace Clubs</li> <li>Children's Peace Home for Orphaned Children</li> <li>Programme for Street Children</li> <li>Thoughts of Youth – Interaction programme</li> </ul> <p>Occasional programs :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Celebrating International Day of Peace—Sept. 21<sup>st</sup></li> <li>- Celebrating International Day of Non-violence—Oct 2<sup>nd</sup></li> <li>- Celebrating WDPAC</li> <li>- Sharing <i>LTLT</i> with teachers</li> <li>- Training teachers on Ethics Education</li> <li>- Sharing <i>LTLT</i> with National Curriculum Board</li> <li>- Sharing <i>LTLT</i> in Youth Camps and Conferences throughout the country</li> <li>- Interaction in different orphanages</li> </ul>
	<p>Future plans: Continue the programs and expand them in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Poorer Communities</li> <li>b. Western part of Nepal</li> <li>c. Mobilize local partners</li> <li>d. School and other educational institutions to increase Child and Youth participation</li> <li>e. Promote peace education.</li> <li>f. Approach the government level</li> <li>g. Increase the frequency of teacher trainings</li> <li>h. Working at grassroots level for Children facing violence</li> </ul>

Pakistan – Pakistan Children’s Missions Association	<p>Current program:</p> <p>Education to Children <i>World Day of Prayer and Action for Children</i> celebrations</p> <p>Future Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training for Youth/ Teachers</li> <li>- Work against Corporal punishment of children</li> <li>- Involve youth in programs on Birth Registration and Against Child Marriage</li> <li>- Provide interfaith involvement to Children</li> </ul>
Sri Lanka – Sarvodaya	<p>Maternal Child Health programs</p> <p>Holistic and Spiritual Approach to Motherhood/ Parenthood</p> <p>Safe Learning Spaces for Conflict Affected Children</p> <p><i>Learning To Live Together</i>—Ethics Education Program for Children</p> <p>Nutrition Centre for abandoned babies of 0—3 years</p> <p>Homes for abandoned Children</p> <p>Home for teenage pregnant mothers</p> <p>Preschools for rural children</p> <p><i>World Day of Prayer and Action for Children</i> celebrations</p>
Sri Lanka – Sunethra Maha Devi Pirivena	<p>Running a school for Children who do not have enough wealth to study</p> <p>100 Children with economic difficulties are in the hostels with 500 other students</p> <p>Every year, scholarship program, stationary, cloth and other requirements are provided to 1000 students irrespective of ethnic group</p> <p>Dhamma school for the children mainly teaching them how to be tolerant and how to live together.</p> <p>Personality development competitions ( speech, song, dance, etc)</p>

## Dinner Reception for the Forum Participants

17<sup>th</sup> June 2012

**HOST: Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President, Arigatou International**

**GUEST OF HONOR: Mama Salma Kikwete, First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania**



Rev. Keishi Miyamoto hosted all Forum participants to a dinner, which was graced by H.E. Mama Salma Kikwete, the First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania. Rev. Miyamoto welcomed the guests and used the opportunity of their presence to convey the message of gratitude from the Japanese people to all the peoples of the world for their messages of condolences and heartfelt support following the Great East Japan Earthquake and the subsequent nuclear crisis at Fukushima.

He welcomed the First Lady and thanked her for agreeing to grace the dinner with her presence and for her concern and work for children, which she had summed up in the clarion call: “Life challenges should not be an excuse for you to abandon children. You never know who your child will become in the future.” Rev. Miyamoto then invited the First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mama Salma Kikwete, to offer some remarks.

### Remarks by Rev. Keishi Miyamoto during the Dinner Hosted for the Forum Participants and Graced by the First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania

*Good evening, Mama Salma Kikwete, First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. You have traveled from all around the world to be here and have just completed two very full days of enthusiastic participation in the GNRC Fourth Forum. I wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude by giving you an opportunity this evening to relax over dinner and perhaps have a bit more time to enjoy one another’s company. Thank you so much for joining me tonight.*



*As you all know, last year on March 11, Japan experienced a terrible disaster, the Great East Japan Earthquake. About 20,000 people lost their precious lives in the earthquake and tsunami, and hundreds of*

thousands more had to evacuate the area and are still living in temporary housing. The situation following the nuclear meltdown in Fukushima is still unstable. You may have seen the exhibit about the disaster set up at the hotel. His Excellency President Kikwete, who so generously participated in the opening plenary session yesterday, spent time looking at the photos.

The Japanese people are so very grateful for the condolences and heartfelt support that we have received from people around the world. We have learned a lot in the reconstruction process after the disaster about the importance of the unbreakable bonds between people, which we call “kizuna” in Japanese. Through the difficulties brought by the disaster, we have been strongly reminded how vital “kizuna” are to all of our lives.

In organizing this GNRC Fourth Forum, my central hope was to provide all of you with an opportunity to form deep bonds, deep “kizuna,” with one another. Tomorrow is the last day of the Forum. I think all of you have already deepened your connections, and in the time we have left together, I would be delighted if all of you could further strengthen your “kizuna” with each other, renewing your commitment to working together to build a better world for children.

I am delighted to say that we all have the opportunity this evening to form a wonderful “kizuna” with our Guest of Honour tonight, Her Excellency Mama Salma Kikwete, First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania. Your Excellency, thank you very much for gracing us with your presence.

Under Mama Kikwete’s leadership, Tanzania was one of the first countries in the world to develop a National Plan of Action for orphans and vulnerable children. The not-for-profit organization founded by Mama Kikwete, called *Wanawake na Maendeleo* (or “Wama”), works tirelessly every day for the welfare of girls and other vulnerable children in Tanzania by expanding access to education, adolescent health services, and maternal and child health services.

Mama Kikwete herself summed it up best when she wisely advised us, and I quote, “Life challenges should not be an excuse for you to abandon children. You never know who your child will become in the future.” These wonderful words are a powerful inspiration to prayer and action for all of us gathered here in Dar es Salaam for the GNRC Fourth Forum. Thank you, Mama Kikwete, for reminding us about our special role as people of faith: to hold out never-ending hope for children’s future.

Your Excellency, First Lady Mama Kikwete, thank you again for being our Guest of Honour this evening. I wonder if I might prevail upon you to share a few words with us all.

**Remarks by the First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania, Mama Salma Kikwete, during the Dinner hosted by Rev. Keishi Miyamoto**

Your Excellency Rev. Keishi Miyamoto - President, Arigatou International  
Your Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini - Co-Patron, GNRC Fourth Forum  
El Hadj As Sy, UNICEF Director for Eastern and Southern Africa



Dr. Mustafa Ali, Chairman, GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee  
Mr. Abubakar Francis, Secretary General, GNRC Fourth Forum  
Eminencies, Excellencies, distinguished participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I thank you Reverend Keishi Miyamoto, President of the Arigatou International, for inviting me to the dinner organized in honour of delegates attending the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children. Allow me to use this opportunity to extend to you, ladies and gentlemen, who have come from long distances to attend this important forum, a hearty welcome. It is my sincere hope that your stay here in Dar es Salaam will be as comfortable and as hospitable as possible.

I thank GNRC for organizing this conference here in Tanzania. As mentioned by His Excellency President Jakaya Kikwete in his remarks to this Forum

yesterday, we feel honoured to play host to such a distinguished gathering of over 300 participants from 64 different countries.

For those of you who are visiting us for the first time, I encourage you to spare some time after your conference to see a bit of our country and enjoy what we have to offer in the hospitality, leisure and tourism industry. I am sure you will not be disappointed for Tanzania is well endowed with world class tourist sites including game parks, serene sandy beaches and many scenic sites. There is also a rich historic and cultural heritage to fascinate many who experience it.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me also to take this opportunity to applaud the good work by the Global Network of Religions for Children today. Their commitment and dedication is without doubt; it is clearly demonstrated

*in the theme of the Fourth Forum “Ending Poverty, Enriching Children”. Indeed, poverty is a serious challenge to most of the developing countries. The world statistics that have been delivered by various speakers to the Fourth Forum, provide a stark reminder of the enormity of work that we all have before us. We cannot allow 22,000 children to continue dying each day due to poverty without doing anything. As we prepare to take our dinner this evening, 300 million children will go to bed hungry today, tomorrow and day after tomorrow. Certainly, we should not allow this trend to continue.*

*Each one of us has to play his or her part to reverse this sad situation. We have the duty to do so. All the holy books, the Holy Qur’an and Holy Bible, bestow this obligation on us. When you read the book of Isaiah 1:17 it says “learn to do right.*

*Seek Justice, encourage the oppressed, and defend the cause of the fatherless ...’ This gathering tonight is an important assurance that we are committed to do what the scripture prescribes us to do. I call upon other local and international organizations to emulate what GNRC is doing.*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

*Let me conclude by declaring my full support for the poverty initiative, which will be launched tomorrow here in Dar es Salaam. I call upon all the other First Ladies from around the world to support this noble initiative and where possible work with GNRC to fulfil this historical duty. On my part, I assure you that we will walk with you in this journey.*

*I thank you for listening.*

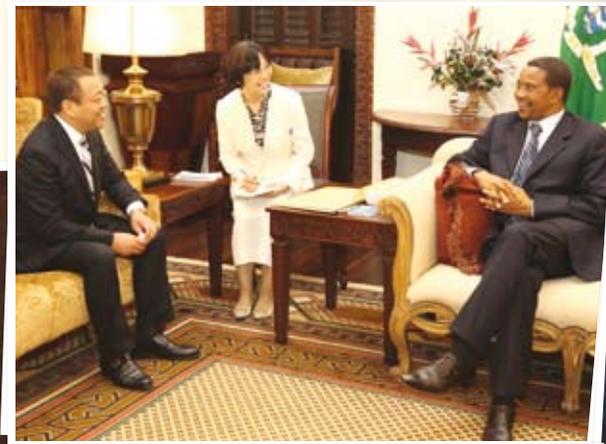


Courtesy Call on President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, at the State House, Dar es Salaam

17<sup>th</sup> June 2012

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, accompanied by Bishop Dr. Method P. Kilaini, Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Mr. Abubakar F. Kabwogi, Mr. Shozo Fujita and Ms. Amelia Kakiziba, paid a courtesy call on H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete.

H.E. Dr. Jakaya Kikwete and Rev. Keishi Miyamoto discussed the need to strengthen interfaith collaboration around the world, noting that violent extremism was on the rise. The two also agreed on the urgent ethical imperative that no child lives in conditions dictated by poverty. Rev. Miyamoto thanked President Kikwete for officiating at the opening ceremony of the GNRC Fourth Forum. President Kikwete, for his part, thanked the Japanese community for working hard to provide leadership in mobilizing religious leaders to work for children's rights and end poverty.





## Fourth Plenary



Reports from the Two Initiatives: *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children* and *Ethics Education for Children*

**SESSION CHAIR:**



**Sheikh Professor Abdul Ghafoor El Busaidy, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM)**

## Report from the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

Speakers: Mr. Kul Gautam, Former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, and Convening Chair, World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

Rev. Dr. Hans Ucko, Co-Chair, World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

## Report on the Ethics Education Initiative since the Launch of *Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education* at the GNRC Third Forum in Hiroshima, Japan

Speaker: Ms. Agneta Ucko, Director, Arigatou International—Geneva

## Fourth Plenary Overview

In fulfillment of its commitments, the GNRC has been promoting ethics education for children and the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child using *Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education* and the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children* respectively.

*Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education* is a unique learning tool developed by GNRC in cooperation

with UNESCO and UNICEF to foster children's innate potential for spirituality. It is being used in many countries around the world, and has been translated into 9 different languages.

The *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children* has been celebrated around the world on November 20<sup>th</sup> every year since 2008. In 2011 alone, over 230,000 people have participated in prayer gatherings and action events organized in 97 countries, under the theme of “*Stop Violence Against Children.*”

## World Day of Prayer and Action for Children

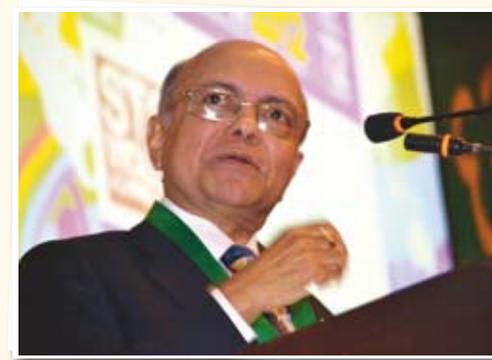
### Tackling Poverty to Stop Violence Against Children

The Convening Chair and Co-Chair of the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children respectively shared their experiences with the World Day with the final Plenary of the GNRC Fourth Forum.

“In the midst of unprecedented global growth, about 1 billion people still live in absolute poverty and do not have access to clean water, 800 million of whom often go to bed hungry, and another 2 billion

lack access to proper sanitation.” (Kul Gautam, GNRC Third Forum)

Dr. Kul Gautam, the Convening Chair of the World Day and Former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, shared the history of the World Day—and its growth from 2008 to date—with the Forum, explaining that the fight against poverty and violence can truly be considered two sides of the same coin.



He pointed out that the vision of a world in which all children have a joyous childhood: where they can play, learn and grow, where they are loved and cared for, where their health and safety are protected, and where their gender is not a liability is shared across the GNRC Fourth Forum. If all involved ‘help generate strong political commitment, sustained public action and genuine community participation, including the participation of children and young people themselves, the vision can be achieved within a single generation.’

He said that WDPAC counted on the religious leaders who ‘are by nature expert communicators, opinion leaders and social mobilisers—and accustomed to translating complex texts into understandable messages—to take a more leading role, joining hands with governments, NGOs, international organizations, the private sector and leaders of civil society to combat child poverty and violence.

The Co-Chair of the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*, Dr. Hans Ucko, affirmed the special place of children when he stated: ‘children have a way with us that brings forth the best in us, that open us for vulnerability, the desire to

protect, that makes us think less of our own dignity but more of the dignity of the child.’

From his perspective, the World Day conveys three concepts: ‘Prayer’, ‘Children’ and ‘Action’. For religious leaders, their role as religious leaders may obscure their sense of being simply human which is necessary for the full appreciation of and ministering to the concepts of ‘Prayer’ and ‘Children’. This means that religious leaders need to view themselves and function only as human beings in respect of their approach to the two components of ‘children’ and ‘prayer’. They are however called upon to act as religious leaders ‘to promote actions for the dignity of children.’



When the goal of a collaboration and cooperation between people of religious traditions and people in civil society involved in organisations and programs committed to the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the health, wellbeing and dignity of children, a resilience born of an experience and professional commitment that maintains focus, can be achieved.

## Ethics Education for Children: Learning to Live Together

Report on the Ethics Education Initiative since the Launch of *Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education* at the GNRC Third Forum in Hiroshima, Japan

Speaker: Ms. Agneta Ucko, Director, Arigatou International—Geneva

*Learning to Live Together* is an ethics education program suitable for use 'to protect children from violence, to prevent children from living in poverty and to safeguard the environment, which was launched in 2008 and has been published with the endorsement of UNICEF and UNESCO. Ms. Ucko employed an interactive methodology in her presentation of the report, inviting the children and the young people involved in the various regions and countries to share in their own words and voices.

Since 2008, 4,230 hard copies of the manuals have been distributed (all over the GNRC regions—and in some cases beyond) in English, French, Spanish and Japanese, with the Portuguese version (which until now existed in CD-ROM and on-line) now available in print. Pending final revision, UNICEF and UNESCO have validated the Arabic version for distribution and the Swahili version was en-route to the printers at the time of this report.

For the full text of the remarks of these three speakers, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)



## Closing Ceremony and Interfaith Prayer for Peace





**SESSION CHAIR:**

**His Grace Archbishop Dr. John Onaiyekan, Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, Co-Chair, African Council of Religious Leaders**

Formal Launch of the GNRC's New Poverty Initiative

Reading of the Forum Declaration by Religious Leaders and Presentation of the Declaration to Children

**CLOSING REMARKS:**

**H.E. Prof. Dr. Anna Tibaijuka, Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development,**

**Closing Remarks by H.E. Prof. Dr. Anna Tibaijuka**

In her remarks Dr. Tibaijuka encouraged delegates to start implementing the resolutions they committed themselves to at the Forum in their individual countries as the only way to ensure that they, and the children with whom and for whom they work, are winners. Any temptation

For the full text of her remarks, visit: [www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport](http://www.gnrc.net/en/4forumreport)



**Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Humans Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)**

**Interfaith Prayer for Peace**

The GNRC Fourth Forum was concluded on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010 in a closing ceremony held at the HYATT, Dar es Salaam Kilimanjaro (Kibo Hall) with the formal launch of the GNRC's New Poverty Initiative, the reading of the Forum Declaration by Religious Leaders, an address by H.E. Prof. Dr. Anna Tibaijuka and an Interfaith Prayer for Peace.

to wait for the fifth GNRC Forum would mean that children keep on dying because of poverty. 'With strong leadership of the Arigatou International, under Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, I believe losing will not be your option. So next time you meet at the Fifth Forum you will be celebrating your good work and achievement done by yourselves as you have declared here in Dar es Salaam.'





## Launch of the New Poverty Initiative at the GNRC Fourth Forum

### Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty



address not only the systemic structures but also the roots of the problem in the human heart—greed, ignorance, hatred and fear.

The overall objective is to establish a long-term global initiative that will contribute to ending poverty by addressing economic injustices at their core.

Poverty is the gravest global injustice of our times. There is enough in this world for everyone, but it is unjustly distributed. It is the worst and most extensive form of violence in the world. Therefore, there is an urgent ethical imperative that we commit ourselves to a vision that no one, especially children, should live under conditions imposed by poverty. With the resources of our religious and spiritual traditions, we can take action to foster conscience, increase empathy, promote just structures and make governments responsible to their people in eradicating poverty.

Partnerships specifically addressing child poverty must go beyond the 2015 target year of the Millennium Development Goals. They must go beyond conventional economic approaches for addressing poverty. For these partnerships to be sustainable and effective, they must

And so today, at the Global Network of Religions for Children Fourth Forum, we launch a global initiative that will emphasize spiritual awakening to address the root causes of poverty. This initiative will challenge the unequal distribution of resources, war and violence, poor governance and corruption. It will utilize interfaith advocacy and grassroots action to overcome poverty.

As we launch this global campaign—which seeks to bring together children and young people, religious leaders, faith communities, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, educators, governments, development banks, businesses, media, and all people of good will—we rededicate ourselves to building a world where no child will live in poverty.

Dar es Salaam, June 18, 2012

# Interfaith Prayer for Peace

Religious leaders from Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sectarian Shinto and Sikhism present at the GNRC Fourth Forum during the closing ceremony which took place on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at the HYATT Regency, Dar es

Salaam, Kilimanjaro (Kibo Hall), participated in an Interfaith Prayer for Peace in their own respective faith traditions and followed by the delegates.

Baha'i



Christianity



Islam



Sikhism



Buddhism



Hinduism



Judaism



Sectarian Shinto



## GNRC Fourth Forum Outcome Document: Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty

### Preamble

Poverty is the gravest global injustice of our times. There is enough in this world for everyone, but it is unjustly distributed. It is the worst and most extensive form of violence in the world. Therefore, there is an urgent ethical imperative that we commit ourselves to a vision that no one, especially children, should live under conditions imposed by poverty. With the resources of our religious and spiritual traditions, we can take action to foster conscience, increase empathy, promote just structures and make governments responsible to their people in eradicating poverty.

Partnerships specifically addressing child poverty must go beyond the 2015 target year of the Millennium Development Goals. They must go beyond conventional economic approaches for addressing poverty. For these partnerships to be sustainable and effective, they must address not only the systemic structures but also the roots of the problem in the human heart—greed, ignorance, hatred and fear.

The overall objective of the initiative is to establish a long-term global initiative that will contribute to ending poverty by addressing economic injustices at their core. This will be achieved by developing new partnerships with others to address the economic injustices, and developing concrete programs and projects aimed at alleviating poverty, while at the same time addressing the root causes of poverty in the human heart.

At the Global Network of Religions for Children Fourth Forum, the global initiative *Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty* was launched. This initiative will emphasize spiritual awakening to address the root causes of poverty. This initiative will challenge the unequal distribution of resources, war and violence, poor governance and corruption. It will utilize interfaith advocacy and grassroots action to overcome poverty.

As the global campaign that seeks to bring together children and young people, religious leaders, faith communities, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, educators, governments, development banks, businesses, media, and all people of good will was launched, GNRC Members rededicated to support this initiative by building a world where no child will live in poverty.

### Background

The world is currently experiencing an economic upheaval of gigantic proportions. In the more industrialized countries, the financial and economic crises have negatively impacted both the middle class and the poor. In the less developed countries, it is highly unlikely that the Millennium Development Goals will be achieved, as planned and hoped for, by 2015. Some Sub-Saharan African and South Asian countries are off-track in their attempts to halve extreme poverty.

Some countries have made significant progress, some have remained stagnant, and others have dropped deeper into poverty. Results are very mixed.

Enormous challenges keep children in poverty: unequal distribution of resources, war and violence, and poor governance. They have become part of unjust socio-economic structures. Systemic structures of injustice remain, and continue to be major impediments to the fight against poverty. In some cases, these systemic structures are, tragically, accepted as normal and part of the natural order of things. Children are always the worst hit. While progress is experienced in some parts of the world, we cannot accept that the current state of half-progress is adequate. An initiative that addresses the systemic structures of injustice, especially socio-economic injustice, is therefore imperative.

### Faith Traditions' Sources and Resources for Eradicating Extreme Forms of Poverty

Faith communities bring significant resources to the table for partnering with other sectors of society. Faith-Based initiatives have raised many poor people out of poverty. Vast networks based on, or inspired by, religions are extensively reaching out to many low-income, poverty-stricken, disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.

The systems and models include Islamic banking, Buddhist economics, Christian charity, Zakat, tithing, Ubuntu, social justice and others religious voices that have historically denounced injustice, and brought back the faithful to rethink systemic structures of injustice,

transforming them to ones of justice and peace.

The religious resources to address poverty include spiritual, social and moral assets. Spirituality is the 'dynamic process of a conscious and ever-evolving path that brings us into deeper touch with ourselves, with one another, [and] with diverse ecologies'. Our spirituality demands that we unconditionally give to and care for the poor. Spirituality provides what many would call 'significance' to the act of giving, of care, of physically nourishing human life, and of empathizing with one another. The spiritual strength of the poor is one of resilience, of striving against poverty, always hoping for better days and, despite their own limitations, living in solidarity.

Historically, faith traditions have established many social networks and assets to fight against poverty. Community mosques, churches, temples, and shrines are focal social structures located in virtually every village, district and city. These social organizations range from regularly and frequently convened assemblies designed for worship and reflection to those specifically dedicated to education, health, emergency relief, economic development and human rights. Many have been successful in addressing poverty.

The moral assets of religious traditions ask us to treat others, as we ourselves would like to be treated. From this should follow the commitment to work for justice—in a way that rejects exploitation, corruption, and unequal distribution of resources. The golden rule has often provided a concrete moral basis for agreements, consensus, and acceptance to address

injustices in ways that empower societies and encourage people to work, share and live together in harmony. Moral assets build upon the spiritual assets to make efforts to eradicate poverty continuous and sustainable, providing encouragement and inspiration to continue the work even in the most extremely difficult environments. With these assets, religious leaders and their communities are uniquely positioned to address the deepest roots of poverty in greed, ignorance, hatred and fear.

Religious social structures represent significant channels for communication and action that can enable believers and communities to function as significant agents of change towards the eradication of extreme poverty. Doing together, rather than separately, that which we can do together, multiplies the impact. Inter-religious cooperation is both substantively and symbolically more powerful than the efforts of single religious communities working on their own. A genuine collaboration among people of different religions and spiritual traditions can send a powerful message, especially in advocacy efforts for economic justice.

### **The Value of Multi-religious Collaboration: The Ethical Imperative to Ensure No One Lives in Poverty**

The world's religious communities have taken, in general, three approaches to poverty eradication: humanitarian and welfare, development of communities and empowering of community members, and 'macro level efforts targeting political and economic structures nationally and globally' (Nontando Hadebe, 2002). The GNRC recognizes the huge benefits

that can be achieved when people of different religions and faith traditions work together to fight poverty. While many are already working to help people around the world to alleviate poverty, collaborative approaches to deploy these assets remain weak.

In previous GNRC Forums, meetings, declarations and statements, GNRC members and religious leaders have recognized the complexity of poverty, underlining its multidimensional and multi-generational nature. In the fight against child poverty, the GNRC will seek to establish partnerships with other faith-inspired groups, development organizations, networks, governments and multilateral institutions. Establishing partnerships to reduce or eradicate extreme forms of poverty is an approach enshrined in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

### **Scope and Potential Objectives of the Initiative**

The eradication of poverty is not merely an intellectual exercise of science, technology or economics, but also involves an inner change. To ensure that structures that address poverty are more efficient, it is necessary to transform the paradigm of development, and to take cognizance of the spirituality, ethics and values that promote sustainable development. Growth and progress are about improvement. They are about values, and thus about moral choices, which cannot be left to science alone to resolve.

Religious people and their institutions cannot sidestep the challenge of poverty by saying that it is an issue for politicians

and economists. Poverty is too serious to be left to financiers and economists alone. It is a deep religious insight that we are all responsible for each other. There is a need for rethinking, for joint action, for building coalitions, for engagement with other sectors of societies, all for the sake of the poor and above all for the dignity of us all.

There is a call to religious institutions to begin reflecting on whether a change of heart should not also be translated into an intentional economic policy in relation to environmental considerations and ethical investments. We are as individuals and institutions part of the problem of generating and continuing poverty. Now is the time to become part of the solution.

*Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty* will be a multi-pronged initiative undertaken in a coordinated manner by a variety of stakeholders to address—at multiple levels—the root causes of extreme poverty. The effectiveness of multi-religious platforms is in their power to, together, advocate for fairness, justice and compassion. The focus must be advocating for economic justice and eradicating child poverty.

Secondly, faith communities, through their various social assets, can contribute towards the eradication of poverty through education. This will be implemented at the grassroots level. Concretely assisting those living in extreme poverty to lift them out of it through education will be one key element in this initiative. Determining what different regions can do for each other, joining each other, for instance, in a "fast of solidarity," and

donating the funds 'saved' by fasting to the poor, or forging reciprocal "sister community" bonds, are some symbolic joint actions that can be implemented.

The overall objective is to establish an overarching long-term global initiative to contribute to the elimination of extreme poverty by addressing economic justice issues at their core, through multi-religious and other approaches. The initiative will be driven by faith communities and institutions, multi-religious groups, grassroots organizations and through partnerships with interested development networks and agencies from all sectors of the societies.

Specific objectives will include forging concrete partnerships, both intra-faith and multi-religious, and with other sectors of societies, at all levels—global, continental, national and local—to advocate for concrete measures that will address the root causes of poverty. Developing tools geared towards advocacy for economic justice, challenging the view that economic development automatically alleviates poverty, advocating for the development and implementation of programs of education that empowers children to address poverty, advocating for the development and implementation of projects that create an environment that enables children to be enrolled and stay in schools until they complete their education, are some of the specific objectives of this initiative. They will depend on the institutional capacities, philosophies and goals of individual partners and members of GNRC. A range of projects including but not limited to the following will be implemented by GNRC members and partners.

- Global-scale multi-religious advocacy with an emphasis on spiritual awakening to reduce or eliminate the major barriers to tackling poverty—unequal distribution of resources, war and violence, and poor governance and corruption—and their human root causes: greed, ignorance, hatred and fear. This will be supported by the development of relevant materials and resources rooted in religious traditions
- An advocacy campaign that includes the value and support of the family, as the first environment for the education and healthy development of children

### Global Advocacy

A global campaign program that brings together religious leaders, faith communities, faith-inspired development agencies, charities, enterprises, secular agencies and political entities to shape and promote development policies that go beyond conventional economic approaches, with the vision and goal of establishing a just economic order will be initiated. Some aspects of this will include:

- Advocacy campaigns at the global, continental, national and local

levels to address specific areas of action aimed at eradicating poverty. Elements of advocacy will be worked out with partners, and attempts to have activities every year on 17<sup>th</sup> October, the designated International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Main advocacy campaigns will be regional, national or location-specific programs/projects addressing, reducing, transforming or ending violent conflicts, and specifically aimed at building just structures

### Grassroots Action Flagship Projects

These projects will address:

- Creating opportunities for quality education for children living in poverty
- Creating conditions that keep children in school to enable them to access quality education
- Income generating projects for low income groups and families
- Developing and implementing projects aimed at ending violent conflicts in areas where these conflicts are barriers to eradication of extreme forms of poverty





## Commitments of Action from Forum Participants

Delegates wrote their commitments on cards and posted them on the walls of the Plenary Hall. A list of the commitments is reproduced below:

1. More involvement of children and youth in the governance and activities of my Organization,
2. Committing more organizational funds and resources towards anti-poverty projects that benefit children,
3. Sharing knowledge on How to Live Together with Youth and promote harmony,
4. Training on Civic and Ethical Education,
5. Helping the poor children,
6. Participating and using own resources in fostering development,
7. To educate the community on poverty,
8. To visit orphans,
9. To translate (into Kiswahili), distribute and explain the Declaration,
10. Promote activism towards the protection, participation and general care of the children,
11. Create/encourage community awareness and initiatives towards dealing with the problem of violence against children,
12. Teach other children about GNRC, Arigatou Foundation and their work and invite them to join the GNRC Network,
13. Start a Peace Club at school,
14. Start a community charity with other children,
15. Fight corruption both within and without the organization,
16. Work on the formation of a Children's Parliament,
17. Lobby the government for improved healthcare/shelter and education environment for children,
18. Propagate maternal health and child survival,
19. Set up programme to train Birth Attendants on saving babies with breathing problems,
20. Work with Youth Peace Forums in schools to build Peace, Democracy and a World fit for all,
21. Post the Declaration on the Website, Facebook and Twitter,
22. Increase the number of sponsorships for orphans from 150 -200,
23. Work with international Partners to build more classrooms and community projects,
24. Holding Interfaith prayer Meetings,
25. Translate and circulate the Declaration among members,
26. Promoting Ethical Education,
27. Revive and prudently manage the Village Community Bank,

28. Promote sharing among Youth,
29. Provide free tuition to poor children,
30. Promote Action involving children and Youth,
31. Integrate poverty eradication in all the projects of Women of Faith Network,
32. Present the New Poverty Initiative to Government and the Media,
33. Advocate for free Universal Education,
34. Organize children to combat poverty,
35. Build the confidence of the children and improve their capacity to fight for their rights,
36. Develop Tools for Advocacy on Inspiring, Acting, Changing,
37. Presenting the Fourth Forum Declaration to the Government Leaders and lobby for their endorsement,
38. Promote the celebration of the World Day of Prayers among NGOs and CBOs,
39. Promote a culture of Volunteerism at the communities levels,
40. Popularize the rights of the child among parents,
41. Form a Network of Youth Volunteers committed to helping children,
42. Reach out to more Communities,
43. Strengthen Children Welfare Education Programmes,
44. Publicly endorse the Declaration and New Poverty Initiative,
45. Undertake participatory Community planning Initiatives to understand the needs of the children and how to effectively address them,
46. Promote Love among Human beings and the respect for Nature,
47. Create a Fund (Micro-credit) from which the Youth may borrow,
48. Establish a Day Care Centre for Children,
49. Write down my plan,
50. Propagate my plan (for support by others),
51. Document Case Studies of local faith inspired work in local communities,
52. To work to bring faith-leaders to the cause of ending early child marriages,
53. Strengthen GNRC Structures within the regions,
54. Increase the number of children cared for by up to 100%,
55. Increase the bases and sources of funding by 50%,
56. Propagate the idea of Ethic Education in Schools,
57. Starting an Art Gallery,
58. Integrate Children's concerns in Interfaith Activities,
59. To involve leaders and the community in the fight against Gender-based Violence,
60. Start an Initiative on Positive Parenting,
61. Translating the Declaration into Braille,
62. Implement the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children in 3 New European countries,
63. Enlarge the GNRC Network by reaching out to other Interfaith organizations,
64. Mainstream Violence Against Children (VAC) issues in selected programs,
65. Strengthen (already established) Micro-Finance Programmes (VICOBA).



# Appendices

## Appendix 1

List of Participants of the GNRC Fourth Forum					
SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
1	Abdalla Talib Abdalla	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
2	Abdallah Mnyasi	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
3	Abdour-Rahman Ahmad	Imam	Nigeria	Islam	Delegate
4	Abdul Hamid Juma	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Child
5	Abdulghafur El-Busaidy	Professor	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
6	Abdullah Ahsan	Professor	Malaysia	Islam	Delegate
7	Abdullahi Issa	Mr.	Kenya	Islam	Child
8	Abdulrahman Wandati	Sheikh	Kenya	Islam	Staff
9	Abubakar Francis	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Staff
10	Abubakar Khamis	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Child
11	Abubakar Zubeir	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
12	Afida Salim	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Staff
13	Agatha Ogochukwu Chikelue DMMM	Rev. Sr.	Nigeria	Christianity	Delegate
14	Agneta Hanna Birgitta Ucko	Ms.	Sweden	Christianity	Staff
15	Aida Diaz	Ms.	Spain	Christianity	Staff
16	Aisha Juma	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
17	Aisha Kamote	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Child
18	Albert Jella Randa	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
19	Alhad Musa Salum	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
20	Alhadj As Sy	H.E.	Senegal	Islam	Speaker
21	Ali Hassan Mwinyi	H.E.	Tanzania	Islam	Speaker
22	Ali Khamis Juma	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
23	Ali Muhidin Mkoयोगore	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
24	Ali Saleh	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
25	Alinikisa Cheyo	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
26	Almas Shikongo	Dr.	Namibia	Islam	Delegate
27	Amir Ibrehim Abdou Awad	Mr.	Egypt	Islam	Delegate
28	Amos Kamugisha Mushendwa	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
29	Amos Mshenwa	Rev.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
30	Ana Velilla De Medio	Mrs.	Argentina	Christianity	Delegate
31	Anasa Chagwezi Muhina	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Guest
32	Andrew Rwela	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
33	Angeliki Aroni	Mrs.	Greece	Christianity	Delegate
34	Anifa Abdallah	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
35	Anis Ahmed	Professor	Pakistan	Islam	Speaker
36	Ann Hayden	Sr.	USA	Christianity	Delegate
37	Anna Andrea	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
38	Anna Grellert	Ms.	Colombia	Christianity	Delegate
39	Anna Maembe	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
40	Anna Mhina	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
41	Anna Tasira	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
42	Anna Tibaijuka	Professor	Tanzania	Christianity	Speaker
43	Anne Marie Froidevaux	Ms.	Switzerland	Christianity	Delegate
44	Anne-Laure Maria	Ms.	Belgium	Christianity	Delegate
45	Anthony Makunde	Fr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
46	Anthony Okara	Mr.	Kenya	Christianity	Speaker
47	Antônio Rodrigues	Mr.	Brazil	Christianity	Child
48	Apolinary Msaki	Fr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
49	Asha Maji	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
50	Ashaaban Abdallah	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
51	Asia Maulid Salim	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
52	Asma Ali Makame	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
53	Athuman Korongo	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
54	Atiye J. Shaame	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
55	Atsushi Iwasaki	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
56	Augustino Shao	Rt. Rev.	Zanzibar	Christianity	Speaker
57	Ayaka Goto	Ms.	Japan	Shinto	Delegate
58	Ayubu Anthony	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
59	Bafakulera Mpela	Mr.	DRC	Christianity	Child
60	Baraka Chedego	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
61	Barkis Mustapha	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
62	Beatus Mbunda	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
63	Bedria Mohammed Ahmed	Ms.	Ethiopia	Islam	Delegate
64	Bhat Raghupathi	Mr.	India	Hinduism	Delegate
65	Bissan Salman	Mr.	Israel	Islam	Delegate
66	Blandina Faustina	Rev.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
67	Camila Alas	Ms.	El Salvador	Christianity	Child
68	Carola Kinasha	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
69	Castor Msemwa	Rt. Rev.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
70	Ceci Boniface	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
71	Cecilia J. Mshanga	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
72	Celeste Derr	Sr.	America	Christianity	Delegate
73	Chacha Marwa	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Guest
74	Ceram Marija	Ms.	Croatia	Christianity	Delegate
75	Charles Kasibante	Msgr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
76	Charles Mjema	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
77	Charles Salala	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
78	Chieko Takegami	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
79	Chintamani Yogi	Dr.	Nepal	Buddhism	Delegate
80	Christel Iranga Kabundula	Ms.	DRC	Christianity	Delegate
81	Christina C. Mbaga	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
82	Christina Motto	Mrs.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
83	Christina Praz	Ms.	Spain	Christianity	Delegate
84	Cinthia Murangi	Ms.	Namibia	Christianity	Delegate
85	Cletus Majani	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
86	Clovis Boufleur	Mr.	Brazil	Christianity	Delegate
87	Daima Mpohamed Mkalimoto	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
88	Daina Zotea	Ms.	Romania	Christianity	Delegate
89	Dairet Babwetenga	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
90	Dalfina Rubyema	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
91	Daniel Emmanuel	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
92	Daniel Petros Botha	H.E.	Namibia	Christianity	Delegate
93	Daniela de Mauro	Ms.	Switzerland	Christianity	Staff
94	David Korpela	Mr.	Finland	Christianity	Delegate
95	David Paul	Mr.	Pakistan	Christianity	Delegate
96	Denis Nuwagaba	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
97	Diana Mangeli	Ms	Kenya	Christianity	Delegate
98	Diana Zotea	Ms.	Lebanon	Christianity	Delegate
99	Dima M. M. Helou	Ms.	Palestine	Islam	Child
100	Dina Yaledi	Ms	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
101	Ditrick Rutashobya	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
102	Doina Rotaru	Ms.	Romania	Christianity	Delegate
103	Dolorosa Mbele	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
104	Domina Chacha	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
105	Dorcas Kiplagat	Dr.	Kenya	Christianity	Delegate
106	Doricase Daniel	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
107	Doris Mbuya	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
108	Dorji Ohm	Ms.	Bhutan	Buddhism	Delegate
109	Dorothy Manzoza	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
110	Dorothy Rozga	Ms.	USA	Christianity	Delegate
111	Dukwa John Didaline	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Journalist
112	Dwayne Hodgson	Mr.	Canada	Christianity	Staff
113	Edmund Mudibo	Mr.	Kenya	Christianity	Media
114	Edzai Chimonyo	Amb.	Zimbabwe	Christianity	Guest
115	Eiko Iwama	Ms.	Japan		Staff
116	Eiko Tsunoda	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
117	Elias Kingamkono	Fr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
118	Elias Samir Elias Fashho	Mr.	Jordan	Islam	Child
119	Eliya Dahhi	Bishop	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
120	Elizabeth Mwase	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
121	Eltruda Kimathi	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
122	Emiko Tomisawa	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
123	Emmanuel Sanga	Rev.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
124	Emmanuel Mathias	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
125	Enoch Kibuijane Mwasubila	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Journalist
126	Eri Harada	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Child
127	Eusebius Nzgilwa	Rt. Rev.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
128	Evi Shbeta	Ms.	Germany	Judaism	Delegate
129	Fadhil S. Soraga	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
130	Fadhili Meta	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
131	Farid Younnes Aberkane	Sheikh Dr.	France	Islam	Delegate
132	Fatuma Musa	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
133	Felista Wanzagi	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
134	Ferdinand Malunda	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
135	Florence Kanyike	Mr.	Ugandan	Christianity	Delegate
136	Francisco Madeira	Amb.	Mozambique	Christianity	Delegate
137	Fransisca Damian	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
138	Fred Nyabera	Rev.	Kenya	Christianity	Delegate
139	Frederick Steven	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
140	Gabriela Velis	Ms.	El Salvador	Christianity	Delegate
141	Gallus Marandu	Fr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
142	Genie Natividad	Sr.	Philippines	Christianity	Delegate

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
143	George Chomola	Rev.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
144	George Mumba	Mr.	Kenya	Christianity	Delegate
145	Georgina Mtenga	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
146	Girgis Talaat Fawzi Gidis	Mr.	Sudan	Christianity	Child
147	Gladys Gonzales	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
148	Godfrey Olwol	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
149	Godfrey Shirima	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
150	Godlove Peter	Mr	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
151	Grace Kaiso	Cannon	Kenya	Christianity	Delegate
152	Grace Kingarame	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Journalist
153	Guo Guo	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
154	Maryam Ibrahim Dada	Hajjiya	Nigeria	Islam	Delegate
155	Hamis Kitwana	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Staff
156	Hamis Mohamed	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Child
157	Hamza Mtuni	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
158	Hans Ucko	Rev. Dr.	Sweden	Christianity	Delegate
159	Harous Mpatani	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
160	Hasana Katungunya	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
161	Hasna Al-Zalouah Maawad	Ms.	Lebanon	Christianity	Delegate
162	Hassan ole Naado	Mr.	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
163	Hawa Kazema	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
164	Hawa Noor Mohammed	Ms.	Kenya	Islam	Staff
165	Helena Simon	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
166	Hiam Mikhael Kasis	Ms.	Syria	Christianity	Delegate
167	Hidehito Okochi	Rev	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
168	Hind Jamal Farah Farahat	Ms.	Jordan	Christianity	Delegate
169	Hiroko Tamaki	Ms.	Japan		Staff
170	Hiromi Hayashi	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
171	Hiroyasu Kobayashi	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
172	Hisae Kaibuchi	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
173	Homa Mungapen	Ms.	Mauritius	Baha'ism	Delegate
174	Hortensia Eugen	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
175	Hussein Almansa	Dr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
176	Ibrahim Lithome	Sheikh	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
177	Idrisa Abdulmuhsin	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
178	Ilukpitiye Pannasekara	Rev.	Tanzania	Buddhism	Delegate
179	Imani Sulemani	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
180	Ingunn Klepsvik	Amb.	Norway	Christianity	Guest

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
181	Irene William	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
182	Irma Tiul	Ms.	Guatemala	Christianity	Child
183	Isack Salasala	Rev.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
184	Issa Mtambuka	Amb.	Burundi	Islam	Guest
185	Isidory Paulo	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
186	Isis Navarro	Mrs.	Panama	Christianity	Delegate
187	Ismail Abdi Houre	Mr.	Djibouti	Islam	Delegate
188	Ismail Habib	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
189	Ismail Sheha Ismail	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
190	Issa Shaaban Simba	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Guest
191	Jackson Tembo Nzerebende	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
192	Jacqueline Namfua	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
193	Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete	H.E.	Tanzania	Islam	Guest
194	Janice McLaughlin	Sr.	USA	Christianity	Speaker
195	Jareen Aquino	Sr.	Philippines	Christianity	Delegate
196	Jasmina Dizdarevic	Ms.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Islam	Delegate
197	Jean Pruitt	Sr.	USA	Christianity	Staff
198	Jerome Mento	Fr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
199	Joachim Ishengoma	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
200	Johari Moshi	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
201	John Baptist Odama	His Grace	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
202	John Kakembo	Psr. Dr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
203	John Mhina	Rev	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
204	John Onaiyeken	His Grace	Nigeria	Christianity	Speaker
205	John Safari	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
206	John Vicent	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
207	Johnson Masiko	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
208	Jose Antonio	Mr.	Spain	Christianity	Delegate
209	José Suazo	Mr.	Chile	Christianity	Delegate
210	Joseph Basoga	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
211	Joseph Kony	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Child
212	Joseph Sar wadda	Pr. Dr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
213	Joyce Mdachi	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
214	Joyce Mushi	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
215	Joyce Zako	Cannon	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
216	Juanita Mwasonya	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
217	Juliana Charles	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
218	Juma Luwuchu	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
219	Juma R.Juma	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
220	Kai Mbarouk	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
221	Kala Archar ya	Dr.	India	Hinduism	Speaker
222	Kanagwa Asma	Ms.	Uganda	Islam	Delegate
223	Katherine Marshal	Ms.	USA	Christian	Guest
224	Katherine Taylor	Ms	USA	Christianity	Guest
225	Kayo Tamura (Ume)	Ms.	Japan		Staff
226	Kazi Rafiqul Alam	Mr.	Bangladesh	Islam	Delegate
227	Keiichi Akagawa	Rev.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
228	Keishi Miyamoto	Rev.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
229	Kelly N. Kabyahura	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
230	Kelvin Samwel	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
231	Kevin Matandiko	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Journalist
232	Kezavino Aram	Dr.	India	Hinduism	Delegate
233	Khamis Ali	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Staff
234	Khamis Haji Khamis	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
235	Kibwana Dachi	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
236	Kimie Kurita	Ms.	Japan		Journalist
237	Kirigo Ngarua	Ms.	Kenya	Christianity	Staff
238	Kul Chandra Gautam	Mr.	Nepal		Delegate
239	Kumbuke Chandraloka Thero	Rev.	Sri Lanka	Hinduism	Delegate
240	Kumiko Shirai	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
241	Kuniko Shirae	Ms.	Japan		Staff
242	Laura Herrera	Ms.	El Salvador	Christianity	Delegate
243	Laura Molnar	Ms.	Romania	Christianity	Delegate
244	Lazarus Simbwa	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
245	Lejla Hasandedić	Ms.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Islam	Delegate
246	Leonard Mtaita	Rev. Dr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
247	Leonidas Ortiz Losada	Fr.	Colombia	Christianity	Speaker
248	Li Ching Chen	Sr.	Taiwan	Christianity	Delegate
249	Lightness Joseph	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
250	Lioce Biira Bwambale	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
251	Louise Corner	Amb.	Britain	Christianity	Delegate
252	Lucy Mwaluko	Ms	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
253	Lynette Wambui	Ms.	Kenya	Christianity	Staff
254	Machiko Jimba	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
255	Madeline Jaramillo	Ms.	Panama	Christianity	Child
256	Madeline Marie Lawder	Ms.	USA	Christianity	Delegate

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
257	Madlain Qustandi Bshara Yaghnam	Mr.	Panama	Christianity	Child
258	Mahal Giseh Da Costa Soto	Ms.	Switzerland	Christianity	Staff
259	Manami Sato	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
260	Mandanje	Fr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
261	Manuela Leal	Ms.	Portugal	Christianity	Delegate
262	Maria Annunciata	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
263	Maria Goretti Kisakye	Sr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
264	Maria Nyerere	Mama	Tanzania	Christianity	Guest
265	Maria Temu	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
266	Marian Nagi Iskander Awad	Ms.	Sudan	Islam	Delegate
267	Marion Hughes, M.M.	Sr.	USA	Christianity	Delegate
268	Marissa Billings	Ms.	USA	Christianity	Child
269	Marlene Silbert	Ms.	South Africa	Judaism	Delegate
270	Marta Palma	Ms.	Chile	Christianity	Delegate
271	Marta Santos Pais	Ms.	Portugal	Christianity	Speaker
272	Marureen Meyer	Sr.	USA	Christianity	Delegate
273	Mary Francis Kobets	Sr.	Zimbabwe	Christianity	Delegate
274	Mary Shuma	Mrs.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
275	Mary Vertucci	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
276	Masako Hosobuchi	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
277	Masataka Akahori	Mr.	Japan		Journalist
278	Masoud H. Jongo	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
279	Masue Suzuki	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
280	Mayerly Angarita	Ms.	Colombia	Christianity	Delegate
281	Mayuko Matsumoto	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Child
282	Mdimi Mhogolo	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
283	Medagoda Abeytisa Thero	Mr.	Sri Lanka	Buddhism	Delegate
284	Meg Gardinier	Ms.	USA	Christianity	Staff
285	Melaney Swenson	Ms.	USA	Christianity	Delegate
286	Mento Jerome	Mr.	India	Christianity	Delegate
287	Mercedes Roman	Ms.	Ecuador	Christianity	Delegate
288	Method Kilaini	His Grace	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
289	Metropolitan Jonah Lwanga	His Grace	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
290	Michiko Kasahara	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
291	Michiko Kubo	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
292	Misael Mendez	Mr.	Guatemala	Christianity	Delegate
293	Mitsuo Miyake	Rev.	Japan	Shinto	Delegate

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
294	Miyuki Sato	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
295	Mohamed Hafidh	Dr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
296	Mohamed Hani	Mr.	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
297	Mohamed Riyami	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
298	Mohammed Akhtar Rao	Mr.	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
299	Moshi Hashim	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
300	Mugalu Ramathan	Mr.	Uganda	Islam	Delegate
301	Muhamad Najjar	Mr.	Israel	Islam	Child
302	Muhidin Zuberi	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
303	Muhyiddin Ahmad Khamis	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
304	Munira Mohammed	Ms.	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
305	Musa Magwesera	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
306	Musa Said	Sheikh	Zambia	Islam	Delegate
307	Musa Sinienga	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
308	Mussie Hailu	Amb.	Ethiopia	Christianity	Delegate
309	Mustafa Ali	Dr.	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
310	Mustafa B. Shabani	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
311	Mwanaiba Kayawanga	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Child
312	Mwanaidi Khamis	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
313	Mwantumu Malale	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
314	Mwasu Mohamed Ninga	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
315	Nafia Abdulla	Ms.	Maldives	Islam	Delegate
316	Najna Haji	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
317	Nalubwama Julie Carol	Ms.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
318	Naomi Kaneko	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
319	Naomi Okano	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
320	Nasibu Manyanya NasiBu	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
321	Natasha Kanguatjivi	Ms.	Namibia	Christianity	Delegate
322	Navroz Lakhani	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
323	Neema Mvuga	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
324	Nelania Zakaria	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
325	Nicolas Meslaoui	Mr.	Belgium	Islam	Delegate
326	Niveen Shaheen	Ms.	Palestine	Islam	Delegate
327	Nizar Selemani	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
328	Nobuhito Kudo	Mr.	Japan		Journalist
329	Nomkhosi Nomusa Kunene	Ms.	South Africa	African Tradition	Child
330	Noreen Elimani	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
331	Noriaki Ito	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
332	Norkishimu Kangai	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
333	Nosim Letion	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
334	Nour Mawla	Ms.	Lebanon	Islam	Child
335	Nunu Ramadhani	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
336	Nyambura Gichuki	Ms.	Kenya	Christianity	Delegate
337	Ofelia Ortega	Mrs. Rev. Dr.	Cuba	Christianity	Speaker
338	Olga Lucia Sierra Santos	Ms.	Colombia	Buddhism	Delegate
339	Olivier Chave	H.E.	Switzerland	Christianity	Guest
340	Omar Selemani	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
341	Omari Msinzia	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
342	Omid Makhani	Mr.	Canada	Baha'ism	Delegate
343	Oontho Godfrey Owiti	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
344	Ornella Barros Carrasquilla	Ms.	Colombia	Christianity	Delegate
345	Oscar Mnung'a	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
346	Othman Mohammed Saleh	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
347	Overnike Koko	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
348	Paddy Meskin	Ms.	South Africa	Judaism	Delegate
349	Pat Edmiston	Sr.	USA	Christianity	Delegate
350	Patrice Brodeux	Professor	Canada	Christianity	Delegate
351	Patrick Loum	Mr.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
352	Patrick Majani	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
353	Patrick Qorro	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Observer
354	Peter Donald Billings	Mr.	USA	Christianity	Staff
355	PLO Lumumba	Professor	Kenya	Christianity	Speaker
356	Purity Muthoni Njeru	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
357	Qais Sadiq	Rev. Prof.	Jordan	Christianity	Delegate
358	Rahma Ali Khamis	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
359	Rahma Salim	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
360	Rahman Dekow Omar	Ms.	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
361	Rajab Mruma	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
362	Rajith Vidanaarachchi	Mr.	Sri Lanka	Buddhism	Delegate
363	Raju Paudel	Mr.	Nepal	Buddhism	Child
364	Rammohan Venkatraman	Mr.	India	Christianity	Delegate
365	Rebeka Danieli	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
366	Recho Stanley	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
367	Reem Elfar	Ms.	Jordan	Christianity	Delegate
368	Reina Sano	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
369	Renalda Killa	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
370	Revocatus Fivawo	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
371	Ricardo Mazarelli	Mr.	Argentina	Christianity	Delegate
372	Rita Simons Proano	Ms.	Ecuador	Christianity	Delegate
373	Rogers Fungo	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
374	Rose Nyerere	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Guest
375	Rosemary Okello	Ms.	Kenya	Christianity	Delegate
376	Ruba Daibes	Ms.	Jordan	Christianity	Delegate
377	Rute Neto	Ms.	Portugal	Christianity	Delegate
378	Ruth Shuster	Ms.	Israel	Judaism	Child
379	Saadiya Yussuf	Ms.	Kenya	Islam	Child
380	Sabas Masawe	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
381	Sabrina Nassor	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
382	Said Abdalla	Mr.	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
383	Saidi Mpeti	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
384	Saleh Omar Kaaby	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
385	Salim Ahmed Salim	H.E.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
386	Salma Yahya	Mrs.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
387	Salum Fereji	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
388	Samira Saleh Khamis	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Child
389	Samuel Kobia	Dr.	Kenya	Christianity	Delegate
390	Sarah Elia	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
391	Sarah Nyende	Mrs.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
392	Saydoon Nisa Sayed	Ms.	South Africa	Islam	Delegate
393	Scolastica Marki	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
394	Scolastica Urassa	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
395	Sebastian Meghjee	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
396	Selemani S. Nkuliye	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
397	Semakula Gyagenda	Min.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
398	Severen Mhina	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
399	Shabaan Abdallah	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
400	Shaban Ramadhan Mubaje	Sheikh	Uganda	Islam	Delegate
401	Shadrack Masaga	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Staff
402	Shamim Khan	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
403	Shao Martin	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
404	Shakur Mohammad	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Guest
405	Shozo Fujita	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
406	Silvia Mazarelli	Mrs.	Italy	Christianity	Delegate
407	Sion Valentine	Mr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Child
408	Sophie Charpie	Ms.	Switzerland	Christianity	Staff

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
409	Sosthene Kubisa	Mr.	DRC	Christianity	Delegate
410	Srdjan Sremac	Ms.	Serbia	Christianity	Delegate
411	Stella Richard	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
412	Stephene Mang'ana	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
413	Subira Levensi	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
414	Suchith Abeyewickreme	Mr.	Sri Lanka	Buddhism	Delegate
415	Sueko Matsuura	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
416	Sugunendra Tirtha Swamiji	Mr.	India	Christianity	Delegate
417	Suhalia Sleiman	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Child
418	Suleiman Mohamed Jabir	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
419	Suleiman Saidi Lolila	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
420	Sutinder Singh Jabbar	Mr.	Kenya	Sikhism	Delegate
421	Suzan Wanzani	Sr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
422	Suzane D.Sekwao	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
423	Taeko Nakamura	Ms.	Japan	Christianity	Staff
424	Takao Kuriyama	Mr.	Japan		Journalist
425	Takashi Hirohashi	Mr.	Japan		Journalist
426	Takayoshi Usui	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
427	Takemi Sugawara	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
428	Tamimu Adamu G.	Mr.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
429	Tatu Issa	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
430	Tausi Swedi Chem	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Volunteer
431	Teruyuki Fujiwara	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Delegate
432	Thirupathi Arunkumar	Mr.	India	Hinduism	Child
433	Thomas Godda	Cannon	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
434	Timothy Nyasulu Maganga	Fr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
435	Tina Mosha	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
436	Toshitaka Obara	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
437	Trine Hveem	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
438	Tukae Njiku Errine	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
439	U PU NAR NANDA	Mr.	Myanmar	Buddhism	Delegate
440	Uday Zuhdi Jubeh	Mr.	Palestine	Islam	Child
441	Ummy Ali Mwalimu	H.E.	Tanzania	Islam	Guest
442	Valerious Mwandaji	Fr.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
443	Vanessa Carline	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
444	Vera Elisabete Leal Ferreira	Ms.	Portugal	Christianity	Staff
445	Veronica Amir Ibrahim Abdo	Ms.	Egypt	Christianity	Child

SN	NAME	TITLE	COUNTRY	RELIGION	CATEGORY
446	Vijayaragavan Gopal	Mr.	India	Hinduism	Delegate
447	Vinya Ariyarante	Dr.	Sri Lanka	Buddhism	Delegate
448	Vivian Rabia	Ms.	Israel	Christianity	Delegate
449	Wati Wardani	Ms.	Indonesia	Islam	Delegate
450	William Vendley	Dr.	USA	Christianity	Speaker
451	Willie Chakauya	Mr.	Zimbabwe	Christianity	Delegate
452	Wilson Mwalukani	Major	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
453	Winfride Mtana	Ms.	Tanzania	Christianity	Volunteer
454	Yaelben Shatat	Ms.	Israel	Christianity	Child
455	Yayoi Shirai	Ms.	Japan		Staff
456	Yolanda Illiano	Mrs.	Belgium	Christianity	Delegate
457	Yoshihiro Koyama	Mr.	Japan	Buddhism	Child
458	Yuichi Sakuma	Mr.	Japan		Staff
459	Yuki Kitano	Ms.	Japan		Delegate
460	Yukie Shono	Ms.	Japan	Buddhism	Staff
461	Yuriko Hisamune	Ms.	Japan		Staff
462	Yusuf Neema	Bishop	Tanzania	Christianity	Delegate
463	Yusuf Salafiya	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
464	Yusuf Yassin Musunu	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
465	Zahara Ally	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
466	Ziana Ally	Ms.	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
467	Ziporah Kazooba	Rev. Con.	Uganda	Christianity	Delegate
468	Zuberi Majaliwa	Sheikh	Tanzania	Islam	Delegate
469	Zulekha Omar	Ms.	Kenya	Islam	Delegate
470	Zvonimira Jakic	Ms.	Croatia	Christianity	Child

## Appendix 2: Pre-Forum Concept Note

### The Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) Fourth Forum

Ending Poverty, Enriching Children.

**INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE.**

June 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

#### Background

The Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) will be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2012. The Forum comes at a time when youth are leading non-violent transformations in various parts of Africa, demanding a better life, better governance and more access to opportunities. Fittingly, the Forum's theme—"Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE."—will address these concerns largely resulting from poverty.

Two hundred and fifty (250) participants including representatives from different religious constituencies—Buddhists, Bahais, Christians, Hindus, Indigenous Traditions, Jews, Muslims, Shintoists and others—will gather together with representatives from the United Nations and its agencies, the African Union and other multi-lateral institutions, civil society organizations, government officials and children from around the world. They will address the challenge of poverty and its devastating consequences for children, not only in Africa but also around the world. Like previous GNRC Forums, interfaith cooperation among religious communities is expected to result in a unique new faith-based contribution to children's well-being. At the Fourth Forum, with the focus on poverty, the GNRC is expected to announce a global initiative to reduce child poverty. The Fourth Forum will be hosted by GNRC Africa, one of the major regional networks of the Global Network of Religions for Children.

The Forum will focus on three concrete areas perceived as main causes of poverty—corruption and poor governance, war and violence, and unequal distribution of resources. These challenges have conspired to cause a contrasting situation of unprecedented global economic growth in many parts of the world, while significant parts still remain in absolute poverty. Tragically, children still suffer disproportionately from poverty, accounting for a large share of poverty statistics. Worse, this challenge is not just limited to the less developed nations, but is also found in the richest countries of the world where unprecedented prosperity has been registered. Children therefore must be at the centre in any effort or strategy to fight poverty.

For the first time in the history of the GNRC, the Forum will be held in Africa, and will be dedicated to addressing the critical theme of poverty. The Forum will commence on 16<sup>th</sup> June in honor of the hundreds of courageous children who on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1976, and armed with nothing but their fragile bodies, were ruthlessly gunned down by the

Apartheid Regime of South Africa for demanding better education and livelihoods and speaking out against imposed poverty.

The GNRC recognizes the enormous potential of diverse religions and faith traditions working together to fight poverty. Each religious community has assets that can be engaged in poverty eradication, and the spirit of inter-religious cooperation—which has always characterized the GNRC—provides a powerful set of capacities for fighting poverty. Taken collectively, religious social structures represent significant channels for communication and action, that if engaged and transformed, could enable believers and communities to function as powerful agents of change in eradicating poverty.

### Resources in religions and faith communities

A significant number of education and health institutions are established and run by faith-based or faith-inspired institutions. Three resources—spiritual, moral and social—of each religious community make this possible. And when mobilized, they not only inspire, but also effectively align tremendous energies and resources to bring forth notable impact on poverty eradication.

#### 1. Spiritual resources:

At the heart of each religion is spirituality. Spirituality is the ‘dynamic process of a conscious and ever-evolving path that brings us in deeper touch with ourselves, with one another, [and] with diverse ecologies.’ In cases of extreme poverty, our spirituality demands that we unconditionally give to, and care for the poor. Spiritual assets provide courage and strength to believers in the midst of tragedy and extreme suffering.

Spirituality provides what many would call ‘importance’ to the act of giving, of care, of physically nourishing human life, and of empathizing with one another.

This asset provides human beings with capacities to feel the connectivity, the interaction and the alignment with all humanity.

#### 2. Moral resources:

Religious and faith traditions have moral capacities that build upon and unfold the great strengths of their spiritualities. The moral assets of many religious traditions include, and go much beyond, the simple elaborations of a code of ethics. Fundamentally, all of our moral traditions ask us to judge others by the same standards as we would judge ourselves. These standards urge us to work for justice in a just way that rejects exploitation, corruption, and more unequal distribution of available resources that causes poverty.

More importantly, these standards have often provided concrete moral basis for agreements, consensus, and acceptance to address injustices in ways that empower societies, and to look ahead to work and live together. The faith-inspired and led

Jubilee Initiative that sought to cancel all debts owed to the less industrialized countries, is one such successful initiative emanating from faith communities, and fuelled by the collective moral assets inherent in faith traditions.

#### 3. Social resources:

Religious communities have historical social networks that can be enormous assets in eradicating poverty. Community mosques, churches, temples, shrines are focal social structures located in virtually every village, district and city. These social organizations range from regularly and frequently concerned assemblies designed for worship and reflection to those specifically dedicated to educational, health, humanitarian or communication missions. Many faith-inspired organizations have been successful in addressing poverty.

### The gap

How then can leading global, regional and national public institutions, including political bodies, development banks, economic and social organizations and others fail to adequately recognize the capacity of faith-based or faith-inspired institutions to contribute significantly to poverty eradication? How can these huge assets, found in every village, every corner of the world, where even governments do not reach, be aligned and be deployed to eradicate absolute poverty?

More importantly, how can enduring partnerships between faiths, and between secular development partners and faiths, be forged to eradicate absolute poverty? And concretely, how can we make children a central and integral element in all of our plans to eradicate absolute poverty? These are the critical questions which the GNRC, as a global interfaith network devoted to children’s well-being, can bring uniquely to the table, both challenging and inspiring religious communities and all their partners to develop more effective joint interventions to end poverty and enrich children.

### Mobilizing spiritual, moral and social resources

Through the Fourth Forum, the GNRC seeks—and with concrete outcomes—to INSPIRE all of us, people of faith and people of good will everywhere, to ACT to CHANGE the current trends of corruption and poor governance, war and violence, and unequal distribution of resources; without which better lives for all, and especially for future generations, can be achieved. The GNRC will seek to bring together and encourage the main actors in poverty eradication to join the faith and religious communities, to together review and begin to reformulate the current strategies that seem to have lifted fewer people than hoped out of absolute poverty, especially the children of the world.

The GNRC will seek to reflect on past efforts, together with the faith communities and the global and regional organizations, and create new inter-religious strategies to accelerate mobilization of urgently needed resources to meet the MDG targets, and focus on sustainable development practices. Aligning and deploying the critical spiritual,

moral and social resources to eradicate poverty will be a critical focus for everyone at the Forum.

### Expected outcomes

The Forum will revisit the promises and achievements made during the first, second and third GNRC Forums. The second forum theme was “Our Promise to Children,” revisiting the pledge of “Prayer and Practice for the Future of Children” made at the First Forum in 2000. At the Third Forum, “Learning to Share”, the religious leaders, joined by the United Nations and its agencies UNICEF and UNESCO, and representatives from governments and other bodies, declared three ethical imperatives: the ethical imperative to ensure that no child lives in poverty; the ethical imperative to end violence against children; and the ethical imperative to protect the earth. At the Fourth Forum, the spotlight will be on poverty, and the ethical imperative that no child lives in poverty.

An INSPIRED group of actors, including the youth and children, willing to ACT to CHANGE the status-quo where poverty still reigns, where corruption and poor governance is a norm rather than the exception, and unequal distribution of wealth is still evident, is expected to be mobilized. Driven by GNRC’s commitment to ensuring children’s right to participate and be heard in all matters affecting them—as grounded in Article 12 of the CRC—and building on the GNRC’s experience with empowering children and youth, the Fourth Forum will provide a unique opportunity for children and youth to:

- i. Bring up their needs and ideas for action through an engaging dialogue among themselves and with senior religious, political and social leaders
- ii. Demonstrate their commitment and capacity to lead in the implementation of GNRC’s initiative on poverty together with adults
- iii. Further develop their knowledge and understanding of the world’s key challenges, empowering them to become responsible global citizens
- iv. Be encouraged to participate in peer-to-peer education in their communities

It is expected that faith communities will show-case their contributions to eradicating poverty, propose ways to partner with development agencies, and call on governments, multi-lateral and bilateral agencies including the United Nations, the African Union, the World Economic Forum and others to join hands with them in fighting poverty.

A unique initiative on poverty, spearheaded by religious communities working together, is expected to be announced during the Forum, with contributions to this initiative coming from various partners, building on the hopes and yearning of children to transform their future. Consideration will be given to how to equip the next generation with the skills, knowledge and resources to constructively engage with their own political process

to achieve change. Such an approach will foster a respect for a human development framework based on common a global ethic common to all religions.

Concrete steps and initiatives designed to eradicate poverty will be shared, and the possibility of scaling up existing successful practices will be studied and considered.

A passionate plea to the governments, development agencies, private business communities, and partners to scale-up efforts to eradicate poverty will be made by religious leaders in this Forum. Partners in addressing poverty, especially governments, will be called upon to honor previous promises made, and obligations agreed to under different agreements.

The religious leaders themselves are expected to make a pledge to engage their own faith communities more fully in the fight against child poverty, and to devote the vast spiritual, moral, and social resources of their traditions to the shared goal of lifting enriching and empowering the world’s children.

Now is the time to implement more effective partnerships to eradicate poverty. The Fourth Forum will be a reminder—and a call to action—that children can no longer wait for years-on-end before solutions to end poverty are found and implemented. The courageous actions by the children on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1976 in Soweto, Johannesburg, transformed the struggle for apartheid, and forever the course of the history of South Africa. So too, can we, with the children, transform this world in which poverty still reigns. The moment to act is Now. The time for action is Today.

## Appendix 3

### PROGRAM

#### DAY ONE

16<sup>th</sup> June 2012

#### Opening Plenary

#### VENUE:

SERENA HOTEL. KIVUKONI HALL

09.00 – 09.35	Arrivals, Refreshments, Seating
09.35 – 09.40	Prayer for Peace by His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini, Auxiliary Bishop of Bukoba and Co-Patron of the GNRC Fourth Forum
09.40 – 09.55	Video Documentary on Poverty
09.55 – 10.00	Introductory Remarks by Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders, (ACRL—R/P) and Chairman of the GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee
10.00 – 10.10	Welcome Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Former Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, Former Secretary General of the Organization of African Union (OAU), Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation and Co-Patron of the GNRC Fourth Forum
10.10 – 10.20	Presentation of the Children's Challenges to the Forum
10.20 – 11.20	Remarks by Distinguished Guests  His Lordship Bishop Augustus Shao, Catholic Bishop of Zanzibar and Representative of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue  Rev. Dr. Ofelia Ortega, President from the Caribbean/Latin America, World Council of Churches  Mr. Anthony Okara, Deputy Chief of Staff, African Union (AU)  Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary General, <i>Religions for Peace</i> International  H.E. Al Hajj Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania

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	Mr. Elhadj As Sy, Regional Director, Eastern and Southern Africa Office, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
11.20 – 11.30	Presentation of the Children's Challenges to the Forum
11.30 – 11.40	Musical Performance by Tanzanian Children
11.40 – 11.50	Remarks by the Forum Organizer, Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President of Arigatou International and Chairman of the Board of Myochikai
11.50 – 12.00	Appreciation
12.00 – 12.05	Remarks and Introduction of the President of the United Republic of Tanzania by Hon. Sophia Simba, Minister of Community Development, Gender, and Children
12.05 – 12.35	Official GNRC Fourth Forum Opening Address by H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania
12.35 – 12.40	Vote of Thanks by His Holiness Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji, Sri Puthige Math
12.40 – 12.45	Closing Prayer by H.E. Sheikh Issa bin Shaban Simba, the Mufti of Tanzania
12.45 – 13.00	Group Photograph (Serena Gardens)
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch Break
14.00 – 18.00	Site Visits
18.30 – 20.30	Cultural Evening and Dinner
	<b>VENUE: SERENA HOTEL. SERENA GARDENS</b>
	<b>DAY TWO 17<sup>th</sup> June 2012</b>
	<b>Second Plenary: Thematic Presentations</b>
	<b>VENUE: HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (KIBO HALL)</b>
	<b>Session Chair: His Grace Archbishop Dr. John Onaiyekan, Catholic Bishop of Abuja, Co-Chair, African Council of Religious Leaders</b>
	<b>Key Presentations on the Themes</b>
08.30 – 08.45	Arrivals, Seating

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- 08.45 – 09.15 *Poor Governance: Building Partnerships to End Corruption*
- Children's Presentation on the Theme
- Speaker: Prof. P.L.O. Lumumba, Former Director General, Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission, and Advocate, the High Court of Kenya and Tanzania
- 09.15 – 09.45 *War and Violence: Ending Violence Against Children*
- Children's Presentation on the Theme
- Speaker: Ms. Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative to the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children
- 09.45 – 10.15 *Unequal Distribution of Resources: Giving Every Child a Fair Chance*
- Children's Presentation on the Theme
- Speaker: Father Leonidas Ortiz, Chief Executive Officer of the Latin American Episcopal Conference of the Catholic Church (CELAM)
- 10.15 – 10.45 Tea/Coffee Break

#### Thematic Group Sessions

- 10.45 – 12.30 Thematic Group Work and Discussions
- i. Poor Governance: Building Partnerships to End Corruption*  
(Reflections on Corruption and Poor Governance as Causes of Poverty)
- VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (KIBO I)**
- Session Chair:** **Dr. Kezevino Aram, Vice Moderator *Religions for Peace* and Director, Shanti Ashram**
- Resource Person:** **Prof. P.L.O. Lumumba**
- ii. War and Violence: Ending Violence Against Children*  
(Reflections on War and Violence as Causes of Poverty)
- VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (KIBO III)**
- Session Chair:** **His Grace Archbishop John Baptist Odama, Catholic Archbishop of Gulu and Chairperson, Uganda Episcopal Conference of the Roman Catholic Church**

**Resource Person:** **Ms. Marta Santos Pais**

- iii. Unequal Distribution of Resources: Giving Every Child a Fair Chance*  
(Reflections on Unequal Distribution of Resources as a Cause of Poverty)

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (ZANZIBAR HALL)**

**Session Chair:** **H.E. Sheikh Younes Aberkane, President of the Muslim Scouts Movement in France (SMF)**

**Resource Person:** **Father Leonidas Ortiz**

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch Break

**Third Plenary:** **Panel Discussion**

14.00 – 15.00 Reflections from Different Religious Traditions on How Poverty Affects Children

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (KIBO HALL)**

**Session Chairs:** **H.E. Rev. Mitsuo Miyake, Chief Senior Minister, Konkko Church of Izuo and H.E. Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, Ecumenical Envoy to Sudan**

- Panelists:**
- Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of the Riphah International University, Pakistan
  - Sr. Janice McLaughlin, President of the Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, USA
  - Dr. Mrs. Kala Acharya, Director, K. J. Somaiya Bharatiya Sanskriti Peetham, India
  - Rev. Hidehito Okochi, Chief Priest of Juko-in Temple, Japan
  - Ms. Evi Gueinheim Shbeta, GNRC Coordinator for Israel

15.00 – 15.30 Tea Break

15.30 – 17.00 Thematic Group Work and Discussions

- i. Poor Governance: Building Partnerships to End Corruption*  
(Reflections on Corruption and Poor Governance as Causes of Poverty)

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (KIBO I)**

**Session Chair:** **Dr. Kezevino Aram**

**Resource Person:** Prof. P.L.O. Lumumba

ii. *War and Violence: Ending Violence Against Children* (Reflections on War and Violence as Causes of Poverty)

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (KIBO III)**

**Session Chair:** His Grace Archbishop John Baptist Odama

**Resource Person:** Ms. Marta Santos Pais

iii. *Unequal Distribution of Resources: Giving Every Child a Fair Chance* (Reflections on Unequal Distribution of Resources as a Cause of Poverty)

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (ZANZIBAR HALL)**

**Session Chair:** H.E. Sheikh Younes Aberkane

**Resource Person:** Father Leonidas Ortiz

17.30 – 19.00 Roundtable Consultations on Partnerships to Address Poverty

Aga Khan Development Network, African Council of Religious Leaders, Arigatou International, Centre for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty (CIGA), Finn Church Aid (FCA), International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Islamic Foundation, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), *Religions for Peace*, the World Bank, World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and other Partners and Invited Eminent Persons

**Session Moderator:** H.E. Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia

**Opening Remarks:** Dr. Katherine Marshall, Executive Director of World Faiths Development Dialogue (WFDD)

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (VICTORIA HALL)**

### Regional Sessions

17.30 – 19.00 GNRC Regional Sessions

**Session Moderators:** GNRC Coordinators for the Regions

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO**

GNRC Africa	ZANZIBAR
GNRC Arab States	KIBO I
GNRC South Asia	KIBO II
GNRC Europe	KIBO III
GNRC Latin America	TANGANYIKA I
GNRC Israel	TANGANYIKA II

19.00 – 21.00 Dinner Reception for All Forum Participants, Hosted by Rev. Keishi Miyamoto

Guest Of Honor: Mama Salma Kikwete, First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO MARQUEE**

21.00 – 22.00 Declaration Drafting Committee Meeting

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (BAGAMOYO HALL)**

**DAY THREE 18<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2012**

### Fourth Plenary

**VENUE:** **HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO (KIBO HALL)**

Session Chair: Sheikh Professor Abdul Ghafoor El Busaidy, Chairman of the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM)

08.30 – 9.15 Report from the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*

Speakers: Mr. Kul Gautam, Former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF, and Convening Chair, *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*

Rev. Dr. Hans Ucko, Co-Chair, *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children*

9.15 – 10.00 Report on the Ethics Education Initiative since the Launch of *Learning to Live Together: An Intercultural and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education* at the GNRC Third Forum in Hiroshima, Japan

Speaker: Ms. Agneta Ucko, Director, Arigatou International - Geneva

10.00 – 10.30 Plenary Discussion and Presentation on the GNRC Fourth Forum Declaration

Facilitator: His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini, Chair of the Declaration Drafting Committee

**VENUE: KIBO HALL**

10.30 – 11.00 Tea/Coffee Break

11.00 – 12.30 GNRC Regional Sessions (continued)

**Session Moderators: GNRC Coordinators for the Regions**

**VENUE: HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO**

GNRC Africa	ZANZIBAR
GNRC Arab States	KIBO I
GNRC South Asia	KIBO II
GNRC Europe	KIBO III
GNRC Latin America	TANGANYIKA I
GNRC Israel	TANGANYIKA II

**Simultaneous Declaration Drafting Committee Meeting**

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch Break

14.00 – 15.00 GNRC Regional Sessions (continued)

**Session Moderators: GNRC Coordinators for the Regions**

**VENUE: HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO**

GNRC Africa	ZANZIBAR
GNRC Arab States	KIBO I
GNRC South Asia	KIBO II
GNRC Europe	KIBO III
GNRC Latin America	TANGANYIKA I
GNRC Israel	TANGANYIKA II

15.00 – 15.30 Tea Coffee/Break

## Closing Plenary

15.30 – 17.30

**Closing Ceremony**

**VENUE: HYATT REGENCY, DAR ES SALAAM, THE KILIMANJARO. (KIBO HALL)**

**Session Chair: His Grace Archbishop Dr. John Onaiyekan**

## Formal Launch of the GNRC's New Poverty Initiative

Reading of the Forum Declaration by Religious Leaders and Presentation of the Declaration to Children

Closing Remarks: H.E. Prof. Dr. Anna Tibaijuka, Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development, Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Humans Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

## Interfaith Prayer for Peace

## Appendix 4

### Children's Pre-Meeting Program

#### Day One - 14<sup>th</sup> June

##### 9.00 OPENING

Spiritual moment  
Welcome by the local host  
Special Welcome by Arigatou International  
Welcome by the Local Committee, Sr. Jean Pruitt  
Special Remarks by the Norwegian Ambassador, H.E. Ingunn Klepsvik

##### 9.20 GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER (UBUNTU)

Who am I? Who are you? Where are you from?  
Identity and diversity  
Expectations and outcomes

##### 11.00 TEA BREAK

##### 11.30 POVERTY

Why Inspire? Why Act? Why Change?  
a) Exploring different dimensions of poverty  
b) Inspirational dialogue with African Religious Leaders  
His Grace Bishop Method Kilaini, Auxiliary Bishop of Bukoba and Co-Patron to the GNRC Fourth Forum and Ms Bissan Salman, youth GNRC representative.

##### 13.00 LUNCH

##### 14.00 WORKING ON SUBTHEMES

Introduction to the subthemes (interactive session based on themes)

##### 16.00 TEA BREAK

##### 16.30 WORKING IN GROUPS ON SUBTHEMES

Children worked in groups to unpack the sub-themes  
a) Poor governance  
b) Violence and war, and  
c) Unequal distribution of resources

##### 18.30 DINNER

##### 19.30 CULTURAL EVENING

An opportunity for children to share their traditions from their respective countries, through songs, dances, videos, costumes, prayers, food

#### Day Two - 15<sup>th</sup> June

##### 9.00 SPIRITUAL MOMENT

##### RECAP

##### 9.15 CREATIVE IDEAS TO INSPIRE, ACT, CHANGE

Children explored ways in which children can be involved to  
a) support good leadership,  
b) contribute to transformation of violent situations, and  
c) address social and economic inequalities

##### 13.00 LUNCH

##### 14.00 GETTING READY FOR THE FORUM

Practical preparations for the presentations by children at the Forum

##### 16.00 TEA BREAK

##### 16.30 CLOSING OF THE PRE-MEETING

Remarks by H.E. Ms. Dorothy Rozga, UNICEF Country Representative to Tanzania  
Remarks by Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President of Arigatou International

##### 18.30 DINNER

Appendix 5

Interfaith Prayer for Peace

June 18, 2012,

1700 – 1730 Hrs

Hyatt Regency, Dar es Salaam, The Kilimanjaro, Kibo Hall

Program

Introductory Remarks by His Lordship Bishop Method Kilaini

Prayers by Representatives of the Religions

Baha'i

Buddhism

Christianity

Hinduism

Islam

Judaism

Sectarian Shinto

Sikhism

Appendix 6

Media Coverage Scans: Excerpts and Supplements

**THE NEWS** DAILY NEWS Friday, June 15, 2012 3

# unelectable - study



## Bishop Kilaini warns against religious fanatics

By ROSE ATHUMANI

other should be paramount. The 4th GNRC forum which commences tomorrow, focuses on three areas perceived as main causes of poverty, which are corruption and poor governance, war and violence and unequal distribution of resources.

Without mentioning names, he said such people hiding behind the curtains of religion, use people's problems to divide them, while promoting their own interests, which might eventually plunge the country into conflicts.

Dr Kilaini said such people should be taught on how to live together, despite differences in religion so as to preserve the prevailing peace.

Speaking yesterday about the 4th GNRC global forum that's being held in Tanzania and Africa for the first time in history, the Auxiliary Bishop said among other issues, the Network focuses on teaching children to live together in harmony, regardless of their religious affiliations.

"We as religious leaders and communities we have to help these children to learn to live together in harmony and peace," he explained.

He said to live with someone else with different interests, her rights and responsibilities must be upheld and respects for each

Bishop Dr Kilaini said religious leaders use their religious and spiritual traditions to take action in fostering conscience, increase empathy, promote justice and make governments responsible to their people in eradicating extreme poverty.

President Jakaya Kikwete will be the guest of honour at the three day event, which will also see the launching of a Poverty Initiative Campaign.

Dr Mustafa Ali, the Secretary General of the African Council of Religious Leaders and Chairperson of the Fourth Forum Organizing Committee said 250 participants from different religions are expected to attend.

These include Buddhist, Bahais, Christians, Hindus, Indigenous Traditions, Jews, Muslims, Shintoists and representatives from the United Nations Agencies, Civil societies organizations and children from around the world.

**O** CRUELTY AGAINST ANIMALS...a tout climbs down after fastening a goat on top of a daladala as captured along the Arusha-Dodoma Road in Dodoma municipality yesterday. (Photo by Robert Okanda)

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**JUMAPILI**



## RAIS KIKWETE: HUJAMBO

Rais Jakaya Kikwete akizalimiana na mmoja wa watoto waliokuwa kwenye kongamano la nne la Mtandao wa Kimataifa wa Dini kwa Watoto lililofanyika jana jijini Dar es Salaam. Picha wa Zacharia Oanga.

## JK: Jukumu la kulea watoto ni letu sote

■ Kelvin Matandiko

RAIS Jakaya Kikwete amevataka Watauzania kuachana na filazi potofu kwia jukumu la kulea watoto wanaoishi katika mazingira magumu ni la Serikali pekee yake.

Akizunguma katika Sherehe ya Maadhimisho ya Siku ya Mtoto wa Afrika, zilizofanyika jijini Dar es Salaam, jana, Rais Kikwete alisema Serikali irapampa kuhirikiana na wazazi na jamii kwa ujumla katika kuhakikisha kwamba watoto wote wa Tanzania wanapata haki zao.

"Watoto wanahitaji kupewa matunzo, aya njema na elimu. Hili ni jukumu la wazazi, jamii na Serikali kwa ujumla," alisema Rais Jakaya.

Alisema watoto wanahitaji kusaidiwa na endapo makundi hayo yatotoa huduma kwa watoto kwa usawa wataishi katika mazingira mazuri.

Rais Kikwete aliwataja pia viongozi wa dini kuwa

nao wana nafasi ya kipekee katika kuhimisha jamii ili kiondokana na tatizo la watoto wa mitaani.

"Alisema watoto wengi wanakufa barani Afrika kutokana na mazingira magumu ya kukosa mahitaji muhimu ikwama chakula na maji.

Lakini akaoaya kwia matatizo mengine yanachangwa na mila potofu za baadhi ya makabila, hivyo akasema huna ni wakati wa kubadilika na kuachana na mumbo ambayo hayajengi jamii tati kushimama.

"Watoto wengi wanakufa barani Afrika kwa kukosa mahitaji muhimu... Mila potofu," alisema Rais Jakaya na kuongeza kuwa:

"Ni jukumu la kila Mwanazania kuona ni namna gani anaweza kuchangia kutatua tatizo hilo kulingana na nafasi aliyu naye katika jamii."

Naye, Rais Mitaafu wa Awamu ya Pili, Alihaji Ali Hassan Mwinyi alisema Tanzania ina zaidi milili

zi kutisha ambazo zinaweza kuwasa kuondoa tatizo la maa na magumu.

Mwinyi alisema jamaa yenye watoto wajinga ni wazi kwa na mtazamo wa kimsingi.

Alishukuru Serikali kwa kuandaa maadhimisho hayo yenye malengo ya kuondoa umaskini barani Afrika na kuaminda mtoto aweze kupata matunzo muhimu kwenye jamii.

"Naamini kupitia maadhimisho haya, tutahakikisha tunaongera juhudi za kuondoa umaskini na kuwa na mbinu ambazo zitaisaidia watoto na kuwepanua kuingia kwenye mazingira magumu," alisema Mwinyi.

Maadhimisho ya Siku ya Mtoto wa Afrika huadhimishwa kila mwaka Juni 16 kwa ni kumbukumbu ya masaji ya kinyama waliyofanywa watoto nchini Afrika Kusini mwaka 1976 wakati wakidamama kupinga ubaguzi wa rangi.

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TANZANIA SUNDAY, JUNE 17, 2012



Rais Jakaya Kikwete (centre, background) in a group photo with some children in different countries and religious constituencies after opening the 4th GNRC rena Inn in Dar es Salaam yesterday. (Photo by State House)

## JK expresses concern for suffering children

By SUNDAY NEWS REPORTER

RESIDENT Jakaya Kikwete has said that where poverty abounds, children suffer the most and all their hopes and aspirations are dashed.

He made the statement yesterday in Dar es Salaam at the opening of the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC).

The president said UNICEF estimates that 22,000 children are dying each day due to a host of deprivations because of poverty. Many die quietly in some of the remotest and poorest villages on earth, far removed from the scrutiny of the watchful eye and the conscience of the world.

"It is equally sad to note that about 67 million children of primary school age in the developing world do not attend school and around 300 million children go to bed hungry every day," he said.

## Tamko la Kiulimwengu latolewa Dar kutetea watoto

• Ni katika Mkutano wa GNRC

Na Daima Kibwete  
 MKUTANO wa Nchi wa Mwanachama wa Watoto wa Dunia (GNRC) uliofanyika Dar es Salaam, ambapo wakazi wa dunia kutoka kote kote walikuwepo, kutetea tamko la Kiulimwengu kutotea watoto katika miji ya kote kote. Katika tamko la Kiulimwengu, wakazi wa dunia walikuwepo kutotea watoto katika miji ya kote kote. Katika tamko la Kiulimwengu, wakazi wa dunia walikuwepo kutotea watoto katika miji ya kote kote.

**Sikiliza Redio Maria, Sauti ya Kikristo Nyumbani mwako kila wakati!**  
 Dar es Salaam FM 103.5, Arusha FM 106.7, Iringa FM 90.4, Mwanza FM 106, Songea FM 89.10, Zanzibar FM 103.5, Morogoro FM 102.0, Mpanda FM 90.9, Mtwara 95.3, Singida FM 91.4, Mbeya FM 91.9 na Kilimanjaro FM 107.6

## national news 5



President Jakaya Kikwete shares a light moment with children immediately after the Global Networking of Religions for Children forum held yesterday at Serena Hotel in Dar es Salaam to commemorate the Day of the African Child. PHOTO: ESTHERA GORGE



Rais Jakaya Kikwete akifunga mkutano wa Kimataifa wa Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) uliofanyika jini Dar es Salaam jana na kuwaahiriakisha viongozi wa dini, asasi zinazojitugulisha na haki za watoto pamoja na asasi za kiraia. (Picha na Daima)

# FOURTH FORUM OF THE GLOBAL NETWORK OF RELIGIONS FOR CHILDREN

Theme: "Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change." 16 - 18 JUNE 2012, DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

### Message from Forum Organisers

The opening day of the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children is here with us, and I am filled with hope and expectation. I am particularly delighted that the Forum is taking place in Africa—in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania—and I am inspired by the high expectations that our GNRC members and all of our many partners have for the Forum. I know that the dedicated team planning the Forum, led by Organising Committee Chair Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary General of African Council of Religious Leaders, along with UNICEF and our many other valuable partners, have done everything they can to prepare a powerful, enriching experience for everyone who will attend. Finally, I am thrilled that we have been able to invite so many children between the ages of 14 and 17 as full participants in the Forum. We look forward to the ways they will help to shape the future of the GNRC.



Rev. Kishiki Miyamoto, President, Argentinian International

We all know that the time has come for a truly groundbreaking interfaith led initiative to reduce child poverty worldwide. Poverty is a multi-faceted problem which is more than economic. It includes social and cultural dimensions, and involves upon human dignity. It represents a great challenge, but the GNRC has always been united by a spirit of prayer and action to attempt what few think is possible. I come from a Buddhist tradition, where we see greed as a main cause of poverty. It is all too clear that greed is prevailing in the human heart today. We see it in the insatiable pursuit of profit in modern capitalism. We see it in our globalisation, which divorces people who end up losing the competition. These ill-effects have created an abject gap between rich and poor. Buddhism teaches a spirit of sharing among human beings as equals, free from greed, and I believe this spirit can help bring poverty to an end.

The GNRC accepts the responsibility which comes with the ethical demand to end poverty. But we recognise that religious leaders cannot end poverty alone. We believe that, if the World Bank, IMF and other multilateral institutions collaborate more closely with religious leaders and faith communities, together we can bring about profound change. The GNRC is building a new child-focused paradigm for the fight against poverty, adding the power of spiritual conviction to the efficacy of economic approaches. I look forward to dialogue with the World Bank, IMF, UNICEF, UNICEF and others about how we can take action together beyond this Forum to end child poverty.

### Message from Chairman, Organising Committee

Extreme poverty humbles. This humbles in the worst form of children who experienced over a long period. It is also the most extensive and pervasive, directly affecting millions in the world. Extreme poverty is universal. It is man-made. Children are the worst hit. Twenty two thousand die each day due to the effects of poverty. One in four children in the low developed countries are underweight or stunted. The MDG target of reducing the proportion of underweight children by half will be missed by a staggering 30 million children in 2015 if current trends continue.



Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders - African for Peace

Children's vulnerability to deprivation negatively impacts their long term mental, physical, emotional and spiritual growth. When children are stunted, the future is hazy. This is unacceptable, especially during this time when there is enough in this world for everyone but inequity distribution. Extreme poverty is today's world's empty the greatest injustice to humanity.

There is therefore an urgent ethical imperative that we commit ourselves to a vision that no one, especially children, should live under conditions dictated by extreme poverty. People enabled by the resources of their religious and spiritual traditions are particularly enabled to take action to better themselves, because spiritual grounds just structures and make governments responsible to their people in establishing humane forms of poverty.

We see it. We can eradicate extreme forms of poverty. And so we give together to achieve the MDG targets, we can succeed today to make children central in all our planning beyond the 2012 MDG targets.

## Over 350 delegates expected to attend Dar meeting

By JOANNE WADJALA jwajala@theafricanmedia.com

The Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) fourth forum kicks off this Saturday, June 16th in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

“Apart from deliberating on the current theme, we also want to revisit the promises and achievements made during the first, second and third GNRC Forums.”

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali

The three-day meeting will bring together over 350 participants from all over the world drawn from different religious faiths that include Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Bahais, indigenous Traditional faiths, Judaism, as well as Sikhs, in an open discussion with representatives from the United Nations and its agencies, the African Union, government officials, the civil society as well as children. These participants are selected by GNRC coordinators from all the six regions which include Africa, Arab States, Europe, South Asia, Latin America and Israel.

Fifty children drawn from all the six regions will also attend the forum as well as the children's pre-meeting that will be held prior to the forum on 14th and 15th June. They are a testimony to the success of GNRC's children's initiative in its decadal-long operation.

This is the first time that this forum is being held in Africa since GNRC's inception in 2000. Tanzania was the preferred venue because it hosts the GNRC Secretariat in Africa. This year's forum whose theme is "Ending poverty, enriching children: Inspire. Act. Change," will be officially opened by President Jakaya Kikwete, of Tanzania.

This is the fourth forum in the history of GNRC. The meeting is held every four years. GNRC is a global inter-faith network of organisations and individuals who dedicate their efforts towards securing the rights and well-being of children with a shared commitment to making the world a better place for every child to survive, thrive and make positive contributions to a world of peace and dignity.

Inaugurated in May 2000 by Argentinian International, GNRC focuses on poverty eradication, child rights, ethics education, peace education, resolving urban violence, protecting the natural environment, and empowering children and young people.

The first forum was held in Tokyo Japan in 2000, which issued the landmark GNRC statement that was a call from the world's religions to the world to join with them in endorsing the growing endangering of children and a call for all to see every child as a message of hope from the Divine. The theme of the forum was "Prayer and Practice for the future of Children."

The group marked its second forum in 2004 in Geneva, Switzerland where the Inter Faith Council on Ethics Education for Children was launched, as well as the signing of a joint cooperation agreement between the GNRC and UNICEF for the conduct of a study on the perspectives of major religions on children. The theme of the forum was "Our promise to Children."

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

### Message from the UNICEF Regional Director, Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office

The first decade of the 21st century has brought a lot of good news for children in sub-Saharan Africa. Many more children survive now than at the turn of the century, school enrolment has increased substantially and millions of people with HIV/AIDS - including hundreds of thousands of children - are receiving effective antiretroviral treatment. This is inspiring and it is an invitation to act. Much more needs to be done though, because many continue to be left out of progress and development. Every year around 12 million children in Eastern and Southern Africa die before reaching their 5th birthday. Some 10 million children of primary school age never enter a classroom, and many grow up exposed to abuse and exploitation.

We have to change this and we are ready for that. We have to go the extra mile to reach those children left behind. This is not only our obligation, it is a social imperative. We now know that focusing our efforts on the most disadvantaged children is also more cost-effective than targeting as many children as possible. At this critical juncture in time, when efforts are underway to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals for 2015, UNICEF and partners are therefore increasingly focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable children.

Religious groups of all faiths have been indispensable partners in this endeavour. Thanks to their extensive networks and their continued care and support to families and communities, they are uniquely positioned to promote equitable outcomes for children.

UNICEF is pleased to join the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children in Dar es Salaam. This important occasion will see our common efforts to effectively combat poverty. We are united in our commitment to INSPIRE, ACT and CHANGE to achieve a World Fit for Children.



Ehab Al Si UNICEF Regional Director

“UNICEF and partners are therefore increasingly focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable children.”

# FOURTH FORUM OF THE GLOBAL NETWORK OF RELIGIONS FOR CHILDREN

Theme: "Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change." 16 - 18 JUNE 2012, DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

### FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

The third forum under the theme "Learning to Share: Vision, Action, Hope," was held in May 2008 in Hiroshima Japan, which featured the launch of the Argentinian International ethics education programme titled "Learning to Live Together: An International and Interfaith Programme for Ethics Education," a curriculum and resource manual endorsed by UNICEF and UNESCO.

This year's forum mainly focuses on how to solve children's challenges that result from poverty. Participants are expected to address the challenge of poverty and its devastating consequences for children, not only in Africa but also around the world, with the main focus on the key causes of poverty that include corruption and poor governance, war and violence, and unequal distribution of resources. They will also recommend some unique faith-based contributions towards solving these challenges.

Some of the delegates who will attend include His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kiliani, Auxiliary Bishop of Botswana and Co-Patron of the GNRC Fourth Forum, H.E. Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the African Union Peace Envoy for Sudan and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The Ethiopian Nile Basin Foundation, Rev. Kishiki Miyamoto, President of Argentinian International, H.E. Othello Otenga, President from the Caribbean/Latin America, World Council of Churches, Dr. William F. Woodley, Secretary General, Religion for Peace International, His Grace Archbishop Dr. John Ombaka, Catholic Archbishop of Abuja and Co-Chair, African Council of Religious Leaders, H.E. Ali Iqbal Ali Hassan Mwinyi, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Girma Machel from the Nelson Mandela Foundation among many others.

"Apart from deliberating on the current theme, we also want to revisit the promises and achievements made during the first, second and third GNRC Forums," says the Chairman of the GNRC Fourth Forum Organising Committee, and Secretary General of the African Council of Religious Leaders Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali.

Dr. Ali leads the milestones made by GNRC so far and expresses optimism that the Africa for children is bright.

## Forum to forge enduring partnerships to fight poverty

The three-day Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) is being held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from June 16th.

The Children's Pre-meeting takes place on 14th and 15th June. The Forum comes at a time when youth are leading non-violent transformations in various parts of Africa, demanding a better life, better governance and more access to opportunities. Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change. - will address these concerns largely resulting from poverty.



Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Forum Co-patron



Bishop Dr. Method Kiliani, Forum Co-patron

At this forum which focuses on poverty, GNRC is expected to announce a global initiative to reduce child poverty. The Forum will focus on three concrete areas perceived as main causes of poverty - corruption and poor governance, war and violence, and unequal distribution of resources. These challenges have conspired to cause a cross-cutting situation of unprecedented global economic growth in many parts of the world, while significant parts still remain in absolute poverty. Tragically, children still suffer disproportionately from poverty, accounting for a large share of poverty statistics.

The Forum commences on 16th June in honour of the hundreds of courageous children who on 16th June 1978, and armed with nothing but their fragile bodies, were ruthlessly gassed down by the Apartheid Regime of South Africa for demanding better education and livelihoods speaking out against imposed poverty.

GNRC recognises the potential of diverse religions and faith traditions working together to fight poverty. Each religious community has assets that can be engaged in poverty eradication, and the spirit of inter-religious cooperation, which characterises the GNRC, provides a powerful set of capacities for fighting poverty.

In the struggle against poverty, the Forum will seek to engage the three major assets that all religious communities possess: spiritual, moral, and social resources. The question is: how can these resources be used in every village, every corner of the world, where even governments do not reach, be aligned and be deployed to eradicate absolute poverty? And just as critical: How can enduring partnerships between faiths, and secular development partners and faiths, be forged to eradicate absolute poverty? And how can children be made central and integral elements in all plans to eradicate absolute poverty?

Expected outcomes of the Fourth Forum include: Through the Fourth Forum, the GNRC seeks to INSPIRE all - to ACT to CHANGE the current negative trends, in order to just an end to child poverty and empower children and young people to build a more just and spiritually abundant world for all.

Children and youth will develop their knowledge and understanding of the world's key challenges, empowering them to become responsible global citizens, and be encouraged to participate in peer-to-peer education in their communities. Faith communities will show-case their contributions to eradicating poverty, propose ways to partner with development agencies, and call on governments, multi-lateral and bilateral agencies to join hands with them in fighting poverty.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders - African for Peace, Chairman of the Organising Committee



St. Juan Pablo, Chairperson of the local hosting committee



Ms. Maria Palma, GNRC Europe Coordinator



Mr. Abubakar F. Kibwigi - Secretary General of the Fourth Forum



Ms. Mercedes Roman, GNRC Latin America Coordinator



Rev. Archimandrite Prof. Dr. Qais Ismail, GNRC Arab States coordinator and founder, President of the Ecumenical Studies Center and the Orthodox Youth Fellowship, in Jordan



Ms. Eilat Guggenheim, Shikha Psychotherapist and GNRC Coordinator for Israel



Dr. Vigna N. Aravanan, GNRC Coordinator for South East Asia and the Executive Director of the Sarawaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka



Mr. Stephen Hammer, UNICEF's Civil Society and Parliamentary engagement Specialist



Mr. Felipe Ferrera, Policy Officer, NGOs and Economic Development of the African Union

The GNRC Fourth Forum Supplement is made possible through support from UNICEF

## GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee Members



Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali – The Chairman of the Organizing Committee. He is currently the Secretary General of the African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL—R/P) and the Africa Representative of

the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP). He is also the GNRC Africa Coordinator.



Mr. Atsushi Iwasaki serves as GNRC Secretary General for Arigatou International headquarters in Japan. He has been working with the GNRC since its inauguration in the year 2000.



Ms. Evi Guggenheim Shbeta is GNRC Coordinator for Israel.



Mr. Stephen Hanmer (Paraguay), Civil Partnerships, UNICEF, New York.



Sr. Jean Pruitt, an American Maryknoll Sister, is the Chairperson of the local hosting committee. She has founded a number of organizations in Tanzania including the Tanzania Mozambique Friendship

Association (TAMOFA) and the Dogodogo Centre (Tanzania's leading street children centre).



Mercedes Roman is an Ecuadorian sociologist who has dedicated her work and life to women and children's rights. She has a broad academic background with

studies in anthropology, philosophy and sociology of religion.



Dr. Vinya S. Ariyaratne is Executive Director of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, and Member of the Board, Child Protection Authority of Sri Lanka. He is a physician specialized in community medicine/ public health.



Ms. Meg Gardinier (United States) is Director, World Day of Prayer and Action for Children, at Arigatou International's office in New York.



Ms. Marta Palma is currently the advisor on Children's Issues to the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. She studied sociology, social work and theology and is currently working on a Ph.D. in Theology with the San Francisco Theological Seminar.



Archimandrite Prof. Qais Sadiq is founder and President of the Ecumenical Studies Center and the Orthodox Youth Fellowship, in Jordan, a lecturer and a

counselor. He is also a Member of the Higher Jordanian National Committee for Youth and Child Strategy (2003-2014).



Ms. Agneta Ucko, (Switzerland), is Director, Arigatou International - Geneva.



Filipe Alimo Furuma is the Policy Officer in charge of NGOs' Economic and Social Development in the African Union Commission (AUC), under the Directorate

of Citizens and Diaspora (CIDO). He is also the Desk Officer for the Interfaith Dialogue Forum, which was established in June 2010 in Abuja, Nigeria.



Mr. Abubakar F. Kabwogi is the Secretary General of the Fourth Forum. He has 15 years' experience in Inter-religious cooperation work and has served as Special envoy of WCRP Secretary General in Africa. He is also the Founding Secretary General of the African Council of Religious Leaders. Currently he is the R/P Special Envoy to Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIS) and Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO).



## Former Child Soldiers' Stories at the GNRC Fourth Forum

Two child participants who attended the children's pre-meeting and the main Forum (Joseph Kony Junior, from Gulu, Uganda and Bafakulera Mpela from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)—aged 16 years) both of them former child soldiers, individually expressed their appreciation to the Forum organizers for affording them what they saw as a chance of a lifetime to meet, interact and share experiences with other children from around the world. While in the pre-meeting, they participated in the trainings and experience sharing activities where they role-played as perpetrator of violence and father with familial responsibilities respectively. It was a learning experience not just for the victims of armed violence but also for other children living in relative comfort. They both were outstanding and not only enjoyed themselves immensely but entertained the other children as well in spite of language barriers (especially for Joseph Kony Junior—who only expressed himself to the others through an interpreter).

As narrated by his conference chaperone Mr. Patrick Loum, the 16 year old Joseph Kony Junior was born in captivity. Both his mother and father were abducted and conscripted as fighters within the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Joseph Kony Junior's father was killed by Joseph Kony on allegations that he was plotting to kill him a few months after the birth of Junior. His mother is alive and engages in hawking activities to support her family including Junior who is currently back to school and preparing to sit his final primary school exams at the end of the year to allow him to proceed to secondary school.

### **Bafakulera Mpela, a former child soldier from the DRC, in an interview gave this story:**

*I was born in a poor family of ten children in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo. I am now 16 years old. I was abducted by the Mai Mai militia group sometime in 2006 at the age of 10. I was in my fifth year of primary school then. My role in the army was to store a magic solution known as the 'solution of invulnerability' that was believed to protect soldiers from any harm during fighting. I also helped cook for the commanders and search for food from the villages. Anybody in the village, who resisted our attempts, would find his/her lips pierced and a lock inserted but with a key placed on one hand. I participated in battle against one rebel group once. Parents were allowed to visit us in the bush, and one time they found I was very sick and requested the commanders to release me: something they did at a fee. Back in the village my life was very miserable since I always remained a suspect whenever any crime was committed by other people. My parents requested my uncle to live with me. My uncle was ready to support my formal education but I no longer had the desire and I opted instead to pursue a course in Welding at Let Africa Live Vocational Training Centre. The little money I now earn supports me and my*

*parents and I hope to be able to support my two younger siblings in their education from next year.*

Regarding the GNRC Fourth Forum, Mpela could only marvel at the good fortune that had enabled him—one 'who lived in the forest as a child soldier, with feelings of worthlessness, uneducated and illiterate'—to greet the president of Tanzania Mr. Kikwete and his wife Mrs. Salma Kikwete and more so sit between his feet! 'I dreamed of travelling by plane one day, but now this has come to pass!' 'I have felt the love of high ranking people and children of all races! From the forum I have learned many things: how to use the money I make, do not waste; poverty exists but you and I can find a solution; never say die. I have also made so many friends despite the difficulty of language'.









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