

**„Tolerance and respect are the biggest challenges for religious leaders today.“**



**Dr. Gunnar Stålsett – Honorary President and World Council Member of *Religions for Peace*, Bishop emeritus of the Church of Norway**

Norwegian Bishop Stålsett is an effective, creative and resolute peacebuilder who has worked untiresomely around the world and for many years towards peace. His life and career demonstrate the possibilities for creating a lasting and just peace, and the contributions inter-religious institutions can offer. According to Stålsett, in the world's many armed conflicts today peace and harmony between different ethnic groups are threatened by extremism, and religion is being abused to fuel war rather than promoting peace. In his eyes, tolerance and respect are today's biggest challenges for religious leaders.

## **Vita**

In the 1970s, Gunnar Stålsett served as Secretary General of the Council of the Norwegian Church for ecumenical and international relations, and from 1998 to 2005 he served as Bishop of Oslo. He has been Secretary General of the Lutheran World Federation from 1985 to 94. And was a member of the World Conference of Religions for Peace and Chair of the European Council of Religious Leaders. Prior to his church career he was a member of the Norwegian parliament and government, and served in its international commissions, including the Advisory Council for Arms Control and Disarmament and Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS. From

2006 to 2010 he was Special Envoy for Peace and Reconciliation in in East Timor. He served as a member on the Nobel Price Committee for 17 years.

## Selected media excerpts

*Religions for Peace*, [Bishop Stålsett briefs H.H. Pope Francis, Religious Leaders and Development Experts on Interfaith Rainforest Initiative](#)

*Religions for Peace*, [Religions for Peace Multi-religious Delegation's Visit to Rakhine State](#)

Kelsey Dallas, *In Depth*, G20 Interfaith Forum in Tokyo

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