

1st Assembly on Women, Faith and Diplomacy

RELIGIONS FOR PEACE

The Facts

Women of Faith: The Hidden Leaders Our World Needs

Women disproportionately suffer the consequences of violent conflict, poverty, lack of education, and restrictions on their freedoms (including freedom of thought, conscience and religion).

Yet they are [the first to respond in situations of social and political unrest](#). In public health crises, in public offices, in micro enterprises, in over one third of all households, as well as in religious and secular civil society, women form the bulk of those providing the necessary services as well as the nurture and resilience within diverse families. Many of these women are motivated and strengthened by their faith, and work alongside many male leaders. Yet, their stories, knowledge, and expertise is little-known in mainstream media, by governments, and in the spaces where decisions are made.

The role of women in peace and security is now mainstream, thanks to myriad international efforts, which are being marked this year around UNSC Resolution 1325 and the Beijing Platform for Action's 25th anniversary and review. Nevertheless, the role of faith in women's public lives, and the specific contributions of women of faith alongside their counterparts, [remain underrepresented](#) and even invisible in diplomacy and policymaking.

A New Model of Diplomacy

Women of faith peacebuilders, at an individual level, mirror *Religions for Peace's* effective and inclusive approach to finding solutions to the world's most urgent and cross-cutting challenges. Women of faith, much like *Religions for Peace*, [often work behind the scenes](#) to creatively build peace through sustained faith-inspired relationship building, reaching across lines of difference, including in tense environments. This is one of the many models which may hold promise for renewed, refined and urgent diplomacy desperately needed in this moment of global pandemic, as the world's most pressing challenges become increasingly interlinked.

Religions for Peace, partnering once again with the *Foundation Peace Dialogue of the World Religions and Civil Society* (Ring for Peace), and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, intends to shed light on how faith inspires in diplomatic spaces, by focusing on the diverse forms of expertise leveraged in decision-making and leadership.

The 1st Assembly on Women, Faith and Diplomacy

The *1st Assembly on Women, Faith and Diplomacy: Keeping the Faith and Transforming Tomorrow*, will provide a unique platform to diverse stakeholders from media, diplomatic corps, civil society, academia, and international development sectors. The convening will equip faith-inspired women and men, youth cohorts, and multi-religious communities, with knowledge and analysis, connectivity and narratives, linking religions to peace and security, sustainable development, and human rights.

The Assembly will identify challenges, nuance responsibilities, and showcase successes in peacebuilding, international relations, as well as sustainable development. Diplomacy in this context will shed light on informal structures and multiple strategies of negotiation and mediation, in which many women of faith often play essential roles to build peace, advance human development and uphold and protect human rights.

From 11-13 November 2020, several hundred international religious leaders, diplomats and representatives from civil society, governments, and academic institutions will come together. Due to the ongoing global pandemic caused by the spread of COVID-19, the organisers plan this conference format using cutting-edge and digitally savvy means. While the delegates will participate virtually, a core group will conduct the conference from Lindau. Global members of the press are invited to participate virtually through live-streamed events, press conferences, and interviews.

The Assembly organisers are guided by an international Advisory Council and a Planning Committee of global, high-level religious and institutional leaders. The Programme will focus on key themes related to peace and security (including mediation and reconciliation), human rights (including gender-based violence and human trafficking), and development (including climate change and inter religious education). The program will feature regional spotlights, prominent faith, political and media leaders, interactive interviews, and audio-visual panels.

Lindau: Tripoint on Lake Constance

Lindau on Lake Constance will play host to the *1th Assembly on Women, Faith and Diplomacy*. Located at the tripoint of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, the location as the geographical center of Europe offers a certain “neutral ground”. The exchange of cultures in Lindau and the Lake Constance region is deeply rooted in history. Even today, this tradition achieves global reach for example by promoting generational dialog and assuming responsibility for the future in the organization of the Nobel Laureate Meetings.

The Inselhalle from which the Assembly is held, affords the opportunity to carry out a conference with multiple simultaneous workshops and discussions virtually as well, due to its many convention rooms and workspaces.

The Partners

The „Stiftung Friedensdialog der Weltreligionen und Zivilgesellschaft“ (*Foundation for the Peace Dialog of World Religions and Civil Society*) was founded to conduct the 10th World Assembly in Germany 2019; the Chairman is Dr. h.c. Wolfgang Schürer and the Managing Director is Ulrich Schneider. The international Secretariat of *Religions for Peace* in New York coordinates the program of the Assembly as well as local preliminary meetings and appoints the delegates.

The culture department of the Federal Foreign Office will support the Assembly. As part of the “Religions’ Responsibility for Peace” initiative established by then Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, there has been a regular exchange on the Religions for Peace initiative.

For further information see:

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