

2018 Activity Report and General Policy Presentation for 2019

Dear Esteemed EC members, brothers and sisters of ACRP, I would firstly like to express my deepest gratitude to the Japanese Host Committee of ACRP for preparing, organizing and cosponsoring the crucial EC meeting here in Osaka city.

It is a great honor for me as General Secretary to be given this opportunity to make 2018 Activity report, and to share with you all the General Policy for 2019.

First, I want to start with my report on ACRP's main activities for the period from the last EC meeting in Bengaluru in April 2018 through this EC meeting in Osaka in April 2019, in chronological order.

Activity Report by Secretary General RfP Asia

June 2018 - April 2019 (in chronological order)

Religions for Peace and UNICEF Launch “Faith for Social and Behavior Change Initiative” for the World’s Children

(Bangkok, 10-12 July 2018)



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

This historic initiative will strengthen the global evidence base, establishing a co-created programming framework among UNICEF country offices and strategic religious actors and key government counterparts, and will develop a global UNICEF technical guidance for partnership with faith-based organizations (FBOs).

ACRP secretary-general attended the launch of this initiative.

IPCR International Seminar 2018

(Seoul, 27-29 August 2018)



The International Peace Corps of Religions (IPCR) held an international seminar in Seoul, South Korea. Some 50 people took part, from Japan, China, and South Korea, including the representatives of respective national chapters, people of faith, scholars, and representatives of citizens' groups.

IPCR is a South Korean corporation established by the Korean Conference of Religion for Peace (KCRP). It has held a seminar every year since 2009 on the basic theme, "Building a Peace Community in North-East Asia."

Dr. Jeong Se-hyun, president of Wonkwang University in South Korea, gave a keynote address on this year's theme,

How to Respond to Ethical Challenges and Suggest Best Practices for

Establishing a Peace Community in Northeast Asia." Afterward, during three sessions, the participants discussed the theme concerning politics, the economy, and society and culture.

The seminar on “Religion and Building Ecological Civilization” hosted by CCRP

(China, 10 -14 September 2018)



ACRP delegation visited China at the invitation of CCRP. From Sep 10th to 14th, at the invitation of China Committee on Religion and Peace, Prof. Cahill, ACRP deputy Moderator, Madam Mastura and Dr.Sision, both Co-Presidents of ACRP, Ven. Nemoto, Secretary-General of ACRP, Ven. Sugino, deputy Secretary General of Religions for Peace, and representatives from RfP Japan, ACRP Philippine, ACRP Malaysia, and ACRP Thailand, members of Development and Environment Committee, 15 in total visited Beijing, Zhejiang in China.

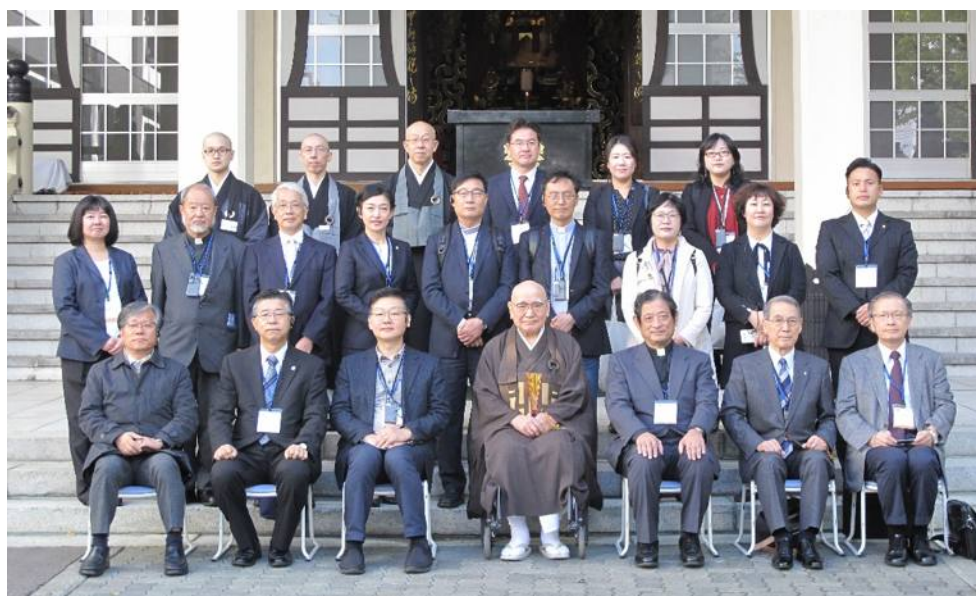
In Beijing, ACRP delegates attended a seminar on Religion and Building Ecological Civilization hosted by CCRP. They shared and discussed practices and experiences on how to tackle the environmental crisis and advance green development through efforts of religious circles with Dr. Wu Shunze, a top Chinese expert on environmental protection and members of CCRP, appealed believers to work actively for ecological civilization. In Zhejiang Province, ACRP delegates visited famous Buddhist Mt Putuo, water pollution

treatment project in Pujiang county, and Taoist temples, Islamic mosques, Catholic churches and Christian cathedral in Hangzhou city, hand in-depth exchanges with local members of CCRP on efforts made by Chinese religious believers to promote ecological civilization and serve the society, and China's achievements in protecting environment.

This activity got strong support from the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). During the visit, ACRP delegates were met by H.E.Mr.Bater, the Vice Chairman of CPPCC's National Committee, and Mr.Chen Tiesiong, the Vice Chairman of CPPCC's Zhejiang Committee.

Showing support to ACRP and its SAP by this activity, CCRP is willing to further exchanges among ACRP chapters and make ACRP more vital, pragmatic and influential. ACRP delegates all spoke highly of this visit and seminar, which was regarded as a model to other working committees by Prof.Cahill and Ven. Nemoto.

The Second Japan-Korea Religious Leaders' Interaction Program (Hokkaido, 23-26 October 2018)



WCRP Japan Committee and KCRP jointly held the "Second Japan-Korea Religious Leaders' Interaction Program" in Hokkaido. This program aims at promoting solidarity for peace by fostering trust at the non-governmental level through interactive programs between the religious leaders of both countries by visiting each other's countries.

The first program was held in Seoul in 2016. The seven religious leaders interacted with Japanese religious leaders by visiting together the Lake Toya,

religious facilities of Sapporo and Otaru cities, and attending the inter-faith symposium, and so on.

In the afternoon of 25th, the symposium was held at the Anglican Church of Hokkaido Dioces in Sapporo city. Some 130 religious leaders participated in the symposium including seven representatives of Christianity, Won Buddhism and other religions from Korea, as well as executives of WCRP Japan Committee and other religious leaders in Hokkaido.

The Chair of WCRP Japan, Rev. Uematsu expressed his gratitude to the organizer and all the participants for the precious opportunity to learn from each other and pursue the path of acting together for the common good and peace of the world.

The KCRP Secretary General Kim Teasung expressed his appreciation to the Japanese host for the warm welcome given to the Korean delegation and shared his conviction by referring to the history between two countries that people of religion are one family in faith, and have the mission of transforming the division and conflict to reconciliation and coexistence.

All the participants vowed to continue their efforts to fulfill the mission entrusted by God and Buddha.

International seminar on "World Peace through Interfaith and Intra-faith Dialogue"

(Dhaka, 27-28 November 2018)



An International Seminar on World Peace through Interfaith and Intra-faith Dialogue was organized by Asian conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP)/ Religions for Peace Asia, Bangladesh Chapter was held on 27 and 28 November 2018 at the hotel The Westin Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Religions for Peace Bangladesh is a multi-religious partnership of various Religious Communities that aims to deepen friendship and co-operation among Religious Leaders and promote harmony and peace among its members and the society in general.

The objective of the seminar was to facilitate interaction among the followers of different religions and sects so that they have a better understanding and knowledge about it. It is expected that this will help develop respect, peace and harmony among them which will, in turn, contribute to lasting world peace.

On 27 November, Mr. Fazle Hossain Badsha MP, Chairman Parliamentary Caucus on Indigenous People attended the inaugural session as chief guest and Professor Dr. M. Din Syamsuddin, Moderator- ACRP/RfP Asia, Rev. Nobuhiro Nemoto, Secretary General- RfP Asia were the Guests of Honour. The key speaker was Prof. Dr. Syed Anwar Hussain, Prof. of Bangabandhu Chair.

Prof. Desmond Cahill delivered goodwill speeches from RfP Australia, Master Mingsheng of CCRP- China, Mr. N. Vasudevan, Secretary General RfP India, Mr. U Myint Swe, President RfP Myanmar, and Dr. Md. Ismath Ramzy from Sri Lanka.

In the evening the overseas guests visited Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi and placed wreaths in front of the father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

On 28 November 2018, Mr. Azaduzzaman Khan MP, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Home Affairs attended the concluding day as Chief Guest and as guests of honor Mr. Sampad Barua, Secretary-President's office and H.E. Zhang Zuo, the Ambassador- The People's Republic of China in Bangladesh spoke in the seminar. Speeches were delivered by Imam MU Kefa, Mr. Wang Wenjie of CCRP, etc.

The seminar ended with a cultural show.

On 29 November, CCRP delegates visited Baitul Mukarram National Mosque, Islamic foundation Dharmarajik Buddhist temple and Buddhist Religious Welfare Trust, Dhaka.

Honorable President, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Honourable Prime Minister and Honourable Speaker sent messages wishing the seminar

a grand success.

2018 APIYN Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp

(Yangon, 17-20 December 2018)



The 78 young leaders from twelve countries across the Asia Pacific convened in Yangon, Myanmar for the fifth annual Asia Pacific Interfaith Youth Network peace camp, hosted by Religions for Peace Asia and the Seoul Peace Education Centre, in partnership with the Religions for Peace Myanmar. Delegates from Myanmar, Australia, China, India, Japan Mongolia, the Philippines, Pakistan, South Korea, Sri Lanka convened to reflect upon the impact of climate change on their communities and across the region, and to develop action plans to address specific aspects of climate change at the local level.

The young leaders from across Asia, along with various observers, were warmly welcomed by the Myanmar Union Minister for Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture H.E. Thura U Aung Ko, and by dignitaries from the *Seoul Peace Education Centre* (Rev Teasung Kim, Director) *Religions for Peace Asia* (Rev Masamichi Kamiya, Senior Advisor, ACRP), *Religions for Peace International* (Rev Kyoichi Sugino, Deputy Secretary General), and *Religions for Peace Myanmar* (U Mint Swye, President).

Throughout the camp, the delegates learned about the scientific impact of climate change and the role that people of faith and good will can play in helping communities respond to it. Dr. Tun Lwin, former Director General of DMH, and CEO of the Myanmar Climate Change Watch, presented a seminar

on the science of climate change and gave participants an overview of how climate change is affecting Myanmar. The participants also toured various places of worship and learned about each faith's connection and concern to the environment through visitations to St Mary's Cathedral, Islamic Centre of Myanmar, Shwedagon Pagoda, Sri Maha Kali Temple, and the Pan Pyo Let Monastic Education Centre.

APIYN youth leaders Takashi Hashimoto (APIYN Vice Moderator, Japan), Nivy Balachandran (APIYN Strategic Partnerships, Australia) and Renz Argo (Chair of Youth Committee, RfP Philippines) facilitated various workshops throughout the camp guiding participants from thought to action.

Enlarged Secretariat's meeting in Bangkok, Thailand

(Bangkok, 15-18 January, 2019)



ACRP Team visited Interreligious Council of Thailand at Mahidol University

ACRP secretariat had the first enlarged secretariat's meeting in which Moderator, Deputy Moderator, SG, ASGs, Senior advisor and all secretariat staff members participated for the intensive discussion on the governance, management, project implementation and road mapping of ACRP.

January 15

1. Opening Session

- a) Opening prayer and words by Secretary General

- b) Welcome speech by Moderator
- c) Orientation for the meeting by Senior Advisor
- 2. Session for Upcoming Major Meetings
 - 2.1 Overview of the preparation for the World Assembly in 2019
 - a) RfP Asia's share in the World Assembly
 - b) Regional conference in March for the World Assembly
 - 2.2 EC meeting in 2019
 - a) Discussion on the draft agenda
 - b) Discussion on the logistics
 - c) Assignment of tasks among the members of the Secretariat
 - 2.3 Overview of the preparation for the 2020 Assembly in Tokyo
 - a) Review of 'Proposed Architecture' document
 - b) Discussion for further refinement of the document mentioned above

January 16

- 2.3 Overview of the on-going undertaking in amending the Constitution
- 3. Session for Governance (forward-looking discussion)
 - 3.1 Governance Assembly, considering its membership and functions & tasks
Executive Council, considering its membership and functions & tasks
 - 3.2 Leaders' Advisory Committee
 - 3.3 Finance Committee, considering its membership and functions & tasks
 - 3.4 A new governance body required such as 'the Trustees'?
 - 3.5 Organizational relationship with RfP International while considering RfP Asia's raison d' être

January 17

- 4. Session for Management (forward-looking discussion)
 - 4.1 Roles & responsibilities of secretariat's team members (SG, ASGs, Advisor and secretarial staff) and Human resource relationship with RfP International
 - 4.2 National Chapters
 - a) Identification of challenges, which a national chapter faces
 - b) Ways and means of how the Secretariat assists the national chapters in overcoming those challenges

- c) Revitalizing, keeping the status quo or expansion, taking into consideration such new chapters in Central Asia, Brunei, Fiji, Laos, Viet Nam, etc.?
- 4.3 Women's Committee and Youth Committee, considering how the secretariat to be related to the leadership of the respective Committees
- 4.4 New leadership (Moderator, Deputy Moderator, Co-president, etc.)
- Session for Programs, taking into consideration bodies, which carry out them (forward-looking discussion)
 - 4.5 Areas of concern and flagship projects after 2020
 - 4.6 Other projects
 - 4.7 Working Commissions and its guidelines
 - 4.8 SPEC and its working relationship with the secretariat in Tokyo
 - 4.9 Women's Committee and Youth Committee, focusing on projects to be carried out by the respective Committees
 - 4.10 Website development (national chapter websites and updating RfP Asia's website)
 - 4.11 Future roadmap (a strategic action plan between 2020 and 2025)
- Overall discussion/reflections
- 5. Closing words and prayer by Deputy Moderator

January 18

- 6. Programs organized by RfP Thailand
 - 6.1 Visit Mahidol University in the morning
 - 6.2 Local visits in the afternoon

International Conference – Commemorating the Centennial Anniversary of the March 1st Movement

(Seoul, 18-22 February 2018)



KCRP hosted an international seminar commemorating the centennial anniversary of the March 1st movement. The title of the seminar was “Religion and Peace for Another 100 Years: Commemoration of the Centennial Anniversary of the March 1st Movement.”

As a nationwide non-violent resistance movement, the March 1st Movement mobilized religious groups in Korea to call for independence from Japanese colonial rule. It also fostered interreligious dialogue towards harmony and unity, transcending differences in religion and doctrine. The March 1st movement provides the spiritual foundation for harmony and unity in the two Koreas as well as for world peace. Its values help us all to reassess the role of religious leaders and ways to overcome global issues such as the escalating economic recession and tensions, providing a cornerstone for the future of Korea.

KCRP aimed to share the values of the resistance movement and discussed how the spirit of the March 1st resistance could contribute to world peace. Through this seminar, all the participants examined the role of religious leaders in building a future of coexistence and harmony through reflecting on the history of resistance.

Deputy Moderator, Secretary General, Presidents and Secretary Generals of some national chapters attended this seminar and made significant contributions to the discussion and examination on this historical event and theme.

Asia Regional Preparatory Consultation in Yangon, Myanmar

(Yangon, 4-7 March, 2018)



In preparation for the 10th World Assembly, *Religions for Peace*, in partnership with *Religions for Peace Asia*, Asian Conference of *Religions for*

Peace (ACRP), convened in Yangon, Myanmar on 4-7 March 2019. The participants examined Assembly themes and sub-themes, shared best practices and lessons learned, and reviewed commission papers, training manuals, and guides to action created for the Assembly.

The consultation brought together approximately 90 representatives of pan-Asian institutions, religious leaders, women of faith, and youth leaders from *Religions for Peace* affiliates and religious institutions throughout the region. This consultation mapped and engaged the Asian Women and Youth Networks and is now under the production of a report that would enable *Religions for Peace* to gain a more thorough understanding of the current status, activities and impact of the Asia-Pacific Women of Faith Network and Asia-Pacific Interfaith Youth Network.

The research process and subsequent report would generate a broader interest in the networks and increase the potential for levels of engagement. The report would lay the groundwork enabling the networks to hold active forums and consultations in preparation for the 10th World Assembly.

Commission Papers were published and distributed through *RfP* networks in early 2019, and the regional level meeting has provided an opportunity for *RfP* members to discuss the papers and feed directly into the World Assembly preparations and deliberations. Each of the five Commission Papers suggested key discussion topics and questions, and the consultation intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. To capture the critical challenges in each national and regional context concerning the Assembly themes and sub-themes, identify the religious resources' available to help address significant challenges and areas of the capacity building which require further development.
2. To reflect on the relevance and usefulness of the Commission Papers in national and regional contexts, and how they may be adapted and improved.

This consultation would also enable *Religions for Peace* International to gain a more thorough understanding of the current status, activities and impact of the Asia-Pacific Women of Faith Network and Asia-Pacific Interfaith Youth Network in preparation for the *Religions for Peace* 10th World Assembly in August 2019.

The objectives are:

1. To conduct research and produce a report mapping the status and activities of the Asia-Pacific Women of Faith Network (WoFN) and Asia-Pacific Interfaith Youth Network (APIYN).
2. To prepare *RfP*' s Asia-Pacific Women of Faith and Interfaith Youth

Networks for their contributions to *Religions for Peace's* future strategy and activities through pre-Assembly consultations and meetings.

General Policy for 2019.

First, let us review the purpose of ACRP organization and its mission, articulated in the constitution.

Founded in 1976, ACRP is an independent fellowship of the followers of the many religious faiths and traditions in the Asia-South Pacific region, and with its constituent bodies represents more than half of humanity.

The mission of ACRP is to promote Asian spiritualities and interreligious awareness and harmony as well as global and regional cohesion in the pursuit of peace, justice and human dignity and to uphold and develop the various religious heritages of the Asia-Pacific region following the authentic values of religion and spirituality.

The core values of ACRP are responsible cooperation, constructive dialogue, wise leadership and facilitative action.

So, we always bear in minds and follow the purpose of ACRP organization, its mission and the core values.

At the last Incheon General Assembly, we determined ourselves to genuinely pursue growing to be an action-oriented organization by putting into practice the commitments and promises we made and expressed in the Assembly Declaration and “Strategic Action Plan”.

I repeated my appeal in my speech of the General Policy for 2018 in Bengaluru EC meeting that ACRP needs to be a foot-working body, which requires a shift of our focus from talks to actions. Since then, we have been endeavoring to launch some projects in the ACRP region.

We also have been working hard on revising and developing our constitution following our resolutions for redirecting ACRP, from the viewpoints of the governance, management and project implementation. The

organizational structure including the governance and management, etc. is now being reviewed and a final proposal will be submitted to the next General Assembly in Tokyo 2020.

This EC meeting plays a vital role in making historical decisions and recommendations on ACRP's fundamental transformation from dialogue based organization to action based movement, which will undoubtedly affect the future direction of ACRP.

Particularly, I want to draw your attention to the ACRP Flagship Projects which were adopted at the last Bengaluru EC meeting. The details are compiled in the document titled "A Policy Position Paper – ACRP Flagship Projects with its Two Core Principles: Their Identification and Implementation", and were distributed to all the EC members last year.

I now want to focus on the narrative points on ACRP Flagship project.

The core principles in identifying ACRP flagship projects;

- To advocate for human dignity and fundamental human rights
- To build a platform of genuine dialogue for reconciliation and transformation.

The following projects and initiatives have been identified as the ACRP's flagship projects for the time being (that is, until the next ACRP Assembly in 2020 or beyond)

- On-going project on human trafficking (often termed as modern day slavery) being initiated by the ACRP Women's Network in cooperation with RfP Philippines
- Two projects on children/women to be finalized and implemented, one by RfP Nepal and the other by RfP Bangladesh
- On-going consultation for peace and reconciliation between KCRP(ROK) and KCR(DPRK) and the consultation under consideration between RfP Bangladesh and RfP Myanmar
- On-going project on development and Environment, being implemented by the working commission on the development and Environment

I summarize the General Policy for 2019 as follows;

1. Continue making the utmost effort by each national chapter as well as by the whole body to raise fund in each country among members and donors both individual and organizational level.
2. Activating 4 working commissions. Each commission makes an effort to take at least one concrete action per year based on a strategic action plan.
3. All national chapter makes an effort to take or continue concrete action(s), addressing issues or problems in each country.
4. All of us shall start with a first step regardless of its size or scale.
5. Through the preparation of 2020 Tokyo General Assembly, ACRP will challenge a fundamental transformation for fulfilling its mission and role.

Dear distinguished EC members, brothers and sisters, gathering at the Executive Committee meeting here in Osaka, generously hosted by RfP Japan, please help and guide us secretariat in together advancing the sacred way of ACRP lying ahead of us, which may lead to more brilliant society and the world. Our solidarity can make ACRP further grow for peace and happiness of all in the world.

With my sincere appreciation to you all for giving me this chance of working together with you all,

Peace in Dharma
Nobuhiro Nemoto
Secretary-General
ACRP/RfP Asia