

HAND BOOK



October 17, 2021: Youth Pre-Assembly
October 18, 2021: Women Pre-Assembly
October 19-22, 2021: Main Assembly

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I. *Online Ninth General Assembly Program at a Glance*

17TH OCT, 2021 SUNDAY	18TH OCT, 2021 MONDAY	19TH OCT, 2021 TUESDAY	20TH OCT, 2021 WEDNESDAY	21TH OCT, 2021 THURSDAY	22TH OCT, 2021 FRIDAY
YOUTH PRE-ASSEMBLY	WOMEN'S PRE-ASSEMBLY	MAIN GENERAL ASSEMBLY			
11:00-11:15 OPENING					
11:15-11:30 GRATITUDE OF SUPPORT					
11:30-12:30 SESSION I (KEYNOTE SPEECH)		11:40-11:50 VIDEO CLIP			
		11:50-12:00 OPENING PERFORMANCE	11:50-12:00 VIDEO CLIP	11:50-12:00 VIDEO CLIP	11:50-12:00 VIDEO CLIP
12:30-12:45 BREAK			12:00-12:05 OPENING PRAYER	12:00-12:05 OPENING PRAYER	12:00-12:05 OPENING PRAYER
12:45-13:45 SESSION II		12:00-14:00 OPENING CEREMONY	12:05-13:35 PLENARY II (OPEN TO PUBLIC)	12:05-14:05 COMMISSION SESSION 1-4 IN PARALLEL	12:05-13:15 PLENARY V (BUSINESS SESSION)
13:45-14:00 BREAK	13:30-14:00 BUSINESS SESSION		13:35-13:40 BREAK		13:15-13:25 BREAK
14:00-14:30 SESSION III	14:00-14:15 OPENING	14:03-14:13 BREAK	13:40-15:25 PLENARY III (OPEN TO PUBLIC)	14:05-14:15 BREAK	13:25-14:25 CLOSING CEREMONY
14:30-15:00 SHARING REMARKS BY THE GROUPS	14:15-14:35 KEYNOTE ADDRESS	14:13-15:03 PLENARY I (BUSINESS SESSION)		14:15-15:25 PLENARY IV (BUSINESS SESSION)	
15:00-15:15 PRESENTATION	14:35-15:35 GROUP SESSION	15:13-15:33 PRESS BRIEFING			14:40-15:10 PRESS CONFERENCE
15:15-15:20 BREAK			15:35-15:55 PRESS BRIEFING	15:35-15:55 PRESS BRIEFING	
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	16:25-16:30 WAY FORWARD AND CLOSING REMARK		16:00-17:40 AFGHANISTAN SESSION		

II. Welcoming Messages

Message co-authored by Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin, Moderator and Rev. Dr. Nobuhiro Nemoto, Secretary-General



Distinguished and honorary guests, Eminences and Excellencies, esteemed Executive Committee members, Governing Board members, religious leaders, friends and supporters, brothers and sisters of Religions for Peace and ACRP.

On behalf of ACRP, we would like to express our profound gratitude to the Japanese Host Committee of ACRP for preparing and organizing this 9th General Assembly here in Tokyo, Japan. Furthermore, it is a great honor for us to welcome you all.

Due to the corona pandemic, the General Assembly was postponed for one year from its scheduled date in the fall of 2020, and the assembly itself is held in real-time online for the first time in its history. All of this was a new experience for us, and while we were groping in the dark, we were able to arrive at today's conference thanks to the dedicated efforts of the RfP Japan Committee, the host of the assembly, and the ACRP Executive Committee and Preparatory Committee members. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of you.

Although we can't meet you in person in Tokyo due to the online format, we also have a great advantage of having many members and friends of ACRP member and affiliated organizations who could not have attended the regular assemblies due to the limited space.

We are sure that the impact of the sharing learnings and experiences by the participants of this assembly will be immeasurable for the ACRP to move forward strongly as an action movement in the future. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of you for your participation.

As you know, the main theme is "Asian Religious Communities in Action: Moving towards an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia". Moreover, as the critical point of 'Inclusive', ACRP appeals as follows :

The General Assembly wants to promote Asia's many and very diverse religious communities and people to move towards inclusive Asia, where there is no social,

religious, ethnic exclusion or alienation, which is free of social vulnerability, social and sexual stigma, caste exclusiveness, sexual and gender discrimination, hate speech and fake news, etc.

We believe that the philosophy of inclusiveness is what our society and the world need the most today. The Sustainable Development Goals also advocate 'no one left behind'.

When even a single person is excluded, it means 'someone is left behind' and 'exclusiveness' prevails.

If we look around today's society and the world, this 'exclusiveness' is rampant. We are facing the reality of 'some group or some people are left behind'. They are not only left behind, but even become the target of attacks and exclusions, namely victims.

Dialogue is an indispensable activity and path to mutual acceptance and respect for differences and diversity among religions and faiths. There are many obstacles on the path, such as discrimination based on various exclusivities, human rights violations, direct violence, disparities, inequality, etc., which hinder the harmonious coexistence based on 'inclusiveness'. We have a mission entrusted by God and Buddha to address each problem sincerely through dialogue and cooperation among religions and people in other fields.

ACRP is a regional member of the Religions for Peace Global movement. It was founded 45 years ago in 1976 in Singapore. Its purpose is to continue to practice the mission of Religions for Peace. During the first conference in Singapore, our predecessors rescued people who had escaped from war-torn Vietnam by boats. Thus, ACRP started its activities by saving human lives.

Let us all take a fresh look at the mission of religious people and believers entrusted by God and Buddha through this assembly, and let us take a new first step together to achieve our common mission.

Thank you.

Message by The Most Rev. Nichiko Niwano, President of *RfP* Japan (Host Committee)



Dear Asian religious leaders and representatives from all walks of life, please allow me to extend a hearty welcome and thank you for joining the Ninth General Assembly of ACRP/ Religions for Peace Asia, the first Assembly to be convened in Japan.

I would also like to express profound gratitude to ACRP Moderator Dr. Muhammad Din Syamsuddin, ACRP Deputy Moderator Dr. Desmond Cahill, and the leadership of ACRP or undertaking the preparations for this General Assembly, as well as the leadership of WCRP / Japan, for agreeing to accept responsibility for ACRP's Headquarters.

This General Assembly has three main goals:

First, to continue making ACRP a more dynamic movement.

Second, to reaffirm and strengthen the nature of ACRP's contributions to people imperiled by crises.

Third, to help ACRP evolve in response to changes in the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, since our Headquarters was relocated from South Korea to Japan seven years ago, the goal of making ACRP more action-oriented has remained an important priority.

These goals are expressed, symbolically, in the main theme of this Assembly: "Asian Religious Communities in Action: Moving Toward an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia."

In 1976, as ACRP's first General Assembly was convening in Singapore, we received reports that Vietnamese refugees were adrift in the ocean offshore. While the governments of concerned nations were wringing their hands, the religious leaders participating in that first General Assembly sprang into action and mounted a rescue mission.

Drawing upon the legacy of our predecessors' hopes and actions, I would like to work hand in hand with all of you until we have realized a world that protects the sanctity of all life.

Due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection, this General Assembly is being held online for the first time, so staff members will be carefully managing Assembly operations.

I am praying incessantly that, through ACRP's Ninth General Assembly Tokyo, all of you will produce many meaningful results.

III. Congratulatory Messages

Message by Mr. Phan Wannamethee, President of The World Fellowship of Buddhists



On behalf of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (The WFB), its sub-organizations – the World Fellowship of Buddhist Youth (WFBY), and the World Buddhist University (WBU) – including Regional Centres and networking organizations of The WFB, I wish to take this opportunity to offer my warmest congratulations to the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) on convening the Ninth General Assembly to be held in Tokyo, Japan from 19-22 October B.E. 2564 (2021).

Although COVID-19 has forced us to change our way of living, it has some good affect namely the recovery of nature, air pollution reduction, and people become more hygienic. Most importantly people also develop the culture of sharing which less unfortunate have helped those who are in need with fundraising and food sharing. We, Buddhist, believe that nothing can exist on its own; everything depends and relies on each other. Any changes in this interconnected compound of existence would definitely, eventually exerts influence on else. Therefore, if we concentrate on putting our own minds at peace, then we can transmit peace mentally and generate peace through our actions. The teaching of Buddhism is based on compassion, non-violence and offers a moral code for all people regardless gender, caste, and religion. It is important to seek the way for social development by understanding the principle of unity and finding the ways to achieve it.

Buddhism has the ultimate goal to secure and maintain happiness, peace, social welfare and harmonious relationship among other religions. To have a stable co-existence, it is very much essential to have comfort life of an individual and to live in harmonious ways with others. Buddhism believes that it will come from a spiritual path and the practice of non-violence, contentment, compassion, and peaceful mind.

We believe that development of science and technology to solve environmental problem are not adequate in itself to deal with environmental crisis because they are incapable of changing the human minds. Whereas environmental education that focusses on human spiritual relationship with the environment will enhance lessening the environmental crisis. In this aspect, not only Buddhism, but also other major religions in the world which all have one thing in common, that is the promotion of good deeds and the

denunciation of bad deeds will be the major force that can foster effective and sustainable environmental protection.

We all gather here today though not meet each other in person, our commitment and determination in making the world a better place for mutually living in peace with happiness has never been diminished. The World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB) acknowledges that all religions teach people to be good and living in harmony with one another. We must therefore begin with ourselves, create loving-compassion and kindness in families, communities, nations, and finally the entire world.

For this special gathering, I have much pleasure in taking this opportunity to extend our sincere best wishes to our ACRP's friends and the organizing committee every success and fruitful achievement in their efforts in upholding peace for mankind and all living beings.

Message by Swami Suvirananda, General Secretary, the Ramakrishna Mission



We are happy to know that the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) is holding its Ninth General Assembly in Tokyo, Japan, from 19 to 22 October 2021.

We take this opportunity to congratulate ACRP and its global body — "Religions for Peace" — for their significant contribution to promote peace and brotherhood among the people across the world during the last 50 years.

We are living in a very troubled time. Never before has humanity experienced so many crucial problems all at once. Belief in co-existence is the only way to rid the world of intolerance and misunderstanding. A multi-religious approach is the ideal way for resolving conflict and advancing reconciliation.

Hinduism espouses the idea of the oneness of mankind — *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* — and proclaims the divinity inherent in each human being, the essential unity of all religions and the brotherhood of the family of man.

According to Hinduism, the ultimate goal of human existence is the attainment of *ananda*, a Sanskrit word for happiness or joy. The Upanishads or Vedanta declare that all human joy is a manifestation of that one Supreme Joy that is our true nature. The *Bhagavad Gita* states that joy and peace are inextricably intertwined and there cannot be any joy for one who has no peace — *ashantasya kutah sukham?*

Education in the ancient Indian tradition was oriented to the above goal of attainment of supreme peace and happiness. All the Upanishads begin and end with Peace Chants (called *shanti mantra* in Sanskrit). Education is imparted to a student by first teaching these Peace Chants so that thoughts and emotions of the young minds get oriented towards cultivating peace internally and externally. It is our earnest appeal to the educational institutions across the globe to make 'Peace Education' an integral part of the system in their own way, in keeping with their respective traditions, so that Peace and Joy may reign on this earth that is strife-torn, conflict-ridden and panic-stricken.

On behalf of Hinduism and the Ramakrishna Mission, I have great pleasure in sending our blessings and best wishes for the success of the Ninth General Assembly of ACRP.

Om shantih, shantih, shantih — peace, peace and peace be unto all!

IV. *Online Ninth General Assembly Information*

1. Introduction

With its 21 member nations comprising more than half of humanity, the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP), now generally known as Religions for Peace Asia, will hold its Ninth Asian Assembly in Tokyo in 19th-22nd October 2021 in online mode. It will be preceded by the Youth Pre-Assembly and the Women's Pre-Assembly. Because of the unprecedented and ongoing crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the General Assembly has been delayed by a year and this year will have to be conducted virtually or online because of the uncertainties regarding travel, quarantines and vaccination roll-outs.

The General Assembly may be preceded by the delayed and simplified 2020/21 Olympic Games, and will be held via ZOOM. The central theme of the 2020/21 Asian Assembly will be **Asian Religious Communities in Action: Moving towards an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia** in developing an interfaith movement working for positive peace and shared well-being across Asia and the Pacific based on the national chapters with the objective to create formal links with key umbrella religious organizations, governments, key international and regional agencies and relevant research organizations in universities.

Because of the pandemic, some changes have been made to the proposed architecture of the General Assembly, including a special session on the COVID-19 pandemic and Asia's religious communities as the Plenary III of the General Assembly. Additionally, because of the Executive Committee decision in March 2021, the Assembly will be conducted online. As a result, the original set of proposals have been simplified. The Assembly will be held over 4 days and for three and a half hours per day and in the afternoon (Japan time).

The overall aims of the General Assembly are to approve a new constitution, appoint the office-bearers for the next five years, approve the Assembly declaration and, lastly, to approve a series of recommendations as part of an ACRP action plan that would guide the organization and the Tokyo secretariat until the next Assembly, probably in 2025.

2. General Assembly Aspirations

The year 2020 has marked the 50th anniversary of the First World Assembly of *Religions*

for Peace International (known as World Conference on Religions and Peace/WCRP then), held at Kyoto Japan in 1970. In October of the commemorative year, Asian Conference of Religions for Peace/ ACRP (also known as *Religions for Peace Asia*) was hoping to convene its Ninth General Assembly in Tokyo Japan, but this has been postponed for 12 months due to the pandemic of COVID-19. In this context, the Tokyo Assembly in October 2021 will be a moment where we recall and commemorate the past fifty years and also reaffirm our unambiguous commitment to action, envisaging a promising future of ACRP, of which we all envisage.

In the recent past, ACRP adopted the *Strategic Action Plan (2015)* and the document titled, “*The Remedial Strategies for ACRP’s Advancement (2017)*” both of which would assist ACRP in becoming a more action-driven organization. Taking into consideration these opportunity-given documents for change, we plan to utilize the General Assembly in Tokyo to envision and make real changes in our way of thinking and in our genuine commitment on the ground to action for social communities, who need our assistance.

We will be able to demonstrate that we have already changed by our *already-completed* achievements and success stories in the Tokyo Assembly in 2021.

We are urged to avoid becoming engaged in discussions, which bring about less fruitful results in our General Assembly. Rather, we will bring our wisdom and determination with the other like-minded people both in religious and non-religious communities alike, who are gathered *online*, with the aim of making ACRP into a multi-religious movement rather than a conference. The Tokyo Assembly in 2021 therefore ought to be a showcase for reaffirming and further strengthening our commitment to concrete activities, which will assist in ameliorating the plight of people, including the most vulnerable in Asia and the Pacific.

The pandemic of COVID-19 has presented unprecedented health challenges across the world. And it has impacted negatively on the maintenance of the world economy, which sustains the well-being of the world’s population. In this context, therefore, the members of ACRP during the *virtual* Ninth General Assembly are tasked to plan and implement ACRP’s multi-faith commitment to concrete activities, which could become a driving force to lessen the impact of the pandemic.

3. General Assembly Objectives

The objectives of the General Assembly are:

- 1) To streamline ACRP and make it a more action-oriented organization;
- 2) To reaffirm and strengthen ACRP's commitment and engagement in assisting people, whose lives and livelihood are being placed at risk in the Asia-Pacific region, in collaboration with other partners so that we can provide genuine benefits for them;
- 3) To advance ACRP further in a changing Asia-Pacific region;

4. Modality of Assembly Presentation

The Ninth General Assembly of ACRP will be convened *online*. The virtual Assembly will be proceeded with the software called “ZOOM Meeting” not “ZOOM Webinar” so that the open communication channel among the Assembly participants can be secured.

The Plenary Session I, IV and V on business will be the closed session, and the Opening & Closing Ceremonies, Plenary Sessions II & III and Commission Session will be open to the wider audience. The YouTube channel will be available for the open programs.

At present, it is conceived that a stage as the hub of the four-day operation of the General Assembly is to be set up as long as the Assembly Budget permits and it is technically feasible. Those, who wish to join the open sessions of the Tokyo Assembly, are required to register with them in advance.

5. General Assembly Main Theme and Sub-themes

1) The main theme of the Tokyo Assembly

The main theme of the Tokyo Assembly is **Asian Religious Communities in Action: Moving towards an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia.**

2) The sub-themes of the Tokyo Assembly

The sub-themes of the Tokyo Assembly are:

- i) Education for Peace and Human Dignity: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia
- ii) Human Rights and Well-being for the Vulnerable: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia
- iii) Reconciliation for Social Cohesion and Harmony: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia
- iv) Development and the Environment in Diversifying Societies: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia

6. Background of the Theme Setting

The central theme has been chosen to reflect the need for Asia's religious communities to work together for a more inclusive, healthy, prosperous and peaceful Asia. Asia with the adjacent area of the Middle East is the birthplace of all the world's major religions and their various traditions. The Asian Conference of Religions for Peace was formally founded in 1976 soon after the foundation in 1970 of *Religions for Peace International*, known also as the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP), in which year it held its first World Assembly at Kyoto. Hence, the Tokyo Assembly will mark 50 years, though it was delayed a year, since the foundation of WCRP and the Kyoto Assembly.

The foundation of WCRP was mostly inspired by the atomic bomb attacks in 1945 and the need for religious communities to work collaboratively in the cause of global and regional peace and national cohesion. After the painful memories of World War II in the face of the threat that a new war would end in nuclear annihilation, in the words of Dr William Vendley, the Secretary-General Emeritus of *Religions for Peace International*, "Independently of each other, religious communities and some of their leaders began focusing on the idea that global challenges demanded a global alliance of the different religions".

Trees are seen by most religions as symbolizing hope, and the revered survivor trees of Hiroshima point to the hope that peace can be achieved by the religious communities working together. The Asian landscape is dotted with temples, mosques, churches and gurdwaras such as the holy city of Varanasi in India, the Shwedagon pagoda in Yangon, the Mt. Putuo island monastery in China, the MacKillop holy shrine in Sydney and the Puchong Perdana mosque in Malaysia, reflecting the many Asian spiritualities and the spiritual genius of the peoples of Asia.

1) Asia as Inclusive

The General Assembly wants to encourage and promote Asia's many and very diverse religious communities to move towards an Asia that is inclusive, where there is no social or religious exclusion or alienation, which is free of social vulnerability, social and sexual stigma, caste exclusiveness, sexual and gender discrimination, hate speech and fake news, where there is freedom of religion and belief in worship and practice, in education and in social policy and where bad religion or bad religious practices are resisted and expunged.

Asian inclusivity will take place mainly in cities. Especially pertinent to Asia has been the global growth of cities. The last decade has seen a very historic tipping point – for the first time in human history, more people are living in cities than in rural areas. By 2050

70 per cent of all people on this earth will live in urban areas. Asia is presently home to half of the world's urban population, and to 66 of its 100 fastest growing urban areas, of which 33 are in China alone. While most growth will occur in cities and towns, there is also the fact of the megacities (10+ million people) – there are currently 21 with 10 in Asia: Tokyo (36.5M), Delhi (21.7M), Mumbai (19.7M), Shanghai (16.3M), Kolkata (15.3M), Dhaka (14.3M), Karachi (12.8M), Beijing (12.2M), Manila (11.4M) and Osaka-Kobe (11.3M).

According to UNICEF's 2012 *Report of the State of the World Children* which focused on *Children in an Urban World*, more than a billion children live in urban areas, many enjoying the advantages of urban life. But there are too many who are living in marginalized urban slums, vulnerable to violence and exploitation as well as to injuries, illness and death. Too many children are denied such essentials as clean water, electricity and appropriate health care. The key question is: **how do we make our cities more livable and more sustainable? How can we harness the new knowledges and the new technologies to make the cities cleaner, richer and less dangerous, more connected and more cohesive? Religious communities are now centered more in cities than in villages yet how do they work to improve urban living?**

2) Asia as Healthy

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted globally, not least in the Asia-Pacific region. As with the 1918-1920 Spanish flu epidemic where there is no agreement a century later of where and how it started, it is likely that there will be no agreement as to how and where this 21st century pandemic originated. A WHO taskforce is examining the issue. As has been shown in history over 4,000 years, faith and interfaith leaders and their communities have a special role to play in coping with the actual health crisis and in dealing with the social and economic consequences.

TABLE ONE: COVID-19 PROFILE: ACRP and SELECTED COUNTRIES, AUGUST 31ST 2021.

Country	Confirmed C-19 Cases	No. of C-19 Deaths	Deaths/ 100,000 Population
United Kingdom	6.76M	132,760	198.64
U.S.A.	38.80M	637,531	194.62
Brazil	20.74M	579,308	296.43
Iran	4.93M	106,482	128.42

Russia	6.79M	178,457	123.61
<i>ACRP Countries</i>			
Indonesia	4.07M	131,923	48.75
Sri Lanka	.426M	8,775	40.25
Kyrgyzstan	.175M	2,518	39.00
Nepal	.759M	10,714	37.45
India	32.74M	438,210	32.07
Philippines	1.95M	33,109	30.62
Myanmar	.392M	15,183	28.09
Thailand	1.17M	11,143	16.00
Bangladesh	1.50M	26,015	15.96
Japan	1.46M	15,969	12.65
Pakistan	1.16M	25,670	11.85
Cambodia	.092M	1,881	11.41
Sth Korea	.250M	2,284	4.42
Australia	.053M	1,003	3.95
Singapore	.055M	55	0.96
New Zealand	.035M	26	0.53
China	.107M	4,848	0.35

Source: John Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center, Baltimore; data not available on other ACRP countries. Prepared by Professor Des Cahill, Australia

The figures (see Table One) suggest that the Asian countries have been less impacted than the European and American nations, probably because they had had previous experience in dealing with the SARS virus. Almost every country has had to take unpopular measures such as lockdowns, curfews and physical and social distancing. Religious communities have been directly impacted with the deaths of religious leaders, the need for protection of religious health workers, the crisis in funeral services, the decline in financial income and the pressure on their welfare services in feeding hungry people, helping them to be properly housed and dealing with the spiritual and psychological consequences.

Religious communities can be immensely valuable to society in a pandemic, and with their grassroots connectedness they are strategically placed to strongly influence the success of COVID-19 responses in their community connections, their work with vulnerable groups and their provision of community services. But often the possibility for this can be hampered because there is a lack of coordination with government authorities. The postponement of the 2020 Asian Assembly provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the responses of religious communities and their governments to this unprecedented

global crisis.

3) Asia as Prosperous

The Asian Assembly wants to include a prosperous Asia as one of its key objectives. Research shows religious communities contribute to a nation's social and economic capital in many ways, including to national value systems and social and economic cohesion. In recent decades, the Asia-Pacific region has been an economic success story. The Asian Development Bank has continued to argue for inclusive growth through creating opportunities (investing in growth) and broadening access (investing in people). Religions can assist governments in developing an enabling environment for public and business investment and private entrepreneurship through investing in infrastructure and human capital, building institutional capacity, adopting just and market-friendly policies and maintaining rigorously the rule of law. There has been a strong reduction in multidimensional poverty, led by China and Indonesia, over the past two decades.

But Asia's impressive growth has masked that the region's population still remains poor and vulnerable with rapidly rising relative and absolute inequalities. Through the UN's Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, the UNDP, based on 2014-2019 surveys of developing countries, has estimated the percentage of the population living below the national income poverty line. For the ACRP developing countries, the percentages were Bangladesh (24.3%), Cambodia (17.7%), China (1.7%), India (21.9%), Indonesia (9.8%), Myanmar (24.8%), Nepal (25.2%), Pakistan (24.3%), the Philippines (21.6%), Sri Lanka (4.1%), Thailand (9.9%) and Timor-Leste (41.9%).

However, the COVID-19 pandemic is putting these Asian gains at risk as the health and economic sectors are being severely affected. In its September 2020 Dialogue, UNDP explained how the progress is being jeopardized in reducing poverty, highlighting in particular, through their simulations, reductions in nutritional levels and children's school attendance. It estimates that the increases in deprivations of lives and livelihoods may set poverty levels back by 9.1 per cent. Unlike richer people, the poor cannot simply shrug aside the economic shock. The poor will also have less access to vaccination, especially in rural areas. In 2020 Asia and the Pacific could suffer \$1.7 – 2.5 trillion in losses and this accounts for about 30 per cent of the overall decline in global output.

There is much that is uncertain and ambiguous about Asia's prosperity and about any gradual re-opening and introduction and the calibrating of health and economic policies and programs. Pope Francis has argued, "It is time to decide to live differently, to live better, to love more and to care more", calling for debt reduction, even debt forgiveness,

and adding that “we must cure a greater virus, that of social injustice, inequality of opportunity, marginalization and the lack of the protection of the weakest”.

4) Asia as Peaceful

The ACRP General Assembly wants its religious communities to move towards a more peaceful Asia. While most of the Asia-Pacific region lives in peace, the spectre of the Korean Peninsula situation hangs heavily over the world as does the continuing Afghanistan struggle. Asia is being impacted by the Syrian Civil War, the Yemeni conflict, the contested situation with Iran and, in 2021, by the military coup in Myanmar. In the last years, UNDP has drawn attention to the deaths from the conflicts in Kashmir, Balochistan and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan, Myanmar (Kachin, Karen, Rohingya), the Naxalite insurgency in India, and the conflicts in southern Thailand and the southern Philippines.

The 2020 Global Peace Index prepared by the Institute for Economics and Peace for its 163 countries which uses a vast range of indices lists the following Asian countries at the bottom of the scale from 100 – 163: Papua New Guinea (rank 101, score 2.157), Uzbekistan (103, 2.158), China (104, 2.166), Tajikistan (107, 2.188), Thailand (114, 2.245), Turkmenistan (116, 2.276), , Myanmar (127, 2.424), Philippines (129, 2.471), India (139, 2.628), North Korea (151, 2.962), Pakistan (152, 2.973) and, as last, Afghanistan (163, 3.644). The Asian countries that ranked in the top twenty for peacefulness were: New Zealand (2, 1.198), Singapore (7, 1.321), Japan (9, 1.360), Australia (13, 1.386), Bhutan (19, 1.501) and Malaysia (20, 1.525c). Overall, the level of global peacefulness has been declining over the past decade.

Regarding terrorist attacks in 2018 by non-state actors where there were more than ten deaths, the Uppsala Conflict Data Program of Uppsala University in Sweden lists those in Afghanistan (Baghlin, Gardez, Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul, Kama, Khost, Khwaja Umari, Lashkargah, Muse, Rodat and Urozgan), in Pakistan (Datta Teksil, Kabal Teksil, Mastung, Peshawar, Quetta, Raiwind and Wanna), in Indonesia (Surabaya and Sidoarjo), in India (Sukma) and Myanmar (Mohnyin). In the first half of 2019, the Uppsala listing names terrorist attacks in Afghanistan (Bala Murghab, Gulistan, Helmand, Maidan Shar, Murghab, Qaysar, Sangin, Sar-e Pol, Shahrah, Shorobak and Spin Boldak), in Sri Lanka (Colombo, Negombo and Batticaloa), in Pakistan (Lahore, Quetta), the Philippines (Jolo), India (Gadchiroli and Pulwama) and at Christchurch in New Zealand by an Australian gunman.

New threats to Asia’s peace have emerged with an emerging serious trade war fueled by

populist-inspired nationalisms and ethnocentrisms, the dangers contained in cyber realities as Asia moves to a 5G tech world with cyber attacks, cyber pornography etc. and the dangers of social media, hateful speech and fake news.

5) The Impact of Religious Communities

Hence, the main theme of the Ninth General Assembly in October 2021 is directed towards mobilizing religious communities, diverse and different as they are across Asia, to action and more action to make Asia more at peace and more inclusive and to be physically and spiritually healthy. According to the Pew Research Center, 84 per cent of the world's people have a religious commitment. Hence, at both the grassroots and the national levels, religious leaders and their communities can have a powerful impact, not least in achieving the UN's five Ps of sustainable development, namely People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership, and the 17 goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. ACRP wishes not only to be a partnership of member nations but also a movement for building peace and inclusiveness as well as providing for the spiritual, psychological and physical health needs through activating the religious values of love, care, hope and connectedness.

7. ACRP and its Objectives

The objectives of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) to be approved at the Ninth General Assembly are:

(a) to work with faith traditions and religious organizations for interreligious understanding and harmony in the Asian-Pacific region and across the world, including the right to freedom of religion and belief and in the pursuit of peace, justice and human dignity

(b) to promote the salience of spirituality and religion in the multireligious Asia-Pacific region, highlighting its resources and the importance of religion and spirituality and combatting the false and negative aspects of religion

(c) to work with other religious and interreligious organizations in bringing about peace, interfaith understanding, interreligious harmony and religious freedom

(d) to work with intergovernmental, governmental and civil agencies in achieving global, regional and local peace and harmony as well as social stability and cohesion

(e) to work positively and cooperatively with Religions for Peace International

and other regional and specialist organizations

(f) to create social wealth for the countries of the Asia-Pacific, ensuring that the role of religious bodies is positively appreciated

(g) to sponsor activities, events and special initiatives into the multicultural and multi-religious aspects of the region and individual nations

(h) to work with educational bodies to educate the different levels and sectors of the region and its individual countries about religion itself and the many faith traditions

(i) to organize meetings for dialogue between religious leaders at global, regional and national levels and with political and civic leaders

(j) to encourage and implement interreligious activity and projects and the formation of interreligious organizations among particular groups

(k) to work through its networks for the well-being of vulnerable groups, including women and young people, and the well-being of the environment

ACRP believes in the intrinsic value of religion at its best with its various spiritualities. Its positive functions are: (1) religious communities add to the social, moral and economic wealth of a community and nation (2) religious communities inspire by their individual spiritualities to promote and sustain human dignity (3) religion offers spiritual comfort and healing as well as moral wisdom (4) religious communities are a practical source of volunteers (5) religion has the surge capacity to respond to immediate needs (6) religion has unique connections between the micro- and macro-levels of society (7) religious communities have important diversity resources for interfaith and intercultural expertise and (8) each religious community brings unique experiences, all of which ‘make the desert blossom as a rose’.

Following the Tenth World Assembly held in Lindau in southern Germany in August 2019, the Ninth ACRP Assembly through its four Commissions wishes to advance the cause of a multi-religious vision of positive peace and shared human well-being through preventing and transforming violent conflicts, promoting just and harmonious societies, advancing integral human development and protecting the earth as well as learning from and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. Opening and Closing Ceremonies

1) Opening Ceremony

The Opening Ceremony takes place at 12:00-14:00 on Tuesday October 19, 2021.

2) Closing Ceremony

The Closing Ceremony is being conducted at 13:25-14:25 on Friday October 22, 2021.

9. Plenary Sessions

1) Plenary I on Business, Part 1

The Plenary I (14:13-15:03/Day One), which constitutes part 1 of the Assembly business session, deals with: i) Report on the Work of the Organization by the Secretary-General since the 8th General Assembly held at Incheon, the Republic of Korea, ii) Adoption of the revised Constitution for immediate implementation, iii) Approval of a new member group from Timor-Leste and iv) Approval by acclamation of the membership of Steering Committee, Nominating Committee, Declaration Committee, Finance Committee, Structure and Procedure Committee and Documentation Committee.

Mr. Moderator and Mr. Deputy Moderator with Mr. Secretary-General chair the Session. Rev. Nobuhiro Nemoto, Secretary-General, delivers the Report on the Work of the Organization.

2) Plenary II on Flagship Projects

The Plenary II (12:05-13:35/Day Two), which focuses on the reports of flagship projects, which have been carried out so far and on ways forward for subsequent flagship projects after the Tokyo Assembly, including a new ACRP five-year action plan.

The speakers working for the ACRP five flagship projects share their first-hand narratives about their achievements and things that they have not achieved yet. Afterwards, the panelists will be engaged in a forward-looking discussion, which hopefully identify the direction, for which the organization heads in the next five years. In addition, the draft five-year action plan will be shared and elaborated in this Session.

40 minutes are allocated for the forward-looking discussion with Q&A. In concluding this Plenary session, the official announcement of *RfP* Japan's generous financial contribution of ¥ 30,000,000 (approximately US\$ 273,000) to ACRP for its Flagship Projects will be made. This generous contribution will be gratified by Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin, the Moderator of ACRP.

This Session is chaired by Prof. Pablito Baybado, Jr., an Associate Secretary-General of ACRP (*RfP* Philippines).

3) Plenary III on COVID-19 and Asian Religious Communities: Learnings and Recovery

As previously indicated, the coronavirus pandemic has presented unprecedented health challenges across the world. The online format has meant that it will be included within Plenary III on Day Two, Wednesday, October 20th from 1:40p.m. to 3:25p.m..

The pandemic has caused every person to reflect on our quality of life, our spiritual, psychological and especially our physical health and well-being and, as well, on end-of-life and death realities. It presents the ultimate question, 'what are we here for?' As religious traditions well know from their centuries of experience with pandemics, spiritual care forms a vital component of holistic health management in dealing with and coping with illness, suffering, tragedy and death, and religious people have always found solace and comfort in dealing with personal adversity and communal anxiety or disaster. Suffering is at the core of most religious traditions. The relationship with the transcendent or the sacred has a strong influence on people's beliefs, emotional well-being and behavior. Research shows that families rely on their spirituality for psychological, emotional and physical well-being.

The pandemic has impacted directly on places of worship which have been closed, while funerals and burial practices have been directly affected. Chaplains and spiritual caretakers have not been allowed to spiritually minister to sick and dying patients. With no celebration of religious rituals, religious institutions have been financially impacted with no income. And this may be impacting the capacity of their welfare services to help the sick, the needy and those in mourning.

The coronavirus has highlighted other aspects for it has had a major impact upon front-line health workers risking their lives to care for people with COVID-19 and impacting on their activities, routines, and psychological well-being. Many have died; many have been stigmatized; many need a supportive environment; many need to deal with moral distress because many times they may need to make life-or-death decisions.

The pandemic has also been teaching us, not least in the economic aftermath, the need to feed the hungry, the need for an adequate universal health system, the lack of affordable housing, the need to address medical and economic inequality, the fact of digital poverty, and education as the key to opportunity and prosperity.

Faith communities have great moral power. And through their understanding of a tortured world and their emphasis on the values of love, care, hope and interconnectedness, they emphasize that every human life is sacred and unique, and to be protected no matter how vulnerable. They can help to define and shape the future because of their connections with both the grassroots and governing authorities. This should be a community of persons, all of equal worth, joined together in human solidarity. As well, religious hope is linked to the promises of the divine and includes the embracing of the unknown and the unknowable because in the present are the seeds of a new future and new beginnings, and the divine's ability to draw good out of the present. No one can live without hope.

Religions for Peace International has established on their website a *Multi-religious C-19 Hub*. In liaison with UNICEF, it has issued an *Interfaith Call to Action on COVID-19*. Its eight action items in creating a culture of care are (1) combat stigma, quell fears and spread facts, (2) take the proper precautions, (3) be physically distant, but spiritually connected, (4) express gratitude and thankfulness, (5) care for the vulnerable, (6) self-reflect to deepen our understanding and the interconnectedness of the human family, (7) support women and (8) realize the potential of young people and children. It always important to reach the unheard.

More recently, it has issued *New Guidance: Practicing our Faith in a Pandemic* with three broad directives. Firstly, there is the need for religious communities to adapt how their communities gather together, pray and practice religious rituals. Social and religious gatherings are not recommended because of the danger of transmission while changes in hygiene and sanitization practices will require changes in rituals. This may mean adopting the new technologies to livestream worship services or have pre-recorded these services for radio and TV transmission or create podcasts, virtual meetings for group interactive prayer and the adaptation of funerals and burial rituals. Religious leaders may need to combat resistance and mistrust to these modifications in usual practice.

Secondly, religious leaders must address misinformation and rumors by combatting inadequate knowledge of the disease and its spread as well as misinformation, myths and rumors within their community, and perceived low risk with a false sense of security (e.g. *God will protect me from the virus because I am his loyal follower*). They must combat stigma and the stress that results from being stigmatized. They must communicate religious hope and spiritual support to address the fear of infection, anxiety about elderly

relatives, grief over lost loved ones, uncertainty as to whether and when things will return to normality and worry about the loss of income and food shortages.

Thirdly, religious communities are called to identify and help people who are at risk. These include the elderly and those with existing health conditions, people living in extreme poverty, children and pregnant mothers-to-be, children with disabilities, people experiencing discrimination, people experiencing homelessness and people on the move such as temporary workers, refugees and international students.

Religious communities need to mobilize themselves and be mobilized because they can be strategically placed to strongly influence the success of the COVID-19 responses. It is necessary to achieve co-ordination between faith communities and with the various levels of government. To be religious implies being interreligious.

Religions for Peace Asia needs to reflect on the myriad learnings and develop an appropriate plan of action. Religious communities across Asia have already done much in facing the COVID-19 pandemic, but there is need for further planning.

The Plenary III is chaired by Prof. Desmond Cahill.

4) Plenary IV on Business, Part 2

The Plenary IV (14:15-15:25/Day Three), which constitutes part 2 of the Assembly business session, deals with: i) Presentation of the nominees for the new leadership of ACRP, ii) Interim report of an Assembly Declaration, iii) Inputs from Commission discussion to an Assembly Declaration and iv) Report of the Assembly Structure and Procedure Committee on an Advisory Council and o Board of Asian Trustees. As has been described above, this Plenary is so important in view of further advancement of the organization.

This Session is to be chaired by Mr. Moderator, Mr. Deputy Moderator with Mr. Secretary-General.

5) Plenary V on Business, Part 3

The Plenary V (12:05-13:15/Day Four), which constitutes part 3 of the Assembly business session, deals with: i) Approval of the Assembly Declaration and ii) Approval of the new leadership of ACRP (Moderator, Deputy Moderator, Co-presidents, Secretary-General and the members of Governance Assembly and Executive Council.

Mr. Moderator, Mr. Deputy Moderator with Mr. Secretary-General chair the Session.

6) Afghanistan Session

In view of the current situation in Afghanistan, Afghanistan Session will be convened at 16:00-17:40 on October 20, 2021 (DAY TWO).

10. Commission Session

There are four Commissions responding to the four Sub-themes of the Assembly. They are:

- 1) Education for Peace and Human Dignity: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia
- 2) Human Rights and Well-being for the Vulnerable: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia
- 3) Reconciliation for Social Cohesion and Harmony: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia
- 4) Development and the Environment in Diversifying Societies: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia

Each with its own theme will have (i) a facilitator (ii) a main speaker (iii) two resource experts and (iv) two rapporteurs (one of them is a member of APIYN).

The functions of the **facilitator** are to take charge of the Commission and its sessions, chairing the key session, introducing the speaker and the two resource persons, generating discussion and subsequent recommendations, and overseeing the work of the rapporteurs in ensuring the report of the Commission's discussions and recommendations are forwarded to the declaration committee. And it will be presented to a plenary session of the Assembly.

In the modified online format, the **speaker** will be chosen for his or her expertise in the thematic area, and will prepare a written presentation to be read by participants before the commencement of the Assembly, and subsequently in the Commission session she or he will elaborate further for 5 minutes, signaling the key issues and challenges, including suggestions for action and possible recommendations.

The **resource persons** are to provide further written input to the theme, perhaps adding different perspectives and making suggestions for action and possible recommendations during the Commission Session for 2-3 minutes as well as assisting the rapporteurs in finalizing reports and recommendations.

The **rapporteurs** are to take notes of the input and the discussions, making a summary as well as finalizing the suggestions/recommendations for consideration by the Declaration Committee and incorporation into the final Declaration.

The Commission will meet only once on Day Three of the Assembly (Thursday, October 21st., 2020) from 12.05p.m.-14.05p.m.. With the discretion of the facilitator of each Commission, she or he can convene an informal consultation/informal consultations among the facilitator, the resource persons and the rapporteurs prior to the General Assembly so that the Commission Session during the General Assembly can bring about specific recommended actions/activities/programs/projects, which will be forwarded to the Assembly Declaration Committee.

1) Commission 1 on *Education for Peace and Human Dignity: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia*

Education was not central in the Lindau World Assembly but its importance was truly recognized. Yet education, wisdom and virtue are central to the great Asian spiritual and cultural traditions. All the great religious founders such as Jesus and Mohammed were great teachers, and there have been great religious teachers throughout Asian history such as Confucius (551 – 479 BCE), Mencius (372 – 289 BCE) and Lao Tzu (601 - ? BCE) in the ancient Chinese traditions and Swami Vivekananda (1863 – 1902), Rabindranath Tagore (1861 – 1941) and Mahatma Gandhi (1869 – 1948) in the modern Indian Hindu tradition. In the meantime, life has been complicated by the pandemic.

The World Assembly in Lindau stressed the importance of virtue and virtues as an essential complement to rights. Religions have historically regarded the cultivation of virtue as the royal road for unfolding and realizing human potential, achieving just relations with the other and arriving at the religiously sublime states of harmony, love and compassion. The dynamic interplay of skills, virtues and value-based institutions form a virtuous circle in which each person is called to make a contribution and to foster and reinforce the development of the other two. Together they generate social trust.

Education for peace and human dignity is a multilayered and multitargeted reality. Commission One will consider the centrality of peace and human dignity education

initiatives and educational activities that will foster and inculcate attitudes that will help people to respect human rights, freedom and trust through the principles of equality, responsibility and solidarity, to prevent the festering of conflict and to resolve conflicts peacefully, to create social trust and the economic conditions conducive to peace and social cohesion and to bring about a healthy Asia spiritually and physically. Such programs will include the challenge of non-violence, the techniques of conflict resolution, the dimensions of social cohesion, the principles of cross-cultural and interfaith understanding and inclusivist acceptance and recognition of the pillars of highly peaceful societies.

The eight pillars, based on rigorous research by the Institute for Economics and Peace, are: (i) a well-functioning government with high-quality public and civil services, (ii) sound economic regulations for competitive businesses and industrial productivity, (iii) equitable distribution of resources and private and public goods, (iv) assuring the rights of the other, (v) good relations with neighboring governments and peoples, (vi) free flow of information through free and independent media, (vii) high levels of human capital with a broad and deep education system and (8) low levels of corruption.

ACRP by its very nature has a special responsibility in the education of religious leaders and religious communities as well as religious peacebuilders. Healthy societies need healthy religion because religion at its best contributes to the social and economic capital of a nation. This demands quality enlightened religious leadership, and this requires in the religious academies and institutes of religious formation enlightened programs in peacebuilding, human dignity and shared well-being. Part of this is for religious leaders to offer religiously inspired counter narratives against violence and extremism. Another central aspect in human dignity is gender equality and the inclusion of women and girls in educational planning. The exclusion of girls from schools or universities and gender biased textbooks are part of the issue.

Universities have become key in promoting peace and human dignity, and the ACRP family has always had academics representing various member nations. A step further is to construct a network of research and education centers so as to promote the ACRP agenda across Asia and to do the necessary research and deliver the required educational programs.

The facilitator of Commission 1 is Rev. Sang Won Hwang, and the main speaker is Swami Atmapriyananda, and two resource persons are Dr. Sue Ennis and Dr. Loreta Castro.

2) **Commission 2 on Human Rights and Well-Being for the Vulnerable: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia**

Despite expanding economic growth across Asia and the Pacific, inequalities in outcomes, opportunities and impacts are still on the rise. In 1948, the landmark UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights promised the universal application of human rights. Other international legal instruments such as the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have followed. When rights are protected, societies thrive. These instruments have been designed to benefit the vulnerable. Vulnerability is most often associated with poverty and then with the particularly vulnerable led by women and children as well as refugees, asylum seekers and trafficked persons. The COVID-19 pandemic and other epidemics have brought a dimension to vulnerability. Vulnerability can be described as the nil or diminished capacity of individuals or communities or nation states to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a society hazard such as bad governance or a corrupted judiciary or from unemployment or violence or from natural hazards. Overcoming vulnerability requires reducing the impacts of hazards or capacity-building to cope with hazards and addressing the root causes of vulnerability.

Religious leaders and their communities have generally been supportive of human rights instruments, especially the right to religious freedom. By deepening and expanding the bases for human rights observance in their spiritual traditions, religious leaders have a unique opportunity to make a difference. If religious leaders do not have the courage or opportunity to speak out about social ills and the lack of freedom, then they do not enjoy full religious liberty. Religion must use its spiritual power and community outreach to advance human rights and dignity as well as spiritual and physical health.

It has been said that, “If we get women’s rights right, we get everything right”. Women disproportionately bear the brunt of violence, inequality and discriminatory social and religious norms. Women are often the victims of the misuse and distortion of sacred texts that justifies the dominance of men. The 2019 publication of the UNESCAP’s *Pathways to Influence* calls for transformative leadership, including female religious leadership. Most parliaments have not achieved the goal of 30 per cent female representation.

Another aspect of poverty are the many impacts upon children such as malnutrition. UNICEF in its 2018 report stated that in East Asia and the Pacific 13 million children under five were stunted and 4.5 million were wasted though hidden hunger and undernutrition because we are leaving behind traditional diets and embracing sugars and fats, low in essential nutrients. In South Asia, the problem was much worse with 58.7 million children under five being stunted and 25.9 million children were wasted. The

problem was most acute in India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.

In the 30 years since the proclamation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, undeniable progress has been made but new challenges have emerged. There continues the debate on the child in the digital world to protect their innocence from the harms of a more connected world with its online violence and pornography while harnessing its opportunities for education and information.

Religious leaders throughout the world are highly experienced in ministering to their community members through their mosques, gurdwaras, synagogues, churches and temples. But they also have a special responsibility for those on the move whether as refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons. According to UNHCR, the Asia-Pacific region is home to 7.7 million, of whom 3.5 million are refugees, 1.9 million internally displaced persons and 1.4 million stateless people, mainly from Afghanistan (Iran and Pakistan) and Myanmar. On an historic day in December 2018, the UN General Assembly approved the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*. This document after much negotiation is designed to support international cooperation on the governance of international migration, to provide a comprehensive menu of options for States from which they can select policy options to address some of the most pressing issues around international migration and gives states the space and flexibility to pursue implementation based on their own migration realities and capacities.

On the very same day, the General Assembly approved the *Global Compact on Refugees*. It provides a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing, recognizing that sustainable solutions to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation. Its four objectives are to ease the pressure on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, expand access to third-country solutions and, lastly, support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.

As the first priority, religious communities in the receiving countries need to provide the spiritual and community support for their migrant and refugee co-religionists in overcoming the very considerable stresses of the adaptation or adjustment process. In the area of believing, religious traditions have the capability to interpret religiously the migration experience to the believing migrant and to provide the religious rituals of the particular tradition. For example, within the three Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, migration is at the very core of each tradition when Abram migrated from Ur of the Chaldees in modern Iraq to the promised land of Israel. In Christianity, the child Jesus and his family were both refugees and return refugees when they fled to the safety of Egypt. And the flight from persecution of the Prophet to Medina is central to Islam, marking the beginning of the Muslim calendar.

As part of the bonding and belonging process, religious leaders in the host countries can establish special places of worship in mosques, churches, synagogues and temples specially for individual immigrant and refugee communities so as they can be spiritually ministered to in their own languages. Then they can feel the sense of belonging to a transhistorical and transnational group that solidifies their collective self-esteem and identification with a group of compatriots undergoing the same stresses of adaptation and integration.

Another dimension to vulnerability is contemporary slavery and human trafficking which continues to blight the Asian social landscape and is a by-product of poverty. It is described in terms of the recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing and obtaining a person for compelled labor or commercial sex exploitation by force, fraud or coercion. It covers government-forced labor and conscription, unpaid prison labor, bonded labor, forced migrant labor, sex slavery, forced marriage and child marriage, child labor and child soldiers. The Global Slavery Index estimates that there are more than 40 million slaves across the world with much hidden slavery, not least in advanced, democratic countries. Various organizations have arisen to combat, and it seems appropriate that religiously inspired, interfaith people can work with such organizations as ECPAT International (headquarters in Thailand), the Anti-Slavery Foundation (UK), Stop the Traffik (STOP, UK) and the Minderoo Walk Free Foundation (Australia).

The facilitator for Commission 2 is Mr. Khalid Khan, and the main speaker Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, and two resource persons are Rev. Ms. Elga Sarapung and Mr. Masaya Onimaru.

3) Commission 3 on Reconciliation for Social Cohesion and Harmony: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia

Overcoming hatred and promoting reconciliation must be at the core of all authentic religion as is the building of social cohesion. Religion can be misused by negative, literalist and distorted interpretations of religious ideas and sacred texts, by so emphasizing religious communal identity with the result that in-groups and out-groups are damagingly created, by religious groups sustaining inequality through class and caste differentiation, by the destruction or damage to religious buildings or religious symbols and a distorted and completely false sense of spirituality that might justify terrorism as ‘God’s work’.

This Commission will especially focus on the situations on the Korean peninsula and in

northern Myanmar and Bangladesh. The involved ACRP chapters have been critically involved in working for peace and reconciliation in these conflict zones. The two Korean chapters have worked cooperatively for more than a decade, and are presently working together in a difficult political climate. In Myanmar Religions for Peace has been instrumental to the establishment of the **Religions for Peace Advisory Forum on National Reconciliation and Peace in Myanmar**. This forum has brought together senior government officials, senior army leaders, senior religious leaders, UN officials and ethnic leaders to create an open space for dialogue and cooperation as part of conflict transformation.

Management of multifaith diversity is aiming at social cohesion. Religious leaders in particular need to be well-educated and trained in how to exercise quality leadership in culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse societies. There is no agreed definition of social cohesion but generally descriptions revolve around a shared vision held by a well-functioning core group or community that acts in a continuous and interminable process of achieving social harmony. Scholars across the world base their notion of social cohesion on five dimensions:

- (i) creating a **sense of belonging** for all residents incorporating shared values, trust and psychological identification with the nation state and with the religious group. Here, the issue of citizenship is important – citizenship should be made reasonably easy to obtain after 3 – 5 years for immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.
- (ii) ensuring **social justice and equity** in terms of access to government services and funding, including special programs to meet the special needs of at-risk, vulnerable groups, such as children, women and migrants and other people on the move, including multiple opportunities to develop themselves and their talents through educational and occupational pathways.
- (iii) encouraging **participation** by all majority and minority at-risk groups in civic, political, religious and social life as part of creating this sense of belonging. Another aspect is that civic leaders (including religious leaders) as well as members of parliament need to attend the many varied ethnic and religious community functions as part of creating the sense of welcoming and participation that lie at the heart of social cohesion and as part of interfaith hospitality.
- (iv) bringing about **acceptance** of newcomers and minorities and working against racism, discrimination and hate speech. Religious communities ought be “welcoming agencies” reaching out to migrants, the poor and the outcast.

- (v) forging a **sense of worth** incorporating people's general happiness, life satisfaction and future expectations, all having a sense of their personal worth as individuals, generally happy that hard work has brought rewards, generally satisfied with their lives and with achievable and realistic expectations.

This requires good governance in overcoming loss of trust in institutions, supporting the countering of violent extremism initiatives, sponsoring national dialogues on difficult issues and expanding anti-corruption and anti-hate speech initiatives.

The facilitators for Commission 3 are Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin for sub-session 1 and Ven. Sung Jin for sub-session 2, and the main speakers are Rev. Kyoichi Sugino for sub-session 1 on the current situation in Myanmar and Rev. Peter Kang ju Seok for sub-session 2 on peace and reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula.

4) Commission 4 on Development and the Environment in Diversifying Societies: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia

The realities of the changing climate are already evident in the Asia-Pacific region, having a particularly destructive impact on the small Pacific Island nation states such as Kiribati and Tuvalu and the South-East Asian countries of the Mekong Delta. Over the past two years, there have been major floods in Kerala as well as in Iran, floods and heatwaves in Japan, cyclones impacting on the frontline Pacific Ocean state of the Philippines and drought and bushfires in Australia. These disasters cost lives and impact upon livelihoods and assets. Climate-related disasters are likely to increase in the Asia-Pacific region as seen in the UN's Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESAP) and its August 2019 *Asia-Pacific Disaster Report*.

In Asian cultures with their rich pools of wisdom, love of and harmony with nature is central. The major Asian traditions insist that the increasing threat of natural hazards shows that nature is not in harmony. We see this in Taoism, for 'humanity follows the earth, the earth follows heaven, heaven follows the Tao and the Tao follows what is natural'. In working to achieve this harmony, human beings should cultivate the way of no-action and let nature be itself. If the pursuit of development and profit runs counter to the harmony and balance of nature, people should restrain and curb themselves and their consumerist behavior.

As the ecological crisis has developed, religious leaders have begun to respond but at different rates. Their responses are to emphasize degrowth in their advocacy of simpler lifestyles and their trenchant criticisms of wasteful consumerism. Deep in their respective

wisdom traditions are not only their respect and reverence for evolving nature but also their joint warnings about the over-exploitation of the earth's natural resources. Many religiously-based organizations such as GreenFaith have emerged to press forward with life-affirming agendas and plans for action. But their environmental ethical frameworks need to incorporate the notion of green development and growth that goes beyond their recognition of economic systems as unsustainable, exploitative and inequitable.

In addition to teachings on environmental care, religious communities and their global, national and local organizations have given rise to numerous aid agencies which have been at the forefront of alleviating the human suffering caused by climate-related droughts and floods. They have been at the forefront of helping communities to adapt to climate disruption and to develop disaster resilience. Their extensive responsiveness to humanitarian crises globally has improved the survival and well-being of countless millions.

Environmental sustainability cannot be separated from economic and social growth and the eradication of poverty. The challenge is to transform the climate crisis into an opportunity that generates 'a double dividend of higher economic growth necessary to reduce poverty with lower environmental impact by improving the efficiency of resource use and increasing investments in human and natural capital' in the words of the UN's ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific). It advocates for a Green Growth approach to overcome the current economic, social and environmental inequities. Its March 2019 report, *Accelerating Progress: An Empowered, Inclusive and Equal Asia and the Pacific*, suggests that the area has three pivotal challenges:

- i) Climate change and its potential to worsen inequality
- ii) The urgent need to boost domestic resource mobilization and
- iii) The need to strengthen social accountability and civic engagement

It presents a framework for four intersecting elements: rights and justice, norms and institutions, resources and capabilities, and participation and voice. The report documents four development challenges, namely, natural resource management, climate change, disaster risk and rising inequalities, and outlines the four aspects of future city-building: urban and territorial planning, urban resilience, smart and inclusive cities and urban finance in terms of fifteen strategies.

One perspective describes a green economy in terms of six sectors: renewable energy, green buildings, sustainable transport, water management, waste management and land management. The Global Commission on Adaptation, formed in 2018, has focused on the

need to invest in early warning systems, climate-resilient infrastructure, improved dryland agriculture, mangrove protection and in making water resources more resilient.

In conclusion, it is not the task of religious leaders and religious thinkers to develop the detailed plans for the various sectors of a green economy. But it is their task to be aware of these aspects of green thinking, incorporating environmental crime and sinfulness into their environmental ethical frameworks. Their moral authority which reaches right down to the grassroots of every society can influence the thinking and the behavior of their religious followers, especially in their schools and universities but also in their urban and rural local communities. Then religion will be rightly seen as part of the solution, not part of the problem.

The facilitator for Commission 4 is Mr. Deng Zongliang, and the main speaker for Commission 4 is Dr. Yuhai and two resource persons are Judge Justice Jawad Hassan and Mrs. Philippa Rowland. And it is planned that more resource speakers are to be invited to Commission 4.

11. Other Meetings

1) Assembly Committee Meetings

Assembly Committees meet at 15:33-16:33 on October 19, at 15:55-16:55 on October 20 and at 15:55-16:55 on October 21. These Committees are:

- i) Assembly Steering Committee *to be held online*
 - ii) Assembly Nominating Committee *to be held online*
 - iii) Assembly Declaration Committee *to be held online.*
 - iv) Assembly Documentation Committee *to be held online*
- and
- v) Assembly Structure and Procedure Committee and vi) Assembly Finance Committee are scheduled to complete their tasks before the main General Assembly in principle.

2) Consultations among facilitators, rapporteurs and resource persons of Assembly Commissions

Consultations chaired by each facilitator, will be held whenever necessary prior to the main General Assembly. In these consultations, it is carefully discussed that how to

organize the Commission discussion. One of the major objectives of each Commission is to list up pragmatic actions, which ought to be incorporated into an Assembly Declaration.

3) Press Briefings and Press Conference

A press briefing will be conducted at 15:13-15:33 on October 19, at 15:35-15:55 on October 20, at 15:35-15:55 on October 21. After the Closing Ceremony the Press Conference will be convened at 14:40-15:10 on October 22.

V. Overall Programs of *Online Ninth General Assembly*

Sunday, October 17

Youth Pre-Assembly on Sunday, October 17 at 11:00am-4:00pm (Tokyo time)

1. Concept

This youth pre-assembly in 2021 will be one of goals of the Asia Youth Peace Camp which has been held since 2014. We have been creating true friendships with many irreplaceable memories through these years. Also, we have strengthened our networks and applied our learning into actions in each country.

In the youth assembly of this year, we will reflect a root of our friendship. Hopefully, it will become a significant moment to enrich our friendships by sharing what we have done together with sincere appreciation and heart. In order to fulfill this purpose, we remind religious value and root of human relationship, such as “thankfulness” or “gratefulness” in this program.

Meanwhile, as we have recognized, there is not only Covid-19 pandemic but also many issues in Asia. Some of our friends are involved in. Because they are our true friends so we should definitely regard those issues as our own. Therefore, it will be our mission that we pray for them, send them a huge encouragement and think about what we should do for.

2. Purposes

- (1) To strengthen the Asia and Pacific Interfaith Youth Network (APIYN) by understanding the challenges in Asia and affirming the significance of interfaith cooperation which respects religious diversity;
- (2) To learn what the religious youth networks of various countries are able to do in their own countries through the ACRP Youth Pre-Assembly;
- (3) To develop and adopt recommendations to the ACRP Assembly as the voice of youth.

3. Theme: *Arigato* into Action

4. Organizers: *Religions for Peace Asia & Pacific Interfaith Youth Network (APIYN)*
Youth Committee, *Religions for Peace Japan*
Cooperation with *Religions for Peace Asia/Asian Conference of Religions for Peace*

7. Draft Program *provisional*

MC: Mr. Yusuke Saito, Ms. Kiyo Makabe, Board members of Youth Committee of *RfP Japan*

Time (Japan time)	Draft Schedule
11 : 00	Open Opening Remarks — Ms. Nivy Balachandran, APIYN Co-Moderator — Ven. Gikyo Sugitani, Director of Youth Committee, <i>RfP Japan</i>
11 : 10	Business session Moderator: Mr. Renz Christian Argao, APIYN Co-Moderator — Introduction of APIYN — Report of activities since 2014 — Nomination of APIYN officers and members — Adoption of Bylaws
11 : 40	Gratitude with support of Great East Japan Disaster to Asian Youth Leaders by Youth Committee of <i>RfP Japan</i>
11 : 55	Session 1: Keynote Speech Mr. Seietsu Sato Former Deputy Chief of the Minamisanriku Fire Department, Storyteller of Great East Japan Disaster Q&A (15mins)
12 : 55	Break
13 : 10	Session 2 Pray for our friends, Wish for their Peacefulness Coordinator: Ven. Eigen Onishi, Deputy Director of Youth Committee of <i>RfP Japan</i> Introduction Video Challenges in Asia — Mr. Shameer Rishad (India) — Ms. Gasun Han (South Korea)
13 : 30	Groupwork
13 : 55	Sharing Remarks
14 : 10	Break

14 : 25	Session 3 <i>Arigato</i> Messages — Mr. Injae Ryu (South Korea) — Dr. Sehreen Khan (Pakistan) — Mr. John Medina (Philippines)
14 : 55	Session 4 Sharing remarks by groups
15 : 25	Presentation
15 : 40	Closing Remarks — APIYN New Moderator — Rev. Nobuhiro Nemoto (ACRP Secretary General)
16 : 00	Close

Monday, October 18

Women’s Pre-Assembly on Monday, October 18 at 2:00pm-4:30pm (Tokyo time)

*This provisionally scheduled program of the Women’s Pre-Assembly is subject to change.

Theme: “Women Empowerment for an Inclusive, Healthy Prosperous, and Peaceful Asia”

The Asia-Pacific Women of Faith Network will convene in Tokyo on October 18, 2021 to re-affirm its commitment to action while envisaging and promoting a future of APWoFN working for peace and shared-wellbeing through women empowerment. Such actions are meant to ameliorate the plight of the most vulnerable in the communities of Asia especially women and children. This virtual symposium will have for its objectives:

1. To re-affirm and strengthen APWoFN in its commitment to women empowerment in securing a more inclusive, healthy and peaceful Asia
2. To identify common actions where women can significantly participate in addressing the challenges of and in ensuring;
 - 2.1 peace education and respect for human dignity
 - 2.2 protection of human rights and the well-being of the vulnerable
 - 2.3 social cohesion and harmony in communities
 - 2.4 regenerative development

Assembly Overall Schedule

Opening Prayer (1 minute silence)

Business Session (1:30-2:00 Japan Time)

1:30-2:00 (30) Review past 5 years and Election of new leaderships.

PROGRAM (2:00-4:30 Japan time)

2:00-2:05 (5) Welcome Remarks Rev. Nobuhiro Nemoto

2:05-2:15 (10) Opening Remarks Dr. Lilian Sison/Rev. Yukiko Moriwaki (5minutes each)

2:15-2:35 (20) Keynote Address Ms. Mariko Sato, Director, UNFPA
Representation Office in Japan

2:35-3:35 (60) Workshop on the four sub-themes (Breakout Sessions)

Group 1. Educating women and girls for peace and respect for human dignity

Facilitator: Ms. Haidi Fajardo (RfP Philippines)

Group 2. Human rights and the well-being of women and girls

Facilitator: Ms. Huma Ikramullah (RfP Pakistan)

Group 3. Empowering women for social cohesion and harmony

Facilitator: Rev. Elga Sarapung (RfP Indonesia)

Group 4. Empowering women for regenerative development

Facilitator: Dr. Deepali Bhanot (RfP India)

3:35-3:55 (20) Reporting of Workshop Groups (5minutes each) (Moderator: Dr. Suphatmet Yunyasit)

3:55-4:25 (30) Plenary discussion

4:25-4:30 (5) Way forward and Closing Remarks (incoming Chair of APWoFN)

Tuesday, October 19

ACRP Main General Assembly from Tuesday, October 29 to Friday, October 22

General Assembly, DAY ONE

11:40-12:50 (10) **Video Clip presentation**

11:50-12:00 (10) Performance for Purification, (*Okiyome no Mai*) with Japanese drums
The video clip will focus on the past 50-year history and ACRP activities, including its flagship projects, particularly carried out by women and youths, while remembering ACRP leaders who have been passed away since the Incheon Assembly in 2014.

12:00-14:00 (120) **Opening Ceremony**

12:00-12:10 (10) Multi-religious prayer service by three religious traditions

12:10-12:15 (5) Welcoming remarks by The Most Rev. Nichiko Niwano, the President of *RfP* Japan as the Host Committee

12:15-12:20 (5) Opening welcome by Rev. Dr. Nobuhiro Nemoto, ACRP Secretary-General

12:20-12:25 (5) Opening remarks by Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin, ACRP Moderator

12:25-12:30 (5) Opening remarks by Prof. Azza Karam, the Secretary General of *RfP* International

12:30-12:35 (5) Congratulatory remarks by Rev. George Oshiba, the Chairperson of the Japanese Association of Religious Organizations

12:35-12:40 (5) Congratulatory remarks by Hon. Mr. Shinjiro Koizumi, the Minister of the Environment, the Government of Japan

12:40-12:56 (16) Reports of Youth Pre-Assembly by the newly elected Moderator of APIYN and Women's Pre-Assembly by the newly elected Chair of APWFN

12:56-13:06 (10) Cultural performance

13:06-13:10 (4) Intermission

13:10-13:50 (40) Keynote Address by Prof. Shinichi Takemura, Kyoto University of Art and Design

13:50-14:00 (10) Interaction between Keynote Speaker and the Assembly participants

14:00-14:05 (3) **Group Photo** (Screen Shot)

14:03-14:13 (10) **Break**

14:13-15:03 (50) **Plenary I on Business, Part 1**, chaired by Moderator and Deputy Moderator with Secretary-General

1. Report on the Work of the Organization by Secretary-General since the 8th General Assembly held at Incheon, the Republic of Korea

2. Adoption of the revised Constitution for immediate implementation
3. Approval of *interim* membership from Timor-Leste
4. Approval by the acclamation of the membership of Steering Committee, Nominating Committee, Declaration Committee, Documentation Committee, Finance Committee, Structure and Procedure Committee

15:13-15:33 (20) **Press Briefing**

15:33-16:33 (60) **1st Assembly Committee meetings**

Wednesday, October 20

General Assembly, DAY TWO

11:50-12:00 (10) **Video Clip Presentation**

12:00-12:05 (5) **Opening Prayer Service by two religious traditions**

12:05-13:35 (90) **Plenary II on Flagship Projects**, chaired by Prof. Pablito Baybado, Jr.

1. Reports of Flagship Projects, which have been achieved and not been achieved (lessons learned)
 - 1) Presentation for ‘Human Trafficking’ (10 min.) by Dr. Lilian Sison, the Chair of APWoFN
 - 2) Presentation for ‘Education on the Dignity of Life’ by Dr. NHM Abu Bakar, *RfP* Bangladesh (10 min.)
 - 3) Presentation for ‘Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation’ by Al-Haj U Aye Lwin, *RfP* Myanmar on the current situation in Myanmar and Rev. Tae-sung Kim, KCRP, on the Korean Peninsula (8 min. each)
 - 4) Presentation for ‘Development and the Environment’ by Rev. Xu Xiaohong, CCRP (10 min.)
 - 5) Presentation for ‘Advancement for Youth Leadership’ by Dr. Renz C. Argao, the Chair of APIYN (10 min.)
2. Ways forward for subsequent flagship projects after the Tokyo Assembly, including the consideration of a new ACRP 5-year action plan (40 min.)
3. The official announcement by The Most Rev. Makoto Uematsu of the *RfP* Japan’s generous contribution of ¥ 30,000,000 (approximately US\$ 273,000) to ACRP for the implementation of its Flagship Projects
4. Response of Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin, the Moderator, ACRP

13:35-13:40 (5) **Break**

13:40-15:25 (105) **Plenary III on COVID-19 and Asia’s Religious Communities: Learnings and Recovery**, chaired by Prof. Desmond Cahill

1. Introduction by the Facilitator (5 min.)
2. Voices of APIYN and APWoFN by Mr. Shameer Rishad and by Ms. Haidi Flores-Fajardo (10 min. each)
3. Presentation of resource speakers
 - 1) Hon. Mr. Keizo Takemi, a Member of the House of Councilors, Japan and a WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Universal Health Coverage (15 min.)
 - 2) Rev. Father Carlos Reyes, the Philippines (10 min.)
 - 3) Rev. Imam Yang Faming, CCRP (10 min.)
 - 4) Rev. Dr. Renta Nishihara, a member of *RfP* Japan and President of Rikkyo University, Japan (10 min.)
 - 5) Dr. Ahmad Suaedy, Inodnesia (10 min.)

4. Comments and suggestions from the floor (20 min.)
5. Wrap-up by the Facilitator (5 min.)

15:35-15:55 (20) **Press Briefing**

15:55-16:55 (60) **2nd Assembly Committee meetings**

16:00-17:40 (100) **Afghanistan Session moderated by Rev. Dr. Nobuhiro Nemoto and Dr. Hyunmi Ahn, KCRP**

1. Introduction by the Moderators (5 min.)
2. Report on the humanitarian activities in Afghanistan
 - 1) Mr. Sabirullah Memiawal, the project leader of *Your Voice Organization*, an Afghan NGO
Mr. Ryo Onoyama, the representative of *Peace Village United*, a Japanese NGO
(10 min. in total)
 - 2) Mr. Hameedullah Hamid, the representative of Afghanistan Office, *JEN*
Ms. Akiko Matsuura, program officer for projects in Afghanistan and Turkey of *JEN*
(10 min. in total)
 - 3) Ms. Eri Yamamoto, Country Director of SVA Afghanistan Office and Secretary General of *Shanti Volunteer Association*, a Japanese NGO (10 min.)
 - 4) Mr. Muhammad Hanif Khan, RfP Pakistan, an EC member of ACRP
Pir Syed Lakhte Hassanain, Founder and Chairman, *Muslim Hands*
(10 min. in total)
3. Question and Answer Session (30 min.)
4. Wrap-up and adoption of ACRP's message (25 min.)

Thursday, October 21

General Assembly, DAY THREE

11:50-12:00 (10) **Video Clip Presentation**

12:00-14:00 (120) **Commission Sessions 1-4 in parallel, started with a moment of silence**

Commission 1 on “Education for Peace and Human Dignity: Challenges for an Inclusive, Health, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia”

Facilitator: Rev. Sang Won Hwang, KCRP

Main Speaker: Swami Atmapriyananda, *RfP* India

Resource Persons (two speakers): Dr. Sue Ennis, *RfP* Australia and Dr. Loreta Castro (A non-ACRP expert from the Philippines)

Rapporteurs: Ms. Huma Ikramullah

Commission 2 on “Human Rights and Well-being for the Vulnerable: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia”

Facilitator: Mr. Khalid Nawaz Khan Marwat, *RfP* Pakistan

Main Speaker: Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, the Philippines

Resource Persons (two speakers): Rev. Ms. Elga Sarapung, *RfP* Indonesia, and Mr. Masaya Onimaru, an expert from Japan

Rapporteurs: Dr. Deepali Bhanot, *RfP* India

Commission 3 on “Reconciliation for Social Cohesion and Harmony: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia”

1st Session for an issue of the Rakhine State of Myanmar (so called an issue of Rohingya refugees)

Facilitator: Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin, Moderator

Main Speaker: Al-Haj U Aye Lwin, *RfP* Myanmar,

Resource Persons: Rev. Kyoichi Sugino, *RfP* International, Prof. Keiko Tosa, an expert from Japan, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Rapporteurs: Ms. Jamby Jusubalieva, *RfP* Kyrgyzstan

2nd Session for peace and reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula

Facilitator: Ven. Sungjin, KCRP

Main Speaker: Rev. Peter Juseok KANG, Secretary General of the Commission for the Reconciliation of the Korean People of Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea.

Resource Persons: Prof. Kathy Matsui, *RfP* Japan, Rev. Taehyon Kim, Mr. Seunggil Yoon, Mr. Gugab Chang and Mr. Byungdo Oh, all nominated by KCRP

Rapporteurs: Dr. Hyondo Park

Commission 4 on “Development and the Environment in Diversifying Societies: Challenges for an Inclusive, Healthy, Prosperous, Peaceful Asia”

Facilitator: Mr. Deng Zongliang, CCRP

Main Speaker: Dr. Yuhai, an expert from China

Resource Persons: *See below*

Rapporteurs: Ms. Ikuko Matsumoto, *RfP* Japan

Detailed Program of Commission 4, kindly provided by CCRP

1. Opening by Facilitator

Mr. Deng Zongliang, Executive Vice President of CCRP

2. Opening Remark

Dr. Karam, Secretary-General of RfP (5m)

3. Main Speaker

Dr. Yu Hai, Director and Senior Research Fellow of the Environmental Strategy Division of Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy, Ministry of Ecology and Environment (20 m)

4. Resource speakers

- 1) Justice Jawad Hassan, Judge of Lahore High Court and Founding Member & Secretary, Pakistan Environmental Law Association (10 m)
- 2) Ms. Philippa Rowland, President of Multi faith Association of South Australia (10 m)
- 3) Panchen Lama Erdeni Choskyi Gyalpo, member of CCRP, Vice President of Buddhist Association of China (10 m)

5. Interaction (5m per person)

- 1) Madam Pascale Frémond, President of Religions for Peace Canada
- 2) Ven. Li Guangfu, Vice President of CCRP, President of Taoist Association of China
- 3) Mr. Luigi De Salvia, President of Religions for Peace Italy
- 4) Rev. Fang Xingyao, Vice President of CCRP, President of China Patriotic Catholic Association
- 5) Mr. David Horner, Secretary-General of Religions for Peace UK
- 6) Dr. Rushan Abbaysov, Deputy Chairman of the Religious Board of Muslims of the Russian Federation, Russia Muftis Council,
- 7) Desmond Cahill, Deputy Moderator of ACRP, President of Religions for Peace

Australia

6. Discussion

7. Closing Remark by Facilitator

Mr. Deng Zongliang, Executive Vice President of CCRP

14:00-14:10 (10) **Break**

14:10-15:20 (70) **Plenary IV on Business, Part 2**, chaired by Moderator and Deputy Moderator with Secretary-General

1. Presentation of the nominees for the new leadership of ACRP
2. Interim report of an Assembly Declaration, followed by discussion
3. Inputs from Commission discussion to an Assembly Declaration
4. Report of the Assembly Structure and Procedure Committee on an Advisory Council and a Board of Asian Trustee

15:30-15:50 (20) **Press Briefing**

15:50-16:50 (60) **3rd Assembly Committee meeting**

Friday, October 22, DAY FOUR

11:50-12:00 (10) **Video Clip Presentation**

12:00-12:05 (5) **Opening Prayer Service by two religious traditions**

12:05-13:15 (70) **Plenary V on Business, Part 3**, chaired by Moderator and Deputy Moderator with Secretary-General

1. Approval of the Assembly Declaration
2. Approval of the new leadership of ACRP (Moderator, Deputy Moderator, Co-presidents, Secretary-General and the members of Governance Assembly and Executive Committee)

13:15-13:25 (10) **Break**

13:25-14:35 (70) **Closing Ceremony**

13:25-13:30 (5) Official announcement of the new leadership of ACRP by Rev. Taesung Kim, the chair of Assembly Nominating Committee (Moderator, Deputy Moderator, Co-presidents, Secretary-General and GA/EC members), which will be shown on the screen
Words of the out-going leaders

Words of the in-coming leaders

13:49-13:52 (3) Words of Gratitude by The Most Rev. Makoto Uematsu, the Chirperson of *RfP* Japan (the Host Chapter)

13:52- 14:12 (20) Reading of the Assembly Declaration by Rev. Dr. Renta Nishihara, the chair of Assembly Declaration Committee with two Committee members

14:12-14:22 (10) Vision Message by Rev. Masamichi Kamiya, Senior Advisor with the new Secretary-General

14:22-14:30 (8) Final multi-religious prayer service by four religious traditions

14:29-14:35 (5) Visual playback of the Tokyo Assembly

14:40-15:10 (30) **Press Conference**

*There will be **no optional tour online** after the four-day General Assembly Tokyo has ended.*

VI. Brief Bios of Speakers at the Plenaries and Commissions

[Opening Ceremony]

The Most Rev. Nichiko Niwano



President Nichiko Niwano, the first son of Founder Nikkyo Niwano, was born in 1938. He entered the Faculty of Buddhist Studies at Rissho University in 1958. After graduating from the university's Graduate School in 1968, he entered Rissho Kosei-kai and held the offices of head of the Dissemination Department and president of the Rissho Kosei-kai seminary.

On November 15, 1991, the birthday of Founder Niwano, he succeeded to the presidency in the ceremony of the Inheritance of the Lamp of the Dharma. Since President Niwano was inaugurated as president, he has continued to disseminate the teachings throughout Japan as well as in other countries.

He speaks about the Buddha's wish for us to devote ourselves to the happiness of others and emphasizes the necessity of enriching our own inner spirituality.

Rev. Niwano firmly believes in walking on the Buddha's Way side by side with the members of the Sangha. He called them to join with him as follows: "Putting our faith in the abilities inherent in everyone, I hope that we ourselves will steadily take steps forward as bodhisattvas, while by extension, making efforts to help raise as many bodhisattvas as possible."

President Niwano is the president of the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP/RfP) and a president of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP). He has been vigorously active in interreligious cooperation with the WCRP and other organizations. His writings published in English include *Cultivating the Buddhist Heart*; *Modern Meditations*; *The Inward Path*; and *My Father, My Teacher*.

Rev. Dr. Nobuhiro Nemoto



Secretary General of the Asian Conference of Religious Peace (ACRP), Executive Specialist of the Secretarial Group, Rissho Kosei-kai (RKK) Born in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture Since joining RKK Gakurin Seminary in 1977, he has held the following positions:

Staff member of the Secretariat of the International Association of Religious Freedom (IARF) Frankfurt, Program Officer of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Geneva, Minister of Tsuchiura and Kobe Dharma Centers, Director of the External Affairs Dept, Chair of the Donate One Meal Peace Fund Committee, Chair of the WCRP Japan Task Force on Refugee Issues, Co-President of JEN (non-profit organization), etc.

He has been engaged in relief activities for Kurdish, Somali, former Yugoslavian, and Afghan refugees, as well as other humanitarian assistance activities in Japan and abroad. He holds a PhD in Human Security from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the University of Tokyo.

Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin



Dr. Din Syamsuddin is Professor of Islamic Political Thought at National Islamic University, Jakarta. He served as President of Muhammadiyah, the largest modernist Islamic organization in Indonesia from 2005 to 2015, as well as President of Indonesian Council of Ulama during 2014-2015, and now (2015-2020) acting as Charman of Advisory Council of Indonesian Council of Ulama.

He has been active in interfaith dialogues and cooperation, as he initiated the creation of and becoming President of Interreligious Council of Indonesia. He is currently acting as Moderator of *Rfp* Aisa and Chairman of the Center for Dialogue and Cooperation among Civilizations (CDCC) and Chairman of World Peace Forum based in Jakarta.

He recently initiated the creation of Indonesia's Movement to Save the Earth (Indonesia Bergerak Menyelamatkan Bumi) and acts as Chairman of the Movement's Steering Committee.

Prof. Azza Karam



Prof. Dr. Azza Karam serves as the Secretary General of *Religions for Peace* – the largest multi-religious leadership platform with 92 national and 6 regional Interreligious Councils. She also holds a Professorship of Religion and Development at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, in The Netherlands – of which she is a citizen.

She served as a Senior Advisor on Culture, at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); and as Coordinator/Chair of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Development (UN IATF-R&D); and founder of the Multi Faith Advisory Council of the UN IATF-R&D. In those capacities, she coordinated engagement with members of a Global Interfaith Network for Population and Development with over 600 faith-based organizations from all regions of the world, representing all religions and interreligious affiliations. She was the Lead Facilitator for the United Nations’ Strategic Learning Exchanges on Religion, Development and Diplomacy, building on a legacy of serving as a trainer cum facilitator of inter-cultural leadership and management in the Arab region as well as Europe and Central Asia.

Professor Karam has served in different positions in the United Nations since 2004, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations since the early 1990s, such as International IDEA, OSCE, and *Religions for Peace*. Simultaneously, she lectured in various academic institutions in Europe, in North America (including the United States Military Academy/West Point), Africa and the Middle East.

Her Ph.D. in 1996, focused on Political Islam, became her first book in Arabic (her mother tongue) and in English. She has since published widely, and in several languages, on international political dynamics, including democratization, human rights, peace and security, gender, religious engagement and sustainable development. She was born in Egypt, and now lives in the United States.

Rev. George Oshiba



Rev. George Oshiba is Chairperson of the Japanese Association of Religious Organizations, Chairperson of Japan Confederation of Christian Churches and Moderator of Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church. Rev. Oshiba, born in 1957, graduated from Kanazawa University, Japan Lutheran College, and Japan Lutheran Theological Seminary and was ordained to the priesthood of Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1986. After serving at Fukuyama Church, United Lutheran Seminary (S.T.M.) in Philadelphia in the U.S., and Musashino Church, Rev. Oshiba has served as Pastor of Osaka Church since April 2016. His specializations are pastoral care and clinical pastoral education (CPE) in practical

theology. Rev. Oshiba is also involved in pastoral counseling, terminal care, grief care, and spiritual care. He is currently the chairperson and chaplain of Lutheran Home, a social welfare corporation in Shijonawate City, and a visiting fellow at Institute of Grief Care at Sophia University in Tokyo.

Hon. Mr. Shinjiro Koizumi



After graduating from the College of Economics, Kanto Gakuin University, Japan in March 2004, Hon. Mr. Shinjiro Koizumi entered and graduated from the School of Arts and Science, Columbia University, U.S.A. in May 2006. After serving for the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) as a research fellow since June 2006, he was appointed as a secretary to the former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in September 2007.

Mr. Koizumi then was elected to the House of Representatives, Japan in September 2009 (1st term), elected in the 2nd term in December 2012 and elected in the 3rd term in December 2014. Being a Member of the House of Representatives, he was appointed as the Parliamentary Vice-Minister of the Cabinet Office and as the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Reconstruction in September 2013.

In September 2019 and October 2021, Mr. Koizumi served as the Minister of the Environment and as the Minister of State for Nuclear Emergency Preparedness with the concurrent position of the Minister in charge of Climate Change appointed in March 2021.

[The newly elected chair of APWoFN](#)

[The newly elected chair of APIYN](#)

Prof. Shinichi Takemura



Prof. Shin-ichi Takemura, the inventor and director of “Tangible Earth”, is a media producer known for his numerous cutting-edge IT-driven social activities, along with propounding his incisive views on global environmental issue as an anthropologist. In 2005, Prof. Takemura conceived the prototype of the world’s first multimedia globe, the “Tangible Earth”, which won the Gold Prize of Good Design Award, Japan in 2005. This world’s first interactive digital globe has been exhibited at Hokkaido G8 Summit (2008), COP15 “Bright Green” event (2009 at Copenhagen), TEDx-Tokyo in 2009/13, COP10:Bio-diversity conference at Nagoya(2010), Summer Davos Forum (2011/12, in China), United Nation headquarter (Geneva, NY; 2012/13), Milano Expo (2015), G7 Ise-shima G7 Summit (2016), and frequently exhibited at various sites in Tokyo such as Roppongi Hills. In 2017, Prof. Takemura created the smaller version of Tangible Earth “Sphere” for schools. <http://sphere.blue/en.html>

After “3.11” great earthquake and tsunami event in Japan, he was engaged in the restoration program in Tohoku devastated area and in the scheme design for the future disaster risk reduction as a committee member of the Reconstruction Design Council of the Japanese government (Prime Minister’s office). Since 2012, Prof. Takemura and ELP has served as a communication design consultancy for UNISDR (United Nation International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction) and produce a "tablet" version of Tangible Earth called "GfT".

[Plenary II]

Dr. Lilian Sison



Dr. Lilian J. Sison is Secretary General, Religions for Peace, Philippines and the Chair of Asia Pacific Women of Faith Network

Dr. Lilian Sison is an academic who has served as the Dean of the Graduate School of the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. She is currently the Director of International Relations and Programs of UST. She is also a Professor of Environmental Chemistry. In her advocacy work on Inter-religious Dialogue, she chairs the Asia Pacific Women of Faith Network of Religions for Peace, Asia and has been involved in humanitarian work advocating on women issues, the protection of children, and the protection of the environment. She currently serves as the Secretary General of Religions for Peace, Philippines, Co-President of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace and immediate past member of

the World Council of Religions for Peace. She is the co-founder of UNIHARMONY PARTNERS Manila.

Dr. NHM Abu Bakar



Dr. NHM Abu Bakar is a Retired Professor of Philosophy, University of Chittagong and currently works as an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Islamic Studies, Southern University Bangladesh. He completed his PhD on Historiography of Philosophy from Rabindra Bharati University, India in 1996. His published works are largely confined to theology, history and methodology. From his student life, he was an interreligious activist and passionate about different multireligious issues. To date, he has been involved in various academic and interreligious projects. He is the Secretary General of RFP Bangladesh Chapter since 2018. He was awarded honorary citizenship by the Mayor of Louisville City County, Kentucky, during his USA visit, in 2008 for his contributions to the interfaith arena.

Al-Haj Kalifah U Aye Lwin



Al-Haj Kalifah U Aye Lwin is Chief Convener, the Islamic Center of Myanmar; Member, Kofi Annan led Rakhine Advisory Commission; Founding and Core Member, *Religions for Peace*-Myanmar

As a Kalifah from the Qadariyah Aliya Sufi Order in Myanmar since 1984 and the Chief Convener of the Islamic Center of Myanmar since 1978, Al Haj Kalifah U Aye Lwin has been the Muslim representative and a core member of *Religions for Peace*-Myanmar since 2012. Al Haj has served as a Counselor and Member of Management Board in the Diplomatic School in Yangon, Myanmar from 1976 until present. He is currently the Chairman of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Scholarship Division and counterpart organization Chairman for Myanmar, and has been the treasurer in the Management Committee of the Bahadur Shah Zafar Mausoleum for 9 years since 2004. He has authored, translated and edited more than a dozen books on Islam and comparative religion. He is deeply involved in conflict resolution and peace building in Myanmar.

Rev. Taesung Kim



Education

1991: B.A., *Won*-Buddhism Studies, Wonkwang University, Korea

2002: M.A., International Studies, Choong Ang University

2005: Completed Ph. D Program, International Studies, Choong Ang University

Career

1992: Ordained as Reverend, *Won*-Buddhism

1993: Reverend, Department of International Affairs, Headquarters of *Won*-Buddhism

2001: Vice Secretary-General, Korean Conference of Religions for Peace

2002: Vice Secretary-General, Asian Conference of Religions for Peace

2014: Director, Seoul Peace Education Center

2017: Acting Secretary-General, Korean Conference of Religions for Peace

2018: Secretary-General, Korean Conference of Religions for Peace

Rev. Xu Xiaohong



Rev. Xu Xiaohong, graduated from Nanjing Union Theological Seminary in 1987, and earned the second degree in 2002 in the same institute as one of the first graduates of M. Div. of NJUTS, has rich experience in working with grass-root churches and theological education.

Rev. Xu Xiaohong is the President of China Three-self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches., President of National YMCA, the Vice President of China Committee on Religion and Peace, member of the Standing Committee of Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament, a member of the Standing Committee of China Religious Culture Communications Association, a member of the Shanghai Religious Society, etc..

Rev. Xu Xiaohong's articles include "*Nine Tribes of Zhaowu and Jing Nestorianism*", "*When did Christianity enter China?*", "*To Reshape the Spirit of Harmony in Christ's Love*", "*To Build a Reasonable Faith*", "*Influences of Non-theological element in Western Christian Thoughts on the Church in China*", "*Theological Reflections in the 21st Century*", "*Literature without Grace does not Travel Far*". Rev. Xu Xiaohong was in the editing team of "*Overview of China's Religions*" in charge of the part of Christianity in China. He is the chief editor of "*The History of Christianity in China*" and "*Journey with My Country-Records of Patriotic Chinese Christians*". He is also the author of

“Interpretations of Nestorian Literature and Tablet Inscription in Tang Dynasty”.

Dr. Renz Christian Argao



Renz Christian Argao is the International Youth Committee Coordinator (Chair) of Religions for Peace, the world’s largest and most representative multi-religious coalition, where he also serves as a Member of the World Council and of the International Executive Committee. Renz is the Director and Chief Psychologist of the Argao Center for Psychological Services. An internationally recognized expert in traumatic stress, he is one of the handful of Filipinos who hold the status of a Diplomate of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress.

[Plenary III]

Mr. Shameer Rishad



Positions Held:

Founder-Convenor of Javed Abidi Foundation (JAF), Youth Chairperson of RfP India and Transition Committee Member of RfP APIYN (Nominated for the position of Secretary General of RfP APIYN)

Brief Bio:

Shameer Rishad attended the 2019 RfP APIYN Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp held in Myanmar which built the basis of his interest in the area of peacebuilding. After the Youth Peace Camp he constituted the RfP India Youth Committee to execute projects in India. As a member of APIYN he wishes to facilitate journeys of young people so they can effectively act as agents of change in society. Shameer is also the Founder-Convenor of Javed Abidi Foundation (JAF) which is a think tank founded in memory of his uncle Javed Abidi, a renowned disability rights activist who is known as the father of the cross-disability rights movement in India. The organization seeks to raise the bar for advocacy on non-discrimination, access to information and services. Currently Shameer is completing his BA. in Political Science honours from Indira Gandhi Open National University while also pursuing a BSc. in Data Science & Programming from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras.

Ms. Haidi Bullo Flores-Fajardo



Ms. Haidi Bullo Flores-Fajardo is the Deputy Secretary General of *Religions for Peace* Philippines. She is the communication director of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in the Philippines Area for the last ten years and the editor of Church Newsroom Philippines which is the official Church resource for news media, opinion leaders and the public. She helps manage the social media channels for the Church and oversees its content and strategy. Prior to managing the Church Communication Department, she was a practicing architect. She is mother to 3 children, the eldest being a child with autism, and a loving wife to her hubby who let's her get away with her antics for the last 26 years of marriage.

Hon. Mr. Keizo Takemi



Keizo Takemi is a Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Member of the House of Councillors. Prof. Takemi has been involved in various global initiatives including the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health, Global Health Workforce Alliance (GHWA), WHO expert working group on R&D Financing, and the international organizing committee of the Prince Mahidol Award Conference (PMAC). He has also been serving as the chair of the parliamentary caucus on Stop TB Partnership and the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (AFPPD). In 2016, he was appointed to the UN High Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, and in 2018, to the UHC Financing Advisory Committee for the G20 2019. He has served as Senior Vice Minister for Health, Labour and Welfare, and State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, where he led the initiative to establish the UN Trust Fund for Human Security. Within the LDP, he is Chairperson of the Special Committee on Global Health Strategy of the LDP Policy Research Council, Acting Chairperson of Headquarters for Novel Coronavirus, Acting Chairperson of Project Team for COVID-19 Vaccines and Chairperson of Subcommittee on Governance for Infectious Diseases. In recognition of his contributions to the field over the past decade, he was appointed WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in July 2019. He has been a senior fellow with the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE), since 2007, where is the chair of the Executive Committee of the Global Health and Human Security Program. Professor Takemi is a visiting professor at Nagasaki University, and is the co-author of *Global Action for Health System Strengthening: Policy Recommendations to the G8* (2009), and has contributed numerous articles in English and Japanese to journals such as *The Lancet*, *Asia-Pacific Review*, and *Gaiko* [Diplomacy].

Rev. Father Carlos V. Reyes



Rev. Father Carlos V. Reyes currently belongs to Ministry for Ecumenical and Interfaith Dialogue, Archdiocese of Manila.

Education

1985: Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, University of the Philippines, Quezon City

1999; Bachelor of Science in Sacred Theology Magna Cum Laude, The Royal and Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, Manila

2001: Licentiate in Sacred Theology *History of Theology and Patristic Theology* Magna Cum Laude, Gregorian University, Rome

2016: Certified Private Pilot, Fliteline Aviation School Plaridel, Bulacan

Work Experience

2020-Present: Vicar Eorane, Vicariate of San Felipe Neri, Mandaluyong City

2015-Present: Parish Priest, Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Manadaluyong

2012-Present: Executive Vice President, Domus Mariae Foundation

July 2010-Dec. 2010: Parochial Vicar, St. John Vianney Parish, Hacienda Hts. CA, USA

2004-2016: Executive Secretary, CBCP-Commission on Interreligious Dialogue

2004: Acting Rector, Archdiocesan Shrine of the Divine Mercy

2003-Present: Minister, Ministry for Ecumenical and Interfaith Affairs, Archdiocese of Manila

2001-2010: Vice Rector, EDSA Shrine

2002: Parochial Vicar, St. John the Baptist Parish, San Juan, Metro Manila

2002: Parochial Vicar, Holy Trinity Parish, BalicBalic Sampaloc, Manila

2002: Parochial Vicar, Espiritu Santo Parish, Santa Cruz, Manila

2001: Parochial Vicar, San Roque Parish, Sampaloc, Manila

2000: Parochial Vicar, Parokya ng Kristong Hari, Novaliches

Rev. Father Carlos Reyes is Minister of Interreligious and Ecumenical Affairs, Archdiocese of Manila, the Philippines. He is also a Board member of *Religions for Peace* Philippines.

Imam Yang Faming



Yang Faming, Hui ethnic group, was born in 1956 in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and got undergraduate education. Now he is a member of the 13th Standing Committee of the CPPCC National Committee, Vice Chairman of Sub-Committee on Ethnic and Religious Affairs of the CPPCC, Vice President of China Committee on Religion and Peace, President of China Islamic Association (since 2016), President of the China Islamic Institute, Imam of Dongsi Mosque in

Beijing.

Devoted to his duties and as a model for Chinese Muslims, Imam Yang has made substantive efforts in interpretation on Koran. He translated <The Complete Book of the Muslim Hadith>and<The Mishkati Hadith>, and edited <100 new AL-khutab>,<Al-'Aqidah at-Tahawiyah>and<Ilm al—Kalam>. He wrote dozens of <New al-Wa'z> on patriotism, peace, generosity. He published lots of articles in <People's Daily>,< China Ethnic News >,<China Religion> and <China Muslim> of promoting Chinese muslim's outstanding traditions and guiding Islam in China.

Rev. Dr. Renta Nishihara



Rev. Dr. Renta Nishihara was born in Kyoto in 1962. He currently serves as President of Rikkyo University, Bishop of Diocese of Chubu (Mid-Japan) the Anglican Church in Japan, Vice Director of Peace Research Institute at Religions for Peace Japan, Chair of Association of Christian School in Japan, Executive Director of the Japan Association of Private Universities and Colleges. He is also a Professor of Department of Christian Studies and Graduate School of Christian Studies, Rikkyo University, Director of the Colleges and Universities of the Anglican Communities (CUAC), Central Committee Member of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Board Member and the former Executive Director of the Japan Society of Christian Studies and the Editor-in-Chief of its Journal.

Dr. Ahmad Suaedy



Ahmad Suaedy is Executive Director of the Abdurrahman Wahid Centre for Inter-Faith Dialogue and Peace-University of Indonesia (AWC-UI) Jakarta and senior researcher at the Wahid Institute in Jakarta. He was one of the founders and the former Executive Director of the Wahid Institute (2004-2012). Suaedy is leading the research about “Revitalized Tradition and Social Inclusion” by AWC-UI. His graduated from State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Yogyakarta 1990 for undergraduate; Graduated Master Program at State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta 2012, and candidate Doctor at State Islamic University (UIN), Yogyakarta.

Currently Suaedy is doing research on “Islam and Mainstreaming Intolerance in Indonesia under SBY: Influence on the fate of minorities,” (independent research). He is also doing research on “President Abdurrahman Wahid Policy on Area Conflict, Aceh and Papua” for his dissertation.

Regarding to covid-19 issues, Suaedy, as one of the NU informal leaders, he did numbers of activities, either with his/their network or with interfaith communities. He himself as people who has experienced as a combatan of covid-19 in 2020.

Ahmad Suaedy has written a number of journal articles and book chapters, including, “Citizenship Challenges in Myanmar’s Democratic Transition: Case Study of the Rohingya” will be published soon in *Studia Islamica Journal* Islamic State University, Jakarta.

[Commission Session]

--Commission 1--

Rev. Sangwon Hwang



Rev. Sangwon Hwang (Won Buddhism Department of International Affairs, South Korea/United States) is a Won Buddhist minister who has worked with interfaith groups in the U.S. and Korea to promote peace-building and youth development through education and dialogue. Rev. Hwang holds an MA in Applied Meditation from the Won Institute of Graduate Studies in Philadelphia and an MA in Won Buddhist studies from Won Buddhism Graduate School, South Korea. Rev. Hwang volunteers helping youth and the poor through programs run by the Philadelphia Germantown homeless shelter in the U.S., and Gobong Juvenile Center in Korea. She recently completed the East-West Center’s Asia-Pacific Leadership Program and is now working to develop a new approach for solving sensitive international issues using the principles of harmony and balance.

Swami Atmapriyananda



Swami Atmapriyananda is currently the Pro-Chancellor of Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University, Kolkata, India. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Madras in Theoretical Physics for his work in elementary particle theory. Inspired by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda ideology, he joined the Ramakrishna Order of monks in 1978.

As a monk and an educationist, his present interests include: (i) education for character building in the youth, (ii) Yoga-Vedanta vis-à-vis modern science, (iii) Consciousness Studies as taught in the Upanishads, and (v) Harmony of religions as lived and taught by Sri Ramakrishna.

He has a number of publications on the above subjects in the journals of Ramakrishna Order and of various organizations.

He is widely travelled and has gone to almost all parts of the globe to participate as a resource person in various seminars, colloquia, symposia, conferences, etc., having a bearing on the subjects of his interest.

He is also involved as a Council member or invited participant of a large number of global organizations working for peace and harmony, interfaith dialogue and interreligious understanding, comparative mysticism and spirituality, and holistic welfare of children across the globe.

Dr. Sue Ennis



For more than 40 years Susan Ennis has coordinated/taught English to newly arrived adult refugees/immigrants in Australia. She has also been involved in both a voluntary/paid capacity with the settlement of these groups and asylum seekers. In addition, she has taught English as a Second Language in Turkey, PRC, Cambodia and worked in Israel. In 2012 she obtained her PhD and later Palgrave published her book on Religion, Spirituality and the Refugee Experience based on her PhD. The motivation for her research and book were her long-held interest in religious/spiritual matters, her observations on the need for more understanding of refugees' religious and/or spiritual experiences and how this practically affects settlement and social cohesion. For the past nine years she has been the Secretary of Religions for Peace (RfP) Victoria or Australia and has assisted Professor Desmond Cahill in forming RfP Australia as a national network. Again, with the assistance of Professor Cahill she published a 2018 audit of Multifaith Activity across Australia. Since the mid 1990s Sue has been an active member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia.

Dr. Loreta N. Castro



Loreta N. Castro is the founding director of the Center for Peace Education of Miriam College, Philippines. She also teaches in the International Studies and Education departments of the College. Locally, she is currently involved in the work of educational networks and the UN Interfaith Harmony Partners Manila. Globally, she is a member of the following: the transnational advisory group of Global Campaign for Peace Education, the GPPAC Peace Education Working Group, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, and the steering committee of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative of Pax Christi International.

--Commission 2--

Mr. Khalid Nawaz Khan Marwat



Khalid Nawaz Khan Marwat, by profession, is a lawyer who has been practicing law for more than 20 years at High Courts and Supreme Court. Is a firm believer in justice and fairness and strives to deliver it through his diligence. Attended and participated in a conference at Kyoto, Japan, as a Member of the E.C of A.C.R.P/RfP. Active Member of the World Conference of Religions and Peace. A permanent active member of the World Muslim Congress, having its headquarters in Karachi, Pakistan the largest Muslim organization. Attended the General Assembly of A.C.R.P./RfP, in Manila, Philippines where he was elected as a Member of Executive Committee of same Organization, in the month of October 2008. Besides this, actively played role in Peace meetings locally that is at the level of Pakistan Chapter, as well as in international seminars and conferences in Europe as well as USA. Also plays a key role domestically for Peace and tranquility between the different segments of the society. In 2018 he was elected as the President of A.C.R.P., Pakistan Chapter. Also office-bearer of many organizations in Pakistan and Internationally.

Archbishop Antonio Ledesma



Archbishop Antonio J. Ledesma, SJ, DD was born on March 28, 1943 in Iloilo City. He was ordained a priest on April 16, 1973 at Jaro Cathedral, Iloilo City. On June 13, 1996 Pope John Paul II appointed him Coadjutor Bishop of Ipil, Zamboanga del Sur. He was ordained Bishop on August 31, 1996. His installation took place on July 16, 1997. On June 28, 1997 he succeeded as Bishop of Ipil. Pope Benedict XVI appointed him on March 3, 2006 Archbishop of Cagayan de Oro.

He is currently chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' (CBCP) Episcopal Commission on Inter-religious Dialogue and member of the Episcopal Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace. Archbishop Ledesma speaks English, Tagalog, Hiligaynon, Cebuano, Spanish and Latin.

He spent his elementary years at St. Aloysius School and later at the Ateneo de Manila. Since then, he remained with the Ateneo until he finished his degree in History and Government, graduating magna cum laude in 1963.

He studied Philosophy and Theology at the Loyola House of Studies from 1966 to 1968 and from 1970 to 1973, respectively. He attained his master's degree in Political Science from the University of the Philippines. He attended the University of Wisconsin–Madison in the United States, completing his doctorate in Development in 1980.

On May 30, 1963, Ledesma entered the Society of Jesus. He was ordained priest on April 16, 1973.

He served as an assistant parish priest in Siay, Zamboanga Sibugay from 1980 to 1981. From 1982 to 1996, he worked as a professor and was assigned to various positions in Xavier University. He taught Sociology, Economics, and Religious studies.

Pope John Paul II appointed Ledesma as Coadjutor Prelate of Ipil on June 13, 1996. He succeeded Federico O. Escaler as the Prelate of Ipil on June 28, 1997. On March 4, 2006, he was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI as Archbishop of Cagayan de Oro. On June 23, 2020, Archbishop retired.

Rev. Ms. Elga Sarapung



Rev. Elga Joan Sarapung is the Director of the Interfaith Dialogue Institute in Indonesia (Institute INTERFIDEI). In 1990/1991 she took Master Degree at Theological Faculty University of Groningen, The Netherlands, (Ecumenical study and Missiology). Since 1997, she has been being a facilitator in various trainings "Managing and Means Diversity in Indonesia, and also serving as a resource person in various forums on the issue: "Diversity in Religion and Ethnicity", "Religions for Peace", "Human Rights (especially on FoRB issue)", "Democracy", "Peace Education", etc., local, national and international. She became an "expert" in the Partnership program of the Churches in Indonesia and Protestant Churches in the Netherlands, specifically for Interfaith working group (2010-2014) and "expert" in interfaith working group of Mission 21, Indonesia and Church in Switzerland. (2006-present).

Mr. Masaya Onimaru



Mr. Masaya Onimaru, was born in 1979, is a founder and a board member of Terra Renaissance, a Japanese NGO, which works for demining and peacebuilding activities in conflict areas as well as support for victims affected by conflicts. Mr. Onimaru was deeply inspired by the meeting with Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, a founder of Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, at his high school day and received Dr. Ariyaratne's words that each one of us has a capacity of creating future.

Since his first visit to Cambodia in 2001, he has started with raising awareness campaign for preventing landmines in Japan. In 2001, Mr. Onimaru established “Terra Renaissance” aiming to form society that all living being are able to spend their life in peace. While Mr. Onimaru actively engages with peacebuilding, promoting healthcare, disaster relief and advocacy for human rights in Cambodia, Laos, Uganda, DRC and Burundi, he gives lectures in school, company and local government about issues of land mines and child soldiers in Japan more than 100 times a year.

--Commission 3--

Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin [See his bio shown in Opening Ceremony]

Rev. Koichi Sugino



Currently serving as Deputy Secretary General of *Religions for Peace* in New York, an international coalition of the world’s great religions dedicated to promoting peace, Rev. Kyoichi Sugino has over 20 years of experience at the intersection of engaged Buddhism, interreligious cooperation and multi-stakeholder diplomacy in peacebuilding. Rev. Sugino has facilitated the formation of representative and action-oriented Interreligious Councils in every region of the world, including those in conflict and complex emergencies, as instruments of mediation, reconciliation, peacebuilding and integral human development.

Sugino graduated from Gakurin Seminary in Tokyo (1991) to become an ordained Dharma Teacher in Rissho Kosei-kai, an international Buddhist movement headquartered in Japan. Rev. Sugino received his LL.B from Chuo University in Tokyo (1989) and M.L.I. in International Law and International Human Rights Law from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1993). Earlier in his career, he served as Policy Research Officer at the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva. A well-cited historical perspective on the role of humanitarian agencies in complex emergencies (*The “Non-Political and Humanitarian” Clause in UNHCR’s Statute*, Refugee Survey Quarterly, UNHCR/Oxford University Press, Volume17, no.1 [1998]) is one of his many published articles on humanitarianism and peacebuilding.

Prof. Keiko Tosa

Prof. Keiko Tosa, is a Professor, Institute of Global Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Ven. Sungjin



- 1993: Received novice ordination from Ven. Chungha at Tongdosa.
- 1997: Buddhist military chaplain of Republic of Korea Air Force.
- 2000: Abbot of Sungkwansa at Jangsu.
- 2009: Director of administration of Jogyesa.
- 2012: Director of district office under direct control of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism.
- 2015: Principal of Soenrimwon of Jogyesa.
- 2016: Director of district of propagation of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism.
- 2017: Executive director of Paramita youth association of Korea.
- 2019~: Secretary General of special military religious district of Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism.
- 2014~: Abbot of Sungkwansa of Namyangju.

Rev. Peter Juseok Kang



Rev. Peter Ju Seok Kang is a Catholic priest in South Korea, serving as director for the Catholic Institute of Northeast Asia Peace (CINAP). He is also secretary of Committee for the Reconciliation of the Korean People in the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Korea.

He studied Justice and Peace Studies at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota and received his Ph. D. in North Korean Studies from the University of North Korean Studies in South Korea.

Since 2017, Father Peter Ju Seok Kang has sought for solidarity of religious people for peace on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia through the annual international conference by the Catholic Institute of Northeast Asia Peace. Over the past four international conferences hosted by the CINAP, religious people from South Korea, Japan, the United States, and Russia assembled to closely listen to each other and sought for solidarity

Prof. Kathy Matsui



Dr. Kathy R. Matsui is a professor of the Department of Global Citizenship Studies, Seisen University (Tokyo, Japan) and teaches courses on conflict resolution and peace related subjects. She works with peace researchers and educators internationally and is also active in inter-religious dialogues as a member of the Women's Executive Committee, World Conference of Religions for Peace, Member of Reconciliation and Education Task Force in RfP Japan. As a peace educator, she recently focuses her activities on facilitating peace education course for

Northeast Asia Regional Peacebuilding Institute (NARPI), held annually for participants from Northeast Asia. Presently, she is a research member of the Asian Pacific Center of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) Research Project (2021) Promoting Peace Education in Northeast Asia, and committee member of the Center of Nonkilling Security Education Research Committee.

Rev. Taehyon Kim



Rev. Taehyon KIM is a Presbyterian pastor and ecumenist. He is the director of the Research and Development of Ecumenical Relationship at the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK) and a member of the Central Committee of the Korean Conference of Religions for Peace (KCRP). After studying theology, he became interested in the social responsibility of the Christian and since 1999 he has been working on the Christian unity and inter-religious dialogue at the NCCK. He is an executive committee and central committee member of the KCRP, a consultative body of the seven religions in Korea, to transform it into an organization that fulfills social roles of religions. He has been also actively participating in activities related to peace on the Korean Peninsula such as Inter-Korean religious exchanges and Inter-Korean civilian exchanges.

Mr. Seunggil Yoon



Mr. Seunggil Yoon is the Chairman of External Affairs Association for Korean Native Religion.

Profile

With the approval of the Ministry of Unification so that South Korea and North Korea can reconcile, cooperate, and interact with each other, Mr. Seunggil YOON has accumulated results in exchanges with national joint events and has visited North Korea more than 90 times.

And with the approval of the Ministry of Unification, Mr. Yoon also held a joint Korean national event, 'March 1st Movement' in Gaeseong, North Korea.

Incumbent

Chairman of External Affairs

ASSOCIATION FOR KOREAN NATIVE RELIGIONRNL AFFAIRS

Vice Chair of Standing Committee

KOREAN ASSEMBLY FOR REUNION OF TEN-MILLION SEPARATED FAMILIES

Education

Certified in Leader's Program in Unification
University of North Korean Studies

Mr. Gugab Chang



Mr. Gugab Chang is Director, Department of Culture and Society, Chondogyo, the Republic of Korea.

Experience

- 2020 – Present The Chondogyo Central Church Headquarters
(Director, Department of Culture and Society, Office of Religious Affairs)
- 2013 - Present The Chondogyo Central Church Headquarters
(Member, Office of Religious Affairs)
- 2013 - 2020 The Chondogyo Central Church Headquarters
(Chief Secretary, Church Executive Office)
- 2010 - 2013 The Chondogyo Central Church Headquarters
(Congressman, The Religious Congress)

Additional Activities

- 2021 - Present Siningansa (Chondogyo's Publishing Branch) Board Member, Editor
- 2020 - Present Korean Conference of Religions for Peace
(Member, Executive Committee)
- 2019 - Present The Korean Council of Religious Leaders
(Member, Steering Committee)
- 2013 – Present Donghak National Unification Society
(Member, Steering Committee)

Education

- 1991 BA in School of Law (Gyeongsang National University, R.O.K)

Mr. Byungdo OH



Mr. Byungdo OH is now incumbent Director of External Cooperation Department of General Affairs in Sung KyunKwan (Confucianism). Sungkyunkwan (Confucianism) is carrying out various activities such as moral restoration movement, character building education, etiquette practice movement, traditional cultural succession and preservation to spread humanity to the whole world.

Mr. Byungdo Oh, who has accumulated knowledge and experience in Korean peninsula issues, is also a member of the Unification Education Specialist (nominated by the Peaceful Unification Advisory Council of the ministry of Unification), who can actively participate in unification education projects and contribute to the establishment of a unification education network in the community.

--Commission 4--

Mr. Deng Zongliang



Mr. Deng Zongliang, born in 1960 in Guangdong province in China, now is Executive Vice President of CCRP. He is also Vice Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Ethnic and Religious Affairs of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

He is member of the 11th ,12th ,and 13th sessions of National Committee of the CPPCC, and once was member of Chinese Religious Academics.

He has worked for CCRP since 2005 as General Office Director, Executive Deputy Secretary General, Advisor. He has been committed to interfaith dialogue and cooperation by advancing the bilateral and multilateral exchanges and cooperation between CCRP and other international, regional and national inter religious councils. He is also actively engaged in RfP and ACRP activities by facilitating CCRP delegation to attend the 8th, 9th, 10th RfP Assembly and important meetings of ACRP. He has chaired many international conferences hosted by CCRP.

Dr. Yuhai



Dr. Hai Yu, Ph.D, Director and Senior Research Fellow of the Environmental Strategy Division of Policy Research Center for Environment and Economy (PRCEE), Chief Expert of significant projects of National Social Science Foundation (NSSF). He has served as a consulting expert for the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and other international organizations. Dr. Hai Yu is mainly engaged in the research on environmental strategy and policy, ecological civilization, green development, environmental governance system, and global sustainable development etc., providing technical support for the strategy and policy decision-making of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE). After joining PRCEE in 2002, Dr. Hai Yu has conducted more than 80 projects funded by national and international agencies such as UNEP, EU, CCICED, WWF, NRDC, EDF, etc., and published more than 80 academic papers. He has won several science and technology awards at provincial and ministerial level.

Judge Justice Jawad Hassan



Did his LLM from Pace University, School of Law, New York . Was awarded the Henry F. Feldshuh scholarship, received training at the Hague Academy of International Law. Enrolled as an advocate of Supreme Court, was appointed the Additional Advocate-General Punjab and was elevated to the Lahore High Court in November 2016, having over 150 reported judgments. To-date (2021) has given over 300 judgments, developed principles of environmental law and legal doctrines in numerous cases. His expertise covers a vast area of civil, commercial law and environmental laws. He has also drafted legislation and served as advisor to the Provincial and Federal Government. Has written chapters, edited and compiled a number of books on law published within and outside Pakistan and has international publications and research articles in law journals to his credit. Has imparted legal education in Pakistan at the Federal and Punjab Judicial Academy of Pakistan, Punjab University Law School, National Institute of Public Administration, LUMS, and Kinnaird College.

Mrs. Philippa Rowland



Philippa Rowland is current President of the Multifaith Association of South Australia, and Deputy Chair of Religions for Peace Australia. Trained as an agricultural scientist, she worked for the Australian Federal Government on sustainable farming and national environmental management plans for biodiversity, pesticides, heavy metals and ozone-depleting substances. Since 2003 she has worked on community solutions to climate change, primarily the transition to energy efficiency and renewable energy. Philippa works with the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change as a founding member of the Greenfaith International Network, Sounding the Alarm on Climate and promoting a global Living the Change initiative, designed to encourage collective adoption of sustainable choices in food, transport and energy.

[Closing Ceremony]

The Most Rev. Makoto N. Uematsu



The Most Rev. Makoto N. Uematsu is Bishop of the Diocese of Hokkaido of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (Anglican Church in Japan), Chair of *Religions for Peace Japan*. He received Master of Divinity & Doctor of Divinity from The Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, Austin, Texas, USA. After returning to Japan, he served as priest at St. Mark's Church in Ashiya, the Diocese of Osaka, and appointed to General Secretary of the Provincial Office of Nippon Sei Ko Kai. He serves Bishop of the Diocese of Hokkaido from 1997 and also held Primate of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai from 2006 to 2020.

Rev. Masamichi Kamiya



Rev. Masamichi Kamiya currently serves as the Senior Advisor to Religions for Peace (RfP) Aisa, also known as Asian Conference of Religions for Peace (ACRP) since December 2014. He completed the Master's Degree in Law and Diplomacy at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University located in Boston Massachusetts, U. S. A. in May 1987. Rev. Kamiya served for RfP International (WCRP then) both as an Assistant Secretary General between March 1989 and April 1992 and an Associate

Secretary General in 1998.

From October 1998 to March 2003, Rev. Kamiya served as the Special Research Fellow at the Hiroshima Peace Institute, Hiroshima City University. His major focus at the Hiroshima Peace Institute was on policy recommendations and advocacy for nuclear disarmament.

The newly elected Secretary-General

VII. General Assembly Officers

1. Conference Presidents: Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin (Moderator), Prof. Desmond Cahill (Deputy Moderator), The Most Ven. Wonhaeng, Ms. Lourdes Mastura, Dr. Lilian Sison, Mr. Narayanapillai Vasudevan, Ven. Guangfu Li and The Most Rev. Nichiko Niwano (all the Co-presidents)

2. Conference Secretary-General: Rev. Dr. Nobuhiro Nemoto, Secretary-General

3. Press Officer and Conference Spokesperson: Rev. Masamichi Kamiya, Senior Adviser

4. Assembly Committees

1) Assembly Steering Committee

Chair: Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin

Members: Prof. Desmond Cahill (Deputy Moderator), The Most Rev. Makoto Uematsu (*RfP* Japan/Host), Mr. Deog Chang Yang (KCRP), Dr. Lilian Sison (APWFN), Mr. Renz C. Argao (APIYN) and Rev. Dr. Nobuhiro Nemoto (Secretary-General) with his team of the extended secretariat, including Dr. Deepali Bhanot, Prof. Pablito Baybado, Jr., Ms. Ye Gao and Rev. Tae-sung Kim (four Associate Secretaries-General)

2) Assembly Nominating Committee

Chair: Rev. Tae-sung Kim

Members: Ms. Ye Gao (CCRP), Father Johannes Hariyanto, SJ (*RfP* Indonesia), Rev. Keiji Kunitomi (*RfP* Japan), Principal Sukomal Barua (*RfP* Bangladesh), Dr. Deepali Bhanot (*RfP* India) and Mr. Khalid Nawaz Khan Marwat (*RfP* Pakistan) with the secretarial assistance of Rev. Masamichi Kamiya

3) Assembly Declaration Committee

Chair: Dr. Rev. Renta Nishihara (*RfP* Japan)

Members: Rev. Lin Manhong (CCRP), Prof. Hyundo Park (KCRP), Rev. Augustina

Elga J. Sarapung (*RfP* Indonesia), Prof. Dr. Dhammajothi Thero (*RfP* Sri Lanka), Father Bento Rodrigues (*RfP* India), Ms. Huma Ikramullah (*RfP* Pakistan) and Ms. Kanchana Soonsawad (ACRP Thailand) with the assistance of Mr. Seiichi Tsugawa, Rev. Megumi Wada and Dr. An Seunghee as the Supporting Team for the Chair and the overall secretarial assistance of Rev. Masamichi Kamiya

4) Assembly Documentation Committee

Chair: Prof. Pablito Baybado, Jr.

Members: Ms. Haidi Flores-Fajardo (*RfP* Philippines) and at the end: with the assistance of volunteers from the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, Mr. Abdul Mabood (*RfP* India), Dr. Ouen Sam Art (*RfP* Cambodia), Mr. Haider AL-Husseinawi (*RfP* Iraq), Ms. Jamby Diusubalieva (*RfP* Kyrgyzstan), Ven. Dr. Tumeekhuu Blugan (*RfP* Mongolia) and Ms. Pooja Manandhar (*RfP* Nepal) with secretarial assistance of Ms. Chihiro Kase

5) Assembly Finance Committee

Chair: Mr. Deog Chang Yang (KCRP)

Members: Rev. Munemichi Kurozumi (*RfP* Japan), Dr. Lilian Sison (*RfP* Philippines), Prof. Philip Widjaja (*RfP* Indonesia), Mr. Lacan (CCRP) and Mr. Hanif Ikramullah Khan (*RfP* Pakistan) with the secretariat assistance of Mr. Tatsuya Yoshida

6) Assembly Structure and Procedure Committee

Chair: Prof. Desmond Cahill

Members: Mr. Al-Haj U Aye Lwin (*RfP* Myanmar), Rev. Dr. Yoshinori Shinohara (*RfP* Japan), Mr. Vasudevan (*RfP* India), Ms. Lourdes Mastura (*RfP* Philippines) and Secretary-General with the secretarial assistance of Rev. Kamiya

7) Women's' Pre-Assembly Committee

Chair: Dr. Lilian Sison

Members: Ms. Yukiko Moriwaki, Ms. Seemi Ikramullah, Dr. Deepali Bhanot, Ms. Kanchana Soonsawad, Ms. Indira Manandhar with the secretarial assistance of Ms. Minako Idei

8) Youth Pre-Assembly Committee

Chair: Mr. Renz C. Argao (Co-Moderator of APIYN/ *RfP* Philippines)

Members: Mr. Takashi Hashimoto (Co-Moderator of APIYN/ *RfP* Japan), Ms. Nivy Balachandran (Co-Moderator of APIYN/ *RfP* Australia), Ms. Gasun Han (Co-Moderator of APIYN/ KCRP), Mr. Shameer Rishad (*RfP* India), Ms. Meera Lwin Mar Oo (*RfP* Myanmar) and the representative of *RfP* Japan with the secretarial assistance of Mr. Tatsuya Yoshida

VIII. Pursuit of the Synergy between ACRP's Five Flagship Projects and *Religions for Peace's* Six Strategic Goals

1. Religions for Peace (*RfP*) Six Strategic Goals

Religions for Peace (*RfP*) is the only international multi-religious organization with affiliated and legally registered multi-religious leadership platforms around the world. Membership within these 90 national and six regional Interreligious Councils (IRCs) is built on the principle of religious representatives, reflecting the fabric of religious demography on those levels. ACRP is one of its six regional IRCs. Through these infrastructures, *RfP* advances common action among the world's religious communities for a comprehensive, holistic and sustainable peace. The advancement of human dignity and shared well-being in harmony with the earth, with and through representative religious institutions and faith leadership, is at the heart of *RfP's* understanding and vision of peace.

Through five decades of learning from its interreligious platforms and multi-religious collaboration, *RfP* has experienced religion contributing to solutions, but has also witnessed "religion" being responsible, in diverse ways, for some of the contemporary challenges. Furthermore, challenges today all too often disproportionately affect the vulnerable, including the poor, refugees, internally displaced persons and minorities. These vulnerabilities are intensified by the threats to the environment. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that religions are engaged in all processes of development, human rights, and peace and security. Bearing in mind the above challenges and the need for a strong global network of interreligious bodies to lead efforts advancing effective multi-religious cooperation for peace, *RfP* has six strategic goals:

Strategic Goal (SG) 1: *Promote Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies*

Our faith traditions inspire us to be changemakers where conflict, mass displacement, poverty, violent extremism and inequality call for common action

Strategic Goal (SG) 2: *Advance Gender Equality*

Equality for women and girls is a foundation for securing a more peaceful and inclusive

world for all people.

Strategic Goal (SG) 3: *Nurture a Sustainable Environment*

Recognizing the intimate connection between all forms of life and communities, we are committed to nurturing a sustainable environment.

Strategic Goal (SG) 4: *Champion Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion*

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. We bring faith communities together to champion this right for all.

Strategic Goal (SG) 5: *Strengthen Interreligious Education*

Understanding diverse traditions is vital to increasing trust, respect, and cooperation among all people and faiths.

Strategic Goal (SG) 6: *Foster Multi-religious Collaboration and Global Partnerships*

Strong partnerships with governments, civil society, and faith-based organizations ensures that our work is effective and leaves no one behind.

Each of the goals advance *RfP*'s multireligious vision of peace, build on *RfP*'s past work and align with one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). *RfP*'s strategic goals are interdependent; progress towards one goal contributes to progress towards the others.

These six goals are effectively relate to our ACRP five Flagship Projects and we pursue Synergy between ACRP's Five Flagship Projects and *RfP*'s Six Strategic Goals.

2. ACRP Flagship Project and its correlation to *RfP* Strategic Goals

The following projects and initiatives were identified and have been implemented as ACRP's flagship projects up to date:

- 1) Education on the Dignity of Life (Raising Awareness of the Equal Dignity of all forms of lives) (SG 1, SG 2, SG 5)

ACRP recognizes that respect for the Equal Dignity of all forms of lives and basic human rights are the fundamental factors in eliminating structural violence, including poverty and all forms of discrimination which causes direct violence. "Education on for the Equal Dignity of Life" is a pan-Asian issue that needs to be addressed more broadly. In this regard, we are working for promoting such universal values.

Ongoing and planned projects

- ① Project for the dignity of children in Bangladesh
- ② Peace Education Project in Afghanistan
- ③ Birth Registration Project in Asia (under planning)

2) Human Trafficking (Anti-Trafficking in Persons/ SG 1, SG 2, SG 6)

Trafficking in persons covers a wide range of issues, including sexual exploitation, forced labor, organ trafficking, child marriage, child soldiers, domestic labor, and criminal coercion. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), the number of trafficked persons is estimated to be 40.3 million worldwide. In the Philippines and Indonesia, where trafficking in persons is particularly prevalent, efforts are being made not only to provide psychological care for the women and children who are victims, but also to train the people who take care of.

The problem is not only in developing countries, but also in developed countries such as Europe, the U.S., Japan, and Australia, which are responsible as "buyers. We aim to create a society in which people in developed countries choose not to buy as a matter of course.

Ongoing and planned projects

- ① Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking Prevention Online Seminar (APWoFN, Philippines)
- ② Online visit to a shelter for victims of sexual exploitation (Philippines)
- ③ Online visit to an NGO supporting victims of labor exploitation (Japan)

3) Conflict Transformation and Reconciliation (SG 1, SG 4, SG 5)

The Asia-Pacific region (especially Asia) has many domestic and regional conflicts. As a matter of urgency, the ACRP has been working on peace and reconciliation in North and South Korea, internal conflicts caused by the Myanmar military coup, and problems in Rakhine State.

Currently, the KCR (Korean Council of Religionists), KCRP (Korean Conference of Religions for Peace), *RfP* Bangladesh, and *RfP* Myanmar are taking the lead in promoting dialogue to solve problems.

Ongoing and planned projects

- ① Myanmar Prayer, Seminar and Humanitarian Aid Recommendation Project (Japan)
- ② Myanmar Reconciliation Project (Rohingya issue, etc.) (Myanmar)
- ③ Ongoing Religious Dialogue Project on the Korean Peninsula

4) Development and Environment (SG 1, SG 3, SG 6)

Some national committees, including the WCRP Japan Committee, are working on environmental conservation through tree planting. ACRP youth leaders are also actively working on environmental issues.

In addition, the China Committee on Religion and Peace (CCRP), which chairs the Working Commission on Development and Environment, one of the ACRP's task forces, holds an international seminar on environmental issues every year to strengthen the ACRP's commitment to environmental issues.

Ongoing and planned projects

- ① Climate change symposium, seminar
- ② Environmental improvement project area visit (China)
- ③ Tree planting project (Japan)

5) Advancement of Youth Leadership (SG 2, SG 3, SG 5)

The ACRP recognizes that "the youth are not only the hope of the future, but also the hope of the 'present'" and is committed to empowering youth leaders by the youth themselves who live in the present.

In particular, the Asia Pacific Interfaith Youth Network (APIYN) continues to hold the APIYN Camp, and subsidizes domestic tree-planting projects conducted by the youths of each national chapter.

Ongoing and planned projects

- ① Mangrove planting project in the Philippines
- ② Continuation of interfaith dialogue and cooperation activities by youth committees
- ③ Project to eliminate street children in the Philippines 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

3. Financial resources for ACRP Flagship Projects

It is pivotal to secure the financial resources to implement the afore-mentioned Flagship Projects. According to the budget projections for 2018 approved at the EC meeting convened in Bengaluru in India in April 2018, US\$ 50,000 is being appropriated for flagship projects, including research and other miscellaneous expenses. Since then up

until today, great efforts has been made by some ACRP national chapters, and at least US\$ 300,000 has been pledged to support our Flagship Projects for coming 5 years from 2021 to 2026. In addition, Tokyo secretariat launched internet fundraising campaign in August 2021.

In order to further secure the financial resources particularly for our Flagship Projects, it has to be stressed all those involved in these projects, need to be mindful and responsible for fundraising. This vitally important responsibility must be shared by all, who belong to the ACRP movement.

It is worthwhile noting that the revised Constitution of ACRP, which will be approved by the Ninth General Assembly of ACRP, stipulates the establishment of a *Board of Asian Trustees*, and one of the tasks given to this newly established body is to provide funding assistance for the activities of ACRP.

4. ACRP's Unique Role in Carrying Its Flagship Projects

ACRP uniquely possesses core strengths. They are: i) a multi-religious identity, ii) representative multi-religious structures and iii) multi-religious cooperation on multiple levels and with its 21 member nations representing over half of humanity. In addition, our organization is being equipped with valuable roles, which are: i) awareness raising, ii) education, iii) advocacy, iv) religious and spiritual care, v) humanitarian care, and vi) other service delivery to villages, towns and cities wherever required.

Utilizing ACRP's core strengths and valuable roles to best use in action, we have to fulfill our unique responsibility in building peace with justice and equality throughout the Asia-Pacific region. It is thus imperative for us to tackle those grave issues that exacerbate the well-being of people living in our region.

ACRP, like other *RfP* family organizations, has the necessary points of contact with governments, non-governmental organizations and faith-based organizations / communities, civil societies and academic institutions, etc. that can be used for facilitating programs/projects at every level. Likewise, we have the capacity of reaching a wider audience where we can demonstrate practical support for vulnerable persons, including children and women and those who are suffering from conflicts and confrontations in different parts of the Asia-Pacific region.

It must be underscored that '**connectedness**' is in fact the key concept of cooperation in

the entire process of planning and implementing flagship projects. In the contemporary world, we witness so many negative ramifications in our societies such as discrimination, vilification and serious abuses against the weak in different settings in the context of religions, ethnicities, cultures, languages, etc. Nevertheless, interfaith communities such as ACRP believe that there exist values, which are universally shared among all the peoples locally and globally in social, economic, cultural, political and academic spheres.

For achieving connectedness among peoples in our region for common good, ACRP must spare no efforts in being engaged in our flagship projects for a better Asia-Pacific.

What were argued in this Chapter are on-going, and therefore they are to be developed and elaborated further.

IX. ACRP in its Leadership and Institution

Asian Conference of Religions for Peace/ACRP (also known as *Religions for Peace Asia*) is the largest regional body of the religiously inspired people working for peace and interreligious harmony. Based on the tenets of truth, justice and human dignity, the members of ACRP are active in their home countries, in the Asia-Pacific region and across the world. Founded in 1976, it operates in tandem with the international body, *Religions for Peace*.

1. Composition

1) Co-Presidents:

Prof. M. Din Syamsuddin, (*Indonesia, Muslim*) *Moderator

Prof. Desmond Cahill (*Australia, Christian*) *Deputy-moderator

The Most Ven. Wonhaeng (*R.O. Korea, Buddhist*)

Ven. Guangfu Li (*China, Taoist*)

Ms. Lourdes Mastura (*Philippines, Muslim*)

The Most Rev. Nichiko Niwano (*Japan, Buddhist*)

Dr. Lillian Sison (*Ex-officio, Chair of APWFN, Catholic*)

Mr. N. Vasudevan (*India, Hindu*)

2) Honorary Presidents:

Dr. Sunggon Kim (*Republic of Korea, Buddhist*)

3) Treasurer:

Mr. Yang Deog Chang (*Republic of Korea, Catholic*)

4) Secretary-General:

Rev. Dr. Nobuhiro Nemoto (*Japan, Buddhist*)

5) Senior Advisor to Secretary General:

Rev. Masamichi Kamiya (*Japan, Buddhist*)

6) Associate Secretaries-General

Prof. Pablito Baybado, Jr. (*Philippines, Catholic*)

Dr. Deepali Bhanot (*India, Hindu*)

Ms. Ye Gao (*China, Taoist*)

Rev. Tae-sung Kim (*Republic of Korea, Buddhist*)

2. Institutions

1) Countries where national chapters function

Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea (South Korea), Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand

(Timor-Leste will be admitted as an ACRP member nation on an interim basis with the observer status in the 9th General Assembly.)

2) Working Commissions

At the EC meeting held at Bangalore India in April 2018, a proposal that the existing (standing) Commissions be replaced by ad-hoc based (not standing) *Working Commissions* was officially adopted. As a result, there exist the Working Commission on Reconciliation and Security, Working Commission on Human Rights and Welfare, Working Commission of Peace Education and Peace Research and Working Commission on Development and Environment. And new Working Commissions are to be established in accordance with necessities arise.

The member chapters of the Working Commission on Reconciliation and Security are those of Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka (chaired by Pakistan).

The member chapters of the Working Commission on Human Rights and Welfare are those of Australia, China, India and Indonesia (chaired by Indonesia).

The member chapters of the Working Commission on Peace Education and Peace Research are those of Bangladeshi, Cambodia, Iraq, Mongolia, Nepal, Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka (chaired by R.O. of Korea).

The member chapters of the Working Commission on Development and Environment are those of China, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and APWFN (chaired by China).

3) Seoul Peace Education Center (SPEC)

Seoul Peace Education Center (known as SPEC) was established in 1986 at the Third ACRP Assembly held in Seoul. The SPEC is an ACRP’s essential body so that ACRP can contribute to peace educations. The Center was founded to strengthen ACRP’s research and educational effort for peace, preferably by setting up to work out appropriate materials to be make available to ACRP related religious organizations, and also to raise concern for peace by setting up a Peace Research Institute or a study committee under the auspicious of a national chapter in each country.

With the theme of ‘Peace and Religious Youth Leaders,’ the SPEC supports inter-religious youth leaders’ programs such as ‘*Religions for Peace Asia Interfaith Youth Peace Camp*,’ ‘*Religious Youth Peace School*’ and ‘*Peace Pilgrimage*.’

4) Religions for Peace Global Network



3. Past General Assemblies

1) **The 1st ACRP General Assembly** was held in Singapore in November 1976, and

hosted around 300 participants from 17 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The theme of the Assembly was *Peace through Religion*. A resolution on Indochinese Refugees Relief was adopted at the Assembly, and immediately thereafter, ACRP engaged in relief operations for the refugees in collaboration with *RfP* International. The resulting Boat People's Project caught the attention of international media.

- 2) With the theme of *Religions in Action for Peace*, **the 2nd General Assembly** was convened at New Delhi, India in November 1981 with approximately 200 participants from 16 Asia-Pacific countries in attendance. A delegation from the People's Republic of China participated for the first time in an ACRP Assembly. The Assembly adopted the resolution on the establishment of ACRP *Human Rights Center* in New Delhi, India to demonstrate the ACRP's dedication to the protection of human rights in the region.
- 3) **At the 3rd General Assembly**, over 400 participants from 22 countries in Asia and the Pacific gathered in Seoul, the Republic of Korea in June 1986. The Assembly theme was *Promotion of Human Dignity and Humanization*. Since the unification of the Korean Peninsula was the foremost concern of the participants, the Assembly became a platform to help initiate building a bridge of peace and reconciliation over the two Koreas. This Assembly saw the establishment of the Seoul Peace Education Center, a fitting commemoration to the 10th anniversary of the founding of ACRP.
- 4) **The 4th General Assembly** was convened at Kathmandu, Nepal in October 1991 with the theme of *Asian Religions Towards 21st Century*. Over 300 participants from 21 countries across Asia and the Pacific attended the Assembly. One of the issues discussed during the Assembly was the role of religion as society enters the 21st century, in view of the demise of the Cold War. A delegation from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea attended an ACRP Assembly for the first time.
- 5) With the theme of *Our Asian Neighborhood*, **the 5th General Assembly** was held at Ayutthaya, Thailand in October 1996. About 270 participants from 25 countries in Asia and the Pacific participated in the Assembly, which commemorated the ACRP's 20th anniversary. During the Assembly, the Youth Committee showed its sympathy for the Thai people by collecting US \$1,000 in relief funds for victims of a severe flood that had occurred in the region.
- 6) At Yogyakarta, Indonesia in June 2002, **the 6th General Assembly** was host to approximately 300 participants from 20 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The theme of the Assembly was *Asia, the Reconciler*. The reality and spirituality of Asia were deeply reflected in the Assembly, which focused its dialogue on the topic of

civilization rather than the *clash of civilizations*. The participants viewed that Asian spirituality was a force, which would make people one in spite of their diverse way of expressing the higher nature of humanity.

- 7) Around 400 participants from 24 countries in Asia and the Pacific attended **the 7th General Assembly**, which was held in Manila, the Philippines in October 2008. The Assembly theme was *Peacemaking in Asia*. Prior to the Assembly, the Religious Youth Summit, attended by Asian religious youth leaders, was convened at Mindanao and issued *An Urgent Appeal for Peace in Mindanao*. At this Assembly, the group was rebranded as *Religions for Peace Asia*.
- 8) **The 8th General Assembly** was convened at Incheon, the Republic of Korea in August 2014 with the theme of *Unity and Harmony in Asia*. Over 450 participants from 26 countries in Asia and the Pacific participated in the Assembly, where a Special Workshop on the Reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula took place. The Workshop's key achievement was the issuing of the *Peace Declaration of Korean Peninsula*. The number of *RfP* Asia chapters reached 20 with the addition of the Malaysia and Myanmar chapters.

X. Brief Account for Cultural Performance

Performance for Purification, (*Okiyome no Mai*) with Japanese Drums

Ms. Masako Izumo



At the age of 16, Ms. Izumo was involved in a life-and-death bus accident that left her with severe damage to her spine and pelvis, but with the support of many people, she miraculously recovered. In the process of this recovery, she experienced a world beyond human knowledge. While studying clinical psychology and meditation, she came into contact with a wisdom of the body and entered the world of dance. While handing down the ancient art of Shinto dance (miyamai), she also creates dances that reflect Japan's unique view of nature, which finds beauty in all things and all life.

<http://www.wasshoi-japan.com>

Japanese Drum

Mr. Toen Hibiki



Mr. Hibiki studied under a director Mr. Ryota Matsunaga, and learned the basics of being a stage performer. After working as a member of the taiko drumming group "Kodo," he became independent as a soloist. He specializes in improvisation, and has established a unique worldview of Japanese drum. At the same time, his creative and challenging approach has led him to collaborate with a variety of artists including ceramicists, Bunraku puppeteers, choreographers, Japanese Noh performers, dancers, and musicians to explore the musical possibilities and expressions of Japanese drum. He has performed in shrines and temples, in nature, and in many other places around the world. He also launched various projects and has been performing overseas.

<https://t-hibiki.com/>

Shamisen (Japanese guitar)

Mr. Nobuto Yamanaka

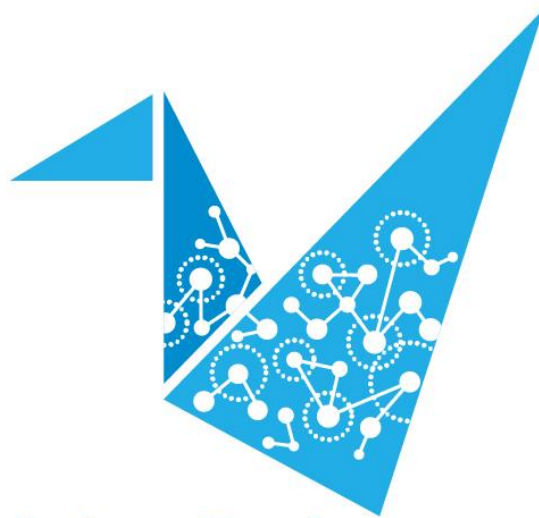


Mr. Yamanaka began training as an apprentice for four years with Tsugaru shamisen player Mr. Senri Yamada at his age of 15. At the Tsugaru Shamisen World Tournament, he won the Class A individual competition for three consecutive years and was inducted into the Hall of Fame. He has performed in a total of 38 countries and regions overseas. He received the Saitama Global Award in 2009. He received the Kitamoto City Cultural Encouragement Award in 2008. He is a teacher of the Yamada Senri School of Tsugaru Shamisen.

Lecturer at Senszoku College of Music. Tourism ambassador of Kazo City. Kitamoto City Tourism Ambassador. And Tourism Ambassador of Konosu. Saitama Goodwill Ambassador.

<http://nobu483-1000.sakura.ne.jp/>

Memo Page



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Religions for Peace**

**9th General Assembly
Tokyo**