



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.



Second Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue: *Strengthening trust and embracing hope for our common future*

Rome, 19-21 June 2025

Programme with Speakers

Version 17 June 2025

Panel composition aims to reflect the diversity of the Conference delegates in terms of religion or belief, profession, geopolitical group, and age. Panels aim for gender parity.

Day 1: Thursday, 19 June 2025

08:00 – 12:00

Registration

(Chamber of Deputies, Palazzo Montecitorio - Main Entrance)

Pre-Conference sessions (limited seating)

09:30 – 11:00

Thematic working session 1

Promoting peaceful coexistence

(Chamber of Deputies, Aula dei Gruppi Parlamentari)

Moderator:

- **Ms. Deepika Singh**, Deputy Secretary General of Religions for Peace

Panellists:

- **Ms. Mónika Bartos**, Member of the National Assembly, Hungary
- **Mr. Abdulla Almanai**, Executive Director, King Hamad Global Centre for Coexistence and Tolerance (Bahrain)
- **Professor Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh Ahluwalia OBE KSG**, Spiritual Leader and Chair, Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha; Co-President and Trustee, Religions for Peace International
- **Ms. Radi Lamia**, Founding President, Foundation Mémoires pour l'Avenir (Morocco)
- **Mr. Issa Toha Shamsou**, Founder and Executive Director, African Students for Interfaith Tolerance (Ghana)

Respondents:

- **Dr. Leo Igwe**, Board Member, Humanists International
- **Ms. Rachel Forster**, Search for Common Ground

11:00 – 11:15

Coffee break

(Chamber of Deputies, Aula dei Gruppi parlamentari)

11:30 – 13:00

Thematic working session 2

*Lessons from the Marrakesh Declaration (2016): Upholding the rights of religious minorities
(Chamber of Deputies, Aula dei Gruppi Parlamentari)*

Organized by the IPU with support from Religions for Peace, the Abu Dhabi Peace Forum and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers.

Moderator:

- **Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi**, Executive Director, the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom Commissioner

Panellists:

- **Sheikh Al-Mahfoudh Bin Bayyah**, Abu Dhabi Forum for Peace
- **Dr. Katherine Marshall**, Senior Fellow, the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Board Member of the G20 Interfaith Forum
- **Mr. Robert Amuma Madubi**, Founder of Badili Tana Initiative (Kenya)

Respondents:

- **Ms. Nejat Mehdi Oumer**, Women and Youth Focal Person, The Ethiopian Interfaith Forum for Development, Dialogue and Action

14:30 – 15:30

Opening Ceremony

(Chamber of Deputies, Palazzo Montecitorio – Plenary Hall)

Speakers:

- **Mr. Lorenzo Fontana**, President of the Chamber of Deputies, Italy
- **Mr. Ignazio La Russa**, President of the Senate, Italy
- **Dr. Tulia Ackson**, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Speaker of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania
- **Dr. Francis Kuria**, Secretary General of Religions for Peace
- **The Most Reverend Rino Fisichella**, Archbishop, Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Responsible for the 2025 Jubilee, Vatican
- **Mr. Pier Ferdinando Casini**, Senator, Honorary President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, President of the Italian IPU Group

Family Photo

(Chamber of Deputies, Palazzo Montecitorio – Plenary Hall)

15:30 – 16:00

Coffee break

16:00 – 18:00

High-level panel

*Countering hatred based on religion or belief: deescalating polarisation, preventing dehumanisation and religious weaponisation
(Chamber of Deputies, Palazzo Montecitorio – Plenary Hall)*

Co-Moderators:

- **Mr. Maurizio Lupi**, Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Italy, Vice President of the Italian IPU Group
- **Ms. Şafak Pavey**, Special Envoy, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, former Deputy Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye

Panellists:

- **His Eminence Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad (H. Em)**, Prefect of the Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue
- **Dr. Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi**, Chairman of the Manara Center for Coexistence and Dialogue and Member of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates
- **Rabbi David Rosen**, Chief Rabbi; Co-President, Religions for Peace

- **Archbishop Angaelos**, Coptic Orthodox Archbishop of London
- **Imam Yahyâ S.Y. Pallavicini**, Chairman of the European Muslim Leaders' Majlis (EULEMA); Member of the European Council of Religious Leaders - Religions for Peace
- **Dr. Nazila Ghanea**, UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief and Professor of International Human Rights Law at Oxford University
- **Ms. Uswatun Hasanah**, Eco Bhinneka Surakarta (Indonesia - *youth representative*)

Evening at the disposal of the delegates

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Day 2: Friday, 20 June 2025

08:30 – 12:30

Registration

(Chamber of Deputies, Palazzo Montecitorio - Main Entrance)

09:00 – 12:30

14:00 – 17:00

General Debate

Parliamentarians in dialogue with religion and belief: Strengthening trust and embracing hope for our common future

(Chamber of Deputies, Palazzo Montecitorio – Plenary Hall)

The General Debate will be chaired by IPU Honorary President Senator Pier Ferdinando Casini of Italy and IPU President, Dr. Tulia Ackson.

- Opening remarks:
- **Ambassador Simona-Mirela Miculescu** (Romania), President of the 42nd UNESCO General Conference
 - **Mr. Miguel Moratinos**, High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations; former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, former Member of Parliament of Spain
 - **Sayyed Jawad El Khoei**, Secretary-General of the Al-Khoei Institute (Iraq)
 - **Archbishop Ioannes Tsafaridis**, Archbishop of Zambia and Mozambique, Orthodox Archdiocese of Zambia and Mozambique
 - *Youth representative*

09:30 – 10:45

Panel 1

Advancing inclusive societies, ensuring freedom of religion or belief
(Chamber of Deputies, Aula dei Gruppi parlamentari)

Moderator:

- **Ms. Tanya Awad Ghorra**, Senior Trainer on Diversity and Inclusive Citizenship and Board Member at Adyan Foundation (Lebanon)

Panellists:

- **Ms. Fernanda San Martín Carrasco**, Director of the International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief, former member of Parliament of Bolivia
- **Professor Ahmed Shaheed**, Professor of International Human Rights Law in the School of Law and Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex, former UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief
- **Rabbi David Saperstein**, Senior Advisor for Policy, Union for Reform Judaism; former Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, US Department of State
- **Ms. Bani Dugal**, Representative to the UN for the Baha'i International Community; Co-President, Religions for Peace
- **Dr. Michael Wiener**, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

- Respondents:
- **Dr. Susan Kerr**, Senior Advisor on Freedom of Religion or Belief, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights – UK
 - **Mr. Honelegn Berhanu Tadesse**, Project Coordinator, Tearfund Ethiopia (*youth representative*)

10:45 – 11:15 **Coffee break**

11:15 – 12:30 **Panel 2**
Promoting ethical leadership at all levels, investing in education for peace (Chamber of Deputies, Aula dei Gruppi parlamentari)

Moderator: - **Dr. Fadi Daou**, Executive Director of Globethics

- Panellists:
- **Dame Karen Bradley**, Member of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom
 - **Ambassador Simona-Mirela Miculescu**, President of the 42nd UNESCO General Conference
 - **Dr. Ibrahim Negm**, Senior Advisor to the Grand Mufti of Egypt, Secretary General of the General Secretariat for Fatwa Authorities Worldwide
 - **Dr. Chinmay Pandya**, Chairperson, South Asian Institute of Peace and Reconciliation, Pro Vice-Chancellor at the Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya (India)
 - **Ms. Joy Muthoni Gitau**, Executive Director, Amani Communities Africa (*youth representative*)

- Respondents:
- **Sayyed Jawad El Khoei**, Secretary-General of the Al-Khoei Institute (Iraq)
 - **Mr. Elias Szczytnicki**, Secretary General & Regional Director, Religions for Peace - Latin America and the Caribbean

12:30 – 14:00 **Side Event** (English only)
Religious literacy for parliamentarians (closed session)
(Chamber of Deputies, Sala del Mappamondo)

12:30 – 14:00 **Buffet Lunch**
(Chamber of Deputies, Sala della regina, Corridoio dei busti, Sala della lupa)

14:00 – 15:15 **Panel 3**
Interfaith dialogue for the inclusion of women in public life (Chamber of Deputies, Aula dei Gruppi parlamentari)

Moderator: - **Ms. Nihal Saad**, Director, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

- Panellists:
- **Ms. Cynthia López Castro**, Senator of Mexico, President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians
 - **Ms. Aminatou Ngangoube**, Senator, Cameroon
 - **Professor Jagbir Jhutti-Johal**, Professor of Sikh Studies, co-founder of the Women's Faith Forum; member of the ODIHR Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief
 - **Dr. Thiago Alves Pinto**, Lecturer in Legal Studies and Diplomatic Studies, Director of Studies in Religion and Theology, Oxford University
 - **Ms. Stella Attah**, Peacebuilding Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, Tearfund – Nigeria (*youth representative*)

- Respondent:
- **Professor Michael Driessen**, Director of the Rome Summer Seminars, John Cabot University

15:45 – 17:15

Panel 4

*Fostering solidarity and action for people in vulnerable situations
(Chamber of Deputies, Aula dei Gruppi parlamentari)*

Moderator:

- **Ms. Claire Thomas**, Executive Director of Minority Rights Group

Panellists:

- **Mr. Gerardo Fernández Noroña**, President of the Senate of Mexico
- **Dr. Katherine Marshall**, Senior Fellow, the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Board Member of the G20 Interfaith Forum
- **Ms. Michèle Bowe**, Head of the Representative Office of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the State of Palestine
- **Mr. Khushwant Singh**, Head of Secretariat, International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development
- **Priestess Beatriz Schulthess**, President, Indigenous Peoples Ancestral Spiritual Council (Costa Rica) and member of the UNHCR-Religions for Peace Multi-religious Council of Leaders

Respondents:

- **Mr. Libasut Taqwa**, Research and Advocacy Officer, the Wahid Foundation (Indonesia – *youth representative*)

17:30 – 18:30

Closing ceremony

(Chamber of Deputies, Palazzo Montecitorio – Plenary Hall)

Speakers:

- **Mr. Martin Chungong**, IPU Secretary General
- Presentation of reports from each of the thematic panels
- Adoption of the Rome Communiqué
- Concluding remarks by the IPU President, **Dr. Tulia Ackson**
- Concluding remarks by **Senator Pier Ferdinando Casini** on behalf of the Host Parliament

Evening at the disposal of the delegates

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Day 3: Saturday, 21 June 2025

07:45

Transfer from Palazzo Montecitorio to Vatican City

10:00 – 11:00

Audience with Pope Leo XIV
(Hall of Benedictions)

11:00 – 12:00

Passing through the Holy Door
(Saint Peter's Basilica)

11:00 – 12:30

Transfer from Vatican City to Palazzo Montecitorio