



Press Release

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

10th March 2012

For Immediate Release

Formal announcement of the Upcoming Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) Fourth Forum¹, to be held in Dar es Salaam Tanzania on the 16th - 18th June 2012

Forum Theme: Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change.

As organizers of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) Fourth Forum, we wish to formally announce the GNRC Fourth Forum to be held here in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from the 16th to 18th June 2012.

This is the first time in the history of GNRC that the Forum is held outside of Europe and Japan. It is meant to coincide with the 16th June (1976) anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre — a day when hundreds of courageous children, armed with nothing but their fragile bodies, were ruthlessly gunned down by the Apartheid Regime of South Africa for demanding better education and livelihoods — against imposed poverty.

The theme of the Fourth Forum is: ***Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change.*** and will bring together over three hundred (300) participants including representatives from the United Nations and its agencies, the African Union and other multi-lateral institutions, civil society organizations, government officials, children from around the world and religious communities comprising of Bahais, Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Indigenous traditionalists, Shintoists and Jews.

¹ GNRC holds a Forum every four years. Previous Forums include GNRC First Forum (Tokyo, Japan, 2000), GNRC Second Forum (Geneva, Switzerland, 2004) and GNRC Third Forum (Hiroshima, Japan, 2008).

The Global Network of Religions for Children is the only global-scale interfaith network of organizations and individuals specifically dedicated to securing the rights and well-being of children. Our members come from all of the world's major religions and many other spiritual traditions who share a commitment to making the world a place where every child can enjoy not only the right to survive, but also to thrive, making positive contributions of his or her own to a world of peace and dignity for all.

At the GNRC Fourth Forum, we will discuss the challenges of poverty and its devastating effects on children and come up with strategies to address it. This will be based on the enormous potential of our diverse religions and faiths in fighting poverty – the **moral, spiritual and social assets** that we possess.

Tragically, children account to a large number of poverty statistics both in developing and developed countries. It is in this regard that we aim to focus on three main causes of poverty during the Forum — factors that have conspired to cause a contrasting situation of unpredicted global economic growth namely;

- **Corruption and Poor Governance**
- **War and Violence**
- **Unequal Distribution of Resources**

Based on GNRC's commitment to ensuring children's rights to participate and be heard in all matters affecting them as grounded in Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Fourth Forum will focus on poverty and the ethical imperative that no child lives in poverty hence offering an opportunity for children to:

- Bring up their needs and ideas for action through an engaging dialogue among themselves and with senior religious leaders, political and social leaders
- Demonstrate their commitment and capacity to lead in the implementation of GNRC's initiative on poverty together with adults
- Further develop their knowledge and understanding of the world's key challenges, empowering them to become responsible global citizens and
- Be encouraged to participate in peer-to-peer education in their communities

Last but not least, a unique initiative on poverty will be announced, encompassing contributions from various partners that will foster respect for a human development framework based on common global ethic. This will include a pledge by religious leaders to fully engage their faith communities in the fight against child poverty by devoting their traditions to the shared goal of **acting, enriching and inspiring** for change.

Thank you —

END

Sincerely,

GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee

Religious Leaders and Organizing Committee Members:

- 1) Dr. Mustafa Y Ali (Kenya) – Organizing Committee Chairperson
- 2) Abubakar F. Kabwogi (Tanzania) – Secretary General of the Fourth Forum
- 3) Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne (Sri Lanka) – GNRC Coordinator for South Asia
- 4) Ms. Marta Palma (Switzerland) – GNRC Europe Coordinator
- 5) Ms. Mercedes Roman (Equador) – GNRC Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean
- 6) Rev. Archimandrite Prof. Dr. Qais Sadiq (Jordan) – Coordinator for Arab States
- 7) Evi Guggenheim Shbeta (Israel) – GNRC Coordinator for Israel
- 8) Stephen Hanmer (United States of America) – Civil Society and parliamentary Engagement Specialist, UNICEF in New York
- 9) Mr. Filipe Furuma (Mozambique) – Policy Officer, NGOs and Economic Development – African Union
- 10) Mr. Atsushi Iwasaki (Japan) – GNRC Secretary General
- 11) Ms. Agneta Ucko (Switzerland) – Director, GNRC Geneva office
- 12) Ms. Meg Gardinier – Director, *Day of Prayer and Action for Children*
- 13) Sr. Jean Pruitt, Chair, Local Hosting Committee
- 14) Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Co-Patron
- 15) Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini, Co-Patron

For further Information please contact:

Mr. Abubakar F. Kabwogi
GNRC Fourth Forum Secretariat
P.O. Box 1221 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Tel: +255 658 131 544
Fax: +255(22)2850447
Email: gncrfourthforumsecretariat@gnrc.net
mailfourthforumsecretariat@gnrc.net
Website: www.gnrc.net