

Inspire

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



GNRC Fourth Forum Newsletter

Issue No. 3

February 2012

Interfaith Cooperation for a Better World for Children

New Hope in the Fight Against Child Poverty: Rev. Keishi Miyamoto

By GNRC Fourth Forum Newsletter Team



the world's major faiths, religious and spiritual traditions.

"I would like to express my gratitude to UNICEF, the African Council of Religious Leaders—*Religions for Peace* and the Norwegian Church Aid for the support that they are already providing to the Forum"

humanity.

Apart from the Fourth Forum, the media representatives expressed interest in the ongoing development of Arigatou's other initiatives such as *Learning to Live Together* and the *World Day of Prayer and Action for Children* and their linkages to the GNRC Fourth Forum. A number of articles on the Fourth Forum have already been published in the Japanese Media. (See the pages on this below)

The President of Arigatou International, Rev. Keishi Miyamoto has expressed confidence that the GNRC initiative against child poverty expected to emerge from the upcoming GNRC Fourth Forum will positively impact children around the world.

GNRC members, religious leaders and their communities and partners are expected to launch a new broad-based partnership to eliminate child poverty. Rev. Miyamoto was speaking in Tokyo, Japan at a press briefing on the Fourth Forum.

The Forum, whose theme is *Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change.* is expected to attract a cross-section of religious leaders from

The press briefing was attended by reporters from several of Japan's leading national and regional papers and news services.

In his remarks, Rev. Miyamoto emphasized the significance of the Forum being held for the first time in Africa and organized by GNRC Africa. He expressed his gratitude to UNICEF, the African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions for Peace* and Norwegian Church Aid for their support for the Forum.

Rev. Miyamoto also issued a strong call for greater inter-religious cooperation to address the many problems that children face worldwide, while urging the media representatives to convey to their audiences the great potential that inter-faith cooperation has for finding solutions for the problems facing

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

The GNRC Fourth Forum will be held from 16th to 18th June this year in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and will bring together more than three hundred participants representing different faith groups, representatives from the United Nations and its agencies, the African Union and other multilateral institutions, civil society organizations, government officials and children from around the world.

Recent Japanese Media Highlights of the GNRC Fourth Forum:



すべての子どもたちのために

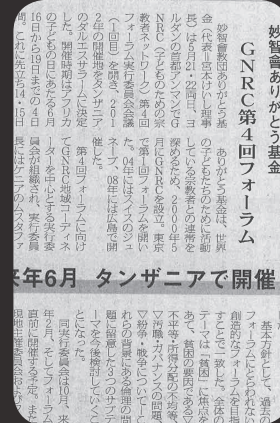
妙智會は平和実現に向けて歩み続けます



子どもたちのための国際ネットワーク
GNRC IV 6月16日~18日
アフリカ・タンザニア

テーマ「貧困をなくし、子どもたちを豊かにする」

世界中に暮らす子供たちを助ける、それは我々の共通の願いです。世界には、貧困に苦しむ子供たちが数多く存在しています。彼らは教育を受ける権利を、そして、その権利を享受する権利を、失っている可能性があります。GNRCは「子どもたちのための国際ネットワーク」を通じて、世界の隅々まで子供たちのために活動を行っています。GNRC第4回フォーラムは、6月16日から18日まで、アフリカのタンザニア・ダルエスサラームで開催されます。このフォーラムは、多くの国で実施された



'The Harbour of Peace' – Dar es Salaam: GNRC's Fourth Forum Venue City

By Hawa Noor

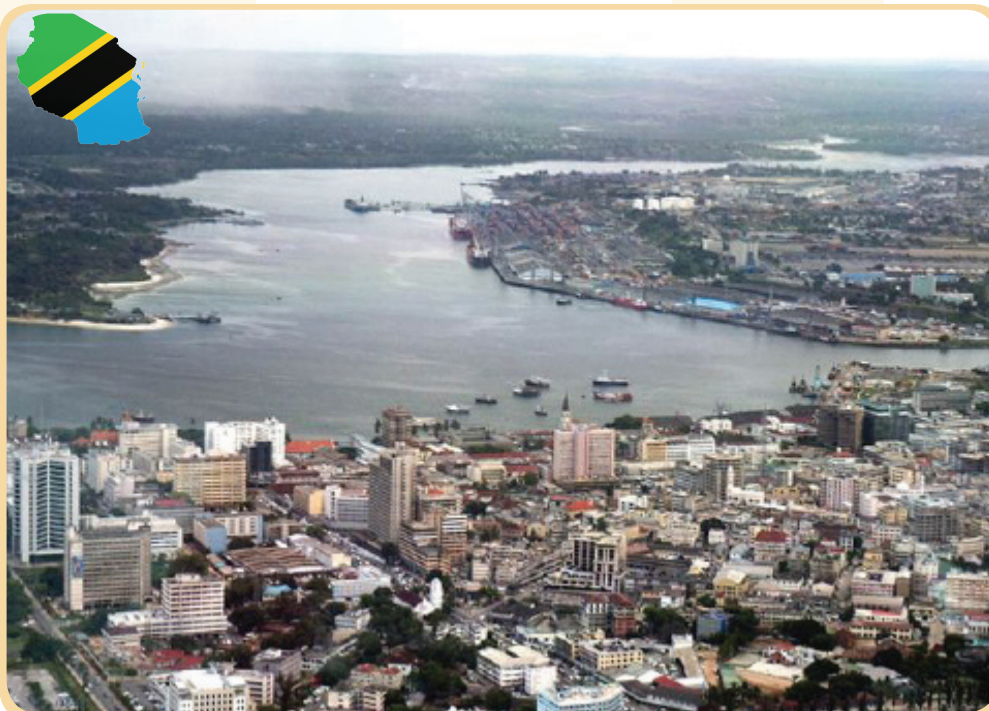
Once upon a time just before Sultan Majid Bin Seyyid of Zanzibar founded a new city in 1862, which he named Bandar-as-Salaam, there existed a fishing village on the periphery of the coast of Tanzania famously known as Mzizima – which in Swahili means 'healthy town.' Mzizima's history dates back to the time when the Barawa people started to settle and cultivate the area around Mbwa Maji, Magogoni, Mjimwema, Gezaulole and Kibonde Maji Mbagara. The village then slowly became what is today's Dar es Salaam, meaning: the 'Harbour of Peace' or 'Haven of Peace' that resulted from a mix-up of the Arabic words 'Dar' for house and 'Bandar' for harbor.

After the Sultan's death in 1870, the town fell into decline but a few years later, its growth was facilitated by its role as the administrative and commercial centre of German East Africa and industrial expansion resulting from the construction of the Central Railway line in the early 1900s.

As evidenced in its architecture, present day Dar es Salaam has been influenced by a myriad of Sultans, Germans and the British and is now Tanzania's largest city with a population of over three million people, great atmosphere, mix of African, Islamic and South Asian influences, picturesque harbour, beaches and bustling markets.

Its religious diversity comprises of Christians, Muslims and other minorities who peacefully co-exist in a city that is still the seat of most government administration and one of East Africa's most important port and trading center.

The city's natural nearly landlocked harbour is the outlet for most of mainland Tanzania's agricultural and mineral exports and serves the nearby land-locked countries of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia and Malawi.





Dar es Salaam is a welcoming multicultural city, pleasant and peaceful– an ideal place that boasts international cuisine with vibrant Swahili culture - the city that has become a popular tourist destination. GNRC looks forward to hosting the GNRC Fourth Forum!

Photos: GNRC Fourth Forum Archive

Q & A with the Chairman of the GNRC Fourth Forum Organization Committee, Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali

By GNRC Fourth Forum Newsletter Team



Q. Where are we at with the preparations of the Forum?

A. We are having the Third GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 10th – 11th March to finalize all processes and documents related to the Forum. Almost all aspects of the Forum preparation are complete. A dedicated Fourth Forum team led by the Secretary General Mr. Abubakar F. Kabwogi is working hard and is ahead of time in their preparations so far. The Local Hosting Committee chaired by Sr. Jean Pruitt is doing a tremendous job to ensure that all conference participants will experience the extraordinary hospitality of the people of Tanzania.

Q. What should the participants and children at the Forum expect?

A. At the Fourth Forum, we will launch a broad-based global-scale poverty initiative. The Forum Organizing Committee is in the process of scrutinizing the various aspects of the Forum and the envisaged initiative.

Q. Have all invitees, senior religious leaders and distinguished guests confirmed attendance?

A. Most invitees have confirmed participation. This includes children, senior religious leaders, influential leaders and speakers from the United Nations, UNICEF, the African Union, governments and grassroots organizations.

Q. What is the level of cooperation with the partners invited to the forum?

A. There has been excellent response from our traditional partners. UNICEF, other United Nations agencies, Norwegian Church Aid, the African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions for Peace* and others are partnering with GNRC Fourth Forum.

Q. What is the role of children in the

whole process, and how are they engaged in the forum?

A. As is customary with all GNRC Forums, children will fully participate as equals alongside adults. In this case, forty (40) children from around the world will participate in the Children's Pre-meeting to take place on 14th and 15th June. They will prepare themselves with the help of expert facilitation in order to fully and effectively participate in the Fourth Forum.

Q. Any other important points to add?

A. We look forward to the Fourth Forum, taking place for the first time in the South. Confirmed attendance at the Forum from leading lights such as former President of Mozambique H.E. Joachim Chissano, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Dr. Stephen Lewis, Ms. Martha Santos Pais, Sr. Janice Mc Laughlin, Dr. Anis Ahmad, Archbishop Dr. John Onaiyekan, Bishop Method Kilaini and many others, is testimony of the interest such people attach to the issue of the eradication of child poverty.

Photo: GNRC Africa



Faith Communities and Partners Target Rehabilitation of Ex-Child Soldiers Through a National Platform

By GNRC Fourth Forum Newsletter Team

A broad-based partnership to address the plight of ex-child soldiers is being mooted in Uganda. This follows a consultative meeting of stakeholders of issues of child soldier Demobilization, Disintegration and Re-integration (DDR) in Uganda that comprised of religious leaders, the private sector, government, non-governmental organizations, learning institutions and the former child soldiers.

“Due to the effects of the war in them, many child soldiers see aggression as the only way of expressing their anger whereas parents and guardians while expressing their frustrations end up insulting them”

The African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions for Peace* (ACRL—RfP), the Goldin Institute, GNRC Africa, Inter-religious Council of Uganda, religious leaders and faith communities met with other stakeholders in Kampala and in the North Western Uganda where the violent conflict affected large portions of populations, especially children.

The war has negatively affected children, many now young adults. Due to the effects of the war, many see aggression as the only way of expressing their anger. In response to this, parents and guardians express their frustrations by insulting and abandoning them.

Long term and sustainable solutions were suggested. Education for the younger ex-child soldiers, income generation activities, for the older ones to sustain themselves and learn-

ing to live together are some of the issue that require urgent attention.

The faith communities and stakeholders supported the idea of establishing a national platform for ex-child soldiers to coordinate their re-integration into the mainstream of the Ugandan society. Among some of the roles the national platform will play include the following:

- Advocating for policy formulation
- In collaboration with local elders, mediating between warring factions in addressing the challenging issues of land and its contribution to conflict
- Reconciling the community
- Promoting education and offering psychosocial support to traumatized children and
- Assisting and encouraging the community to engage in income generating activities such as agriculture

The African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions for Peace* (ACRL—RfP), GNRC Africa and the Goldin Institute are facilitating religious leaders and other stakeholders to realize a dedicated platform that focuses on the plight of ex-child combatants, and those affected by conflict.

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

Photo: ACRL—RfP

Africa welcomes the GNRC Fourth Forum!

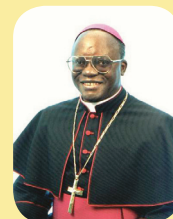
The GNRC Fourth Forum Local Hosting Committee that includes Religious Leaders and Faith Institutions is set to ensure the successful hosting of the Forum - that is coming to Africa for the first time. It consists of Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC), Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT), Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), UNICEF, Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, Norwegian Church Aid and others. Two senior and prominent personalities in Tanzania, H.E. Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim and His Grace Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini serve as the Patrons.

Co-Patrons of the Local Hosting Committee:



His Excellency Ambassador Salim A. Salim is the most seasoned African Diplomat. Currently, he serves as the Chairman of the board of Trustees of the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation and Chancellor of the Hubert Kairuki Memorial University.

His Grace Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini is the Auxiliary Bishop of Bukoba Tanzania and a member of the Committee of the Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children.



Organizing Committee Members:

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali – The Chairman of the Organizing Committee. He is the Secretary General of the African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL—RfP) and the Africa Representative of the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP). He is also the GNRC African Coordinator



Sr. Jean Pruitt, an American Maryknoll Sister, is the Chairperson of the local hosting committee. She has founded a number of organizations in Tanzania including the Tanzania Mozambique Friendship Association (TAMOFa) and the Dogodogo Centre (Tanzania's leading street children centre).



Mr. Abukari F. Kabwogi is the Secretary General of the Fourth Forum. With over 15 years' experience in Inter-religious co-operation work., he is currently the RfP Secretary General's Special Envoy to OIC and ICESCO.

Ms. Marta Palma is currently the advisor on Children's Issues to the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches. She studied sociology, social work and theology and is currently working on a Ph.D. in Theology with the San Francisco Theological Seminary.



Mercedes Roman is an Ecuadorian sociologist who has dedicated her work and life to women and children's rights. She has a broad academic background with studies in anthropology, philosophy and sociology of religion.



Rev. Archimandrite Prof. Dr. Qais Sadiq is founder and President of the Ecumenical Studies Center and the Orthodox Youth Fellowship, in Jordan, a lecturer and a counselor. He is also a Member of the Higher Jordanian National Committee for Youth and Child Strategy (2003-2014).

Evi Guggenheim Shbeta is a Psychotherapist. She became involved, from 1977, in the founding group of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam: the region's only joint Jewish-Palestinian multi-faith intentional community.



Dr. Vinya S. Ariyaratne is Executive Director of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, and Member of the Board, Child Protection Authority of Sri Lanka. He is a physician specialized in community medicine/public health.



Stephen Hanmer is UNICEF's Civil Society and Parliamentary engagement Specialist. He is based in New York, USA.

Mr. Filipe Furuma is the Policy Officer, NGOs and Economic Development of the African Union.



Mr. Stephen Lewis to Deliver a Keynote Address at the GNRC Fourth Forum

By GNRC Fourth Forum Newsletter Team

Mr. Stephen Lewis is the co-founder and co-director of AIDS-Free World: (www.aidsfreeworld.org) an international advocacy organization that works to promote more urgent and effective global responses to HIV/AIDS.



Stephen Lewis' work with the United Nations spanned more than two decades. He was the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa from June 2001 until the end of 2006. From 1995 to 1999, Mr. Lewis was the UNICEF Deputy Executive Director at the organiza-

tion's global headquarters in New York. From 1984 through 1988, he was Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations.

In addition to his work with AIDS-Free World, Mr. Lewis is a distinguished visiting Professor at Ryerson University in Toronto. He also serves as a commissioner for the Global Commission on HIV/AIDS and the Law, created by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with the support of the joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

Mr. Lewis serves as the board chair of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, in Canada. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Clinton Health Access Initiative and Emeritus Board Member of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative.

Mr. Lewis holds 34 honorary degrees from Canadian universities. In June 2010, he received an honorary degree from Dartmouth College. Mr. Lewis was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada, Canada's highest honour for lifetime achievement, in 2003. In 2007, King Letsie III, The monarch of the Kingdom of Lesotho (a mountainous country in Southern Africa) invested Mr. Lewis as Knight Commander of the Most Dignified Order of Moshoeshoe. The order is named for the founder of Lesotho. The knighthood is the country's highest honour.

Photos: GNRC Fourth Forum Archive

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