



9, 10 and 11 May 2017 / Panama City, Panama

# The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum **#EndChildViolence**

**Ending Violence Against Children:  
Faith Communities in Action**

[community.arigatouinternational.org](http://community.arigatouinternational.org)

 **ARIGATOU** | GNRC  
INTERNATIONAL  
*All for Children*



# Building a Better World for Children

## About **Us**

The GNRC is a global-scale interfaith network of organizations and individuals specifically dedicated to securing the rights and well-being of children everywhere. GNRC members come from all of the world's major religions and many other spiritual traditions.

Together, the GNRC is committed to creating a world where every girl and boy

can grow up safe and sound—a world where every child has the chance to shine.

The GNRC is one of the four main initiatives of Arigatou International, a faith-based non-profit organization. Arigatou International works under the motto of "All for Children," bringing together people from all walks of life to build a better world for children.



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**"The Buddha stated that all people are his children. This means there is no distinction between my child and another's child: they are all children of Buddha. I consider all children around the world to be my own children and grandchildren, as well. We have to create a peaceful world for our very own children."**

**Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto**

The Reverend Takeyasu Miyamoto (1917-2015), the Leader of Myochikai and the founder of Arigatou International, was the driving force behind the inauguration of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC). His accomplishments in bringing together people of different faiths from around the world to "make a contribution from the religious perspective to the promotion of child rights in the 21<sup>st</sup> century" stand as a memorial to his life of service to the very youngest members of the global family. The passing of Rev. Miyamoto in March 2015 was mourned by people around the world, and his memory is honored today by all who pray and work to build a better world for children.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, ARIGATOU INTERNATIONAL



### WE CAN END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

With great appreciation and anticipation, I welcome all of you to the Fifth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children in Panama City, Panama. I am delighted and honored that all of you — some 430 participants, including 60 children, from 70 countries around the world and many diverse faith communities, international organizations, governments and NGOs — have devoted yourselves to coming here for the sole purpose of working together to craft action plans to end violence against children.

It is the Divine dream and universal wish of the human heart to see children growing up in safe, healthy environments, where every single one of them can thrive and reach for their full potential. Let this be our inspiration as we address the specific challenges children face worldwide, under three critically important themes: “Protecting Children from Violent Extremism, Gang Violence and Organized Crime”; “Nurturing Spirituality and Ending Violence in Child Upbringing”; and “Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

of Children.” As we address each of these issues, we will plan how faith communities can work together, and also with international organizations, governments and NGOs — as well as with children and young people themselves — to put a stop to violence against children. If we come together in prayer and practice, there is no limit to the difference we can make in the world.

This was the conviction and aspiration of Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, Leader of Myochikai and President of Arigatou International, when, in the year 2000, he proposed the idea of a worldwide interfaith network for children and, with the accord and participation of religious leaders from around the world, inaugurated the GNRC at its first forum in Tokyo. Since his passing in 2015, as the new President of Arigatou International, I have been determined to make every effort to fulfill his mission and dream of creating a better world for children through the GNRC.

On behalf of Arigatou International, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to each one of you for coming to the Forum. I also wish to express my heartfelt gratitude for all the hard work done by the members of the Fifth Forum Organizing Committee, led by Rev. Mons. Sidney Fones, and the Fifth Forum Hosting Committee, chaired by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Julio E. Murray, to prepare for us what I hope will be a soul-searching, inspiring, and transformational Forum experience.

I look forward to participating in the discussions at the Forum, and to seeing the outcomes and recommendations that we all create together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Keishi Miyamoto". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Keishi" and last name "Miyamoto" clearly distinguishable.

**Rev. Keishi Miyamoto**  
President, Arigatou International

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN, GNRC 5<sup>TH</sup> FORUM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE



**The persistent wounds of  
violence have moulded  
children to what they have  
become today.**

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On behalf of the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum International Organizing Committee (IOC), we are pleased to welcome you to this wonderful event and also present the Forum handbook. It is our hope that the information inside will benefit you.

The Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) is an interfaith network of organizations and individuals devoted to securing a better future for children everywhere. One of the organization's activities that brings us together is the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum. The reason for the occasion is the concern that each one of us has heard about violence that has affected millions of children across the world. Problems such as poverty, indecency and inequality among others have amplified emotional, physical and domestic violence meted on the children. The persistent

wounds of violence have moulded children to what they have become today.

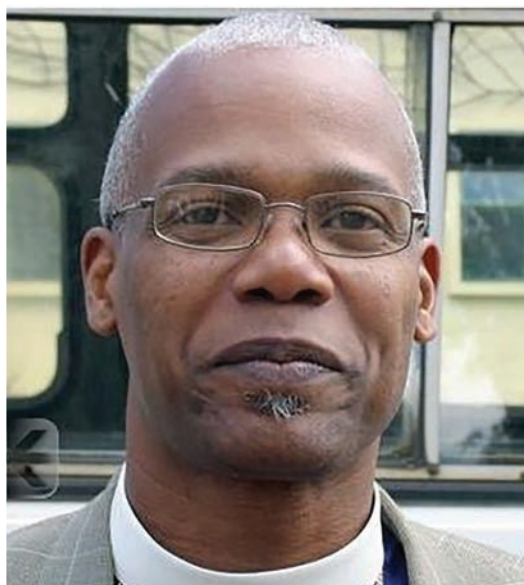
We must understand that everyone has a role to play in ensuring that peace prevails and children are protected. It's our hope that the ideas and outcomes of this meeting will spawn fruitful practical actions that address violence against children. We also welcome you to Panama, one of the countries in Latin America that embraces interfaith cooperation and constructive engagements.

May we be champions of a fair, dignified and peaceful world for children.

**Rev. Mons. Sidney Fones**

Chairman, GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum International  
Organizing Committee (IOC)

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN, GNRC 5<sup>TH</sup> FORUM HOSTING COMMITTEE



**Together, we are the agents  
of the transformation we  
need in society today.**

It is with joy and shared privilege that we offer a word of Welcome to Panama to all participants of the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum, to tackle the theme, *Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action*.

Just like other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean Region (LAC), Panama too has had a fair share of child-related challenges; child abuse, violence, poverty, lack of education and sanitation. Many Panamanians are still grappling with the sad reality that children are under constant threat of being violated. Many children are also experiencing inequality and discrimination in Panama. Such reasons are what prompted GNRC-Panama to work hand in hand with the Ecumenical and Interfaith Committees to offer preventive actions to end violence against children, as a step towards preventing violence against children.

It is my utmost hope that the convention of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) 5<sup>th</sup> Forum will give Panama and the entire world an opportunity to seek best solutions to ending violence against children. The Forum will also open doors

for network building and strengthening existing efforts as we seek to learn and share best practice, our commitment to identify strategies and plans of action and to strengthen the collaboration at the national, regional and international level, all aimed at ending violence against children. Together, we are the agents of the transformation we need in society today.

As members of the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum Hosting Committee, we have worked hard to make this venue a comfortable space so that the objectives of the forum can be realized with the participation of children. Panama is more than the Canal. It's the place where religious leaders, of multiethnic and multicultural backgrounds, meet as friends who respect one another and work to respond to the struggles that undermine the dignity of every human being.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julio E. Murray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'J' and 'M'.

**The Rt. Rev. Julio E. Murray**  
Chairman, GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum Hosting  
Committee

## PROGRAM OUTLINE

### 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017

#### Day one

**FIRST PLENARY: OPENING CEREMONY**  
09:00 – 10:20

**SECOND PLENARY: KEYNOTE ADDRESSES**  
11:00 – 12:30

**THIRD PLENARY: SPECIAL SESSION ON ENDING  
VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN**  
14:30 – 16:00

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS**  
16:30 – 18:00

**DINNER RECEPTION**  
19:00 – 21:00

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Forum Declaration Committee

### 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017

#### Day two

**FOURTH PLENARY: THEMATIC PRESENTATIONS**  
09:00 – 10:30

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: THEMATIC PANEL DISCUSSIONS**  
11:00 – 12:30

**FIFTH PLENARY: ALL FOR CHILDREN**  
14:30 – 15:30

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS**  
16:00 – 18:00

2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Forum Declaration Committee

**CULTURAL EVENING**  
19:00 – 21:30

3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Forum Declaration Committee



11<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017

Day three

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: SPECIAL THEMATIC SESSIONS**

09:00 – 10:30

4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum Declaration Committee

**SIXTH PLENARY: COMMITMENT AND CALL TO ACTION**

11:00 – 13:00

**SEVENTH PLENARY: CLOSING CEREMONY AND FORUM  
DECLARATION**

15:00 – 16:00

**INTERFAITH PRAYER FOR PEACE**

16:15 – 17:15

"Safety and security  
don't just happen,  
they are the result of  
collective consensus  
and public investment.  
**We owe our children,**  
the most vulnerable  
citizens in our society,  
a life **free of violence**  
and **fear.**"

- Nelson Mandela

The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum  
**#EndChildViolence**

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## GNRC 5<sup>TH</sup> FORUM PROGRAM

### Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action

#### DAY ONE: 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017

08:00 – 09:00

Arrivals, Refreshments, Seating

#### FIRST PLENARY:

#### OPENING CEREMONY

Venue:

GRAN ANCON

#### Session Chair and Master of Ceremony:

**Rt. Rev. Julio E. Murray**, Bishop of the Episcopal Church of Panama, President of the Ecumenical Committee, Chair, Interreligious Committee in Panama, Chair, GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum Hosting Committee

09:05 – 09:15

Prayer for Peace offered by Interreligious Committee in Panama

09:15 – 09:30

Remarks by **Rev. Keishi Miyamoto**, President, Arigatou International, Convenor, Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC)

09:30 – 09:35

Message from **H.E Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran**, President, Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Holy See

09:35 – 09:40

Message from **H.R.H. Prince El Hassan bin Talal**, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

09:40 – 09:45

Message from **Rev. Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit**, General Secretary, World Council of Churches

09:45 – 09:55

#### Presentation by Children

09:55 – 10:15

Official Opening Address

10:15 – 10:20

Remarks by **Rev. Mons. Sidney Fones**, Chair, GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum International Organizing Committee

10:20 – 11:00

Group Photograph — **GRAN ANCON**

Break — **FOYER**

#### SECOND PLENARY:

#### KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Venue:

GRAN ANCON

#### Session Co-Chairs:

**Prof. Anantanand Rambachan**, Professor and Chair, Religion Department, Saint Olaf College, Council Member, Prayer and Action for Children, and  
**Rabbi Diana Gerson**, Program Director, New York Board of Rabbis

11:00 – 11:20

**Opening Keynote Address:** *The State of the World's Children*

**Ms. Marta Santos Pais**, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, United Nations

11:20 – 11:40

**Keynote Address by Children's Representative**

11:40 – 12:00

**Keynote Address:** *The Role of Faith Communities in Ending Violence Against Children*

**H.E. Cardinal Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga**, Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, Honduras

12:00 – 12:30

Plenary Question and Answer Session

12:30 – 14:30

Lunch Break — **GRAN SALON**

### THIRD PLENARY:

### SPECIAL SESSION ON ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

**Venue:**

**GRAN ANCON**

14:30 – 15:30

Panel on Partnerships to End Violence Against Children  
*Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action*

#### Session Moderator:

**Mr. Kul Gautam**, Chair, Prayer and Action for Children, Former Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations

#### Introductory Remarks:

**Dr. Susan Bissell**, Executive Director, Global Partnership and Fund to End Violence Against Children

#### PANELISTS:

**Ms. Marita Perceval**, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

**Rev. Adam Russell Taylor**, Lead, Faith-Based Initiative, World Bank Group

**Dr. Kezevino Aram**, Co-Moderator, *Religions for Peace* International, President, Shanti Ashram, India, President, Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children

**Rev. Hidehito Okochi**, Chief Priest, Kenji-in Temple and Juko-in Temple, Japan, Board Member, Arigatou International

**Children's Representative** (from the Children's Pre-Forum Meeting)

15:30 – 16:00

Plenary Question and Answer Session

16:00 – 16:30

Break: **FOYER**

### PARALLEL SESSIONS: REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS

16:30 – 18:00

**WORKING GROUP A:**  
**Session Coordinators:**

**LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**  
**Ms. Mercedes Roman** and **Ms. Lizia Lu**

**Venue:**

**LA CALETA**

**WORKING GROUP B:** EUROPE  
**Session Coordinators:** Ms. Ismeta Begić and Ms. Laura Molnar

**Venue:** CONTADORA II

**WORKING GROUP C:** AFRICA  
**Session Coordinators:** Sr. Agatha Chikelue and Sheikh Ramadhan Aula

**Venue:** COLON

**WORKING GROUP D:** ASIA  
**Session Coordinators:** Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne and Dr. Chintamani Yogi

**Venue:** CONTADORA I

**WORKING GROUP E:** MIDDLE EAST  
**Session Coordinators:** Fr. Abdo Raad, Ms. Suha Mohammad Ameen and Ms. Dorit Shippin

**Venue:** Arab Nations — TABOGA II  
Israel/Palestine — TABOGA I

*(Regional Working Groups are sessions where GNRC Members and other participants who are willing to work with the GNRC at the local, national and regional level will work together to create action plans. Regional groups may break into smaller sub-regional groups to focus on specific issues related to violence against children unique to each sub-region).*

**DINNER RECEPTION** Hosted by **Rev. Keishi Miyamoto**, President, Arigatou International, Convenor, GNRC

**Venue:** GRAN SALON

19:00 - 21:00

**1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Forum Declaration Committee**

**Venue:** GATUN



**DAY TWO: 10<sup>th</sup> MAY 2017**

**FOURTH PLENARY: THEMATIC PRESENTATIONS**

**Venue:** GRAN ANCON

**Session Co-Chairs:**

**Prof. Abdulghafur El Busaidy**, Chairman, Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims, and  
**Ms. Marie Dennis**, Co-President, Pax Christi International

**THEME 1:**

**Protecting Children from Violent Extremism, Gang Violence and Organized Crime:  
The Role of Faith Communities**

09:00 – 09:10	Children's Presentation on the Theme
09:10 – 09:30	Thematic Keynote Address by <b>Fr. Juan Luis Carbajal Tejeda</b> , Executive Secretary, Pastoral de Movilidad Humana, Episcopal Conference of Guatemala

**THEME 2:**

**Nurturing Spirituality and Ending Violence in Child Upbringing: The Role of Faith  
Communities**

09:30– 09:40	Children's Presentation on the Theme
09:40– 10:00	Thematic Keynote Address by <b>H.G. Dr. Barry C. Morgan</b> , former Archbishop of Wales

**THEME 3:**

**Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children: The Role of Faith Communities**

10:00 – 10:10	Children's Presentation on the Theme
10:10 – 10:30	Thematic Keynote Address by <b>Dr. Alaa Murabit</b> , UN High-level Commissioner on Health, Employment and Economic Growth
10:30 – 11:00	Break: <b>FOYER</b>

**PARALLEL SESSIONS: THEMATIC PANEL DISCUSSIONS**

11:00 – 12:30	<b>Protecting Children from Violent Extremism, Gang Violence and Organized Crime: The Role of Faith Communities</b>
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**Venue:** LA CALETA

**Session Moderators:**

**Dr. Esmeralda Arosemena de Troitiño**, Commissioner of the Inter-American Commission  
on Human Rights, and **Imam Dr. Rashied Omar**, Research Scholar of Islamic Studies and  
Peace Building, University of Notre Dame, Coordinating Imam, Claremont Main Road  
Mosque, Cape Town, South Africa

**PANELISTS:**

**Mr. Antti Pentikäinen**, Executive Director, Network for Religious and Traditional  
Peacemakers (NRTP)

**Dr. Amr Abdalla**, Senior Advisor on the Reform of Education in Muslim Societies Project, International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), Washington, D.C.

**Dr. William Vendley**, Secretary General, *Religions for Peace* International

**Dr. Mohamed Elsanousi**, Director, Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers (NRTP)

**Children's Representative** (from the Children's Pre-Forum Meeting)

**Ms. Janet Arach**, GNRC Member, Uganda, Youth Representative

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11:00 – 12:30

**Nurturing Spirituality and Ending Violence in Child  
Upbringing: The Role of Faith Communities**

**Venue:**

**GRAN BARU I**

**Session Moderators:**

**Dr. Nelson Arns Neumann**, Coordinator, Pastoral da Criança, and

**Rev. Dr. Nicta Lubaale**, General Secretary, Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC)

**PANELISTS:**

**Ms. Georgina de Villalta**, Global Movement for Children in Latin America and the Caribbean

**Prof. Harold Segura**, Regional Director of Church Relations and Christian Identity for Latin America and the Caribbean, World Vision International

**Ms. Rosalina Tuyuc Velásquez**, President of CONAVIGUA, Member, Continental Network of Indigenous Women of Americas, Guatemala

**Children's Representative** (from the Children's Pre-Forum Meeting)

**Mrs. Sheran Harper**, Worldwide Trustee, Mothers Union, Trainer, Worldwide Parenting Programme

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11:00 – 12:30

**Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children: The Role  
of Faith Communities**

**Venue:**

**GRAN BARU II**

**Session Moderators:**

**Ms. Silvia Mazzarelli**, Regional Head of Policy and Programming, Plan International, and

**Ms. Bani Dugal**, Representative to the United Nations, Baha'i International Community, United States

**PANELISTS:**

**Ms. Dorothy Rozga**, Executive Director, ECPAT International

**Sr. Denisse Pichardo**, O.P, Dominican Order of the Altagracia

**Children's Representative** (from the Children's Pre-Forum Meeting)

**Ms. Corina Villacorta**, Regional Director, Plan International Americas

**Mr. Christo Greyling**, Senior Director, Faith – Advocacy and External Engagement, World Vision International

12:30 - 14:30

Lunch Break: **GRAN SALON**

## FIFTH PLENARY

### ALL FOR CHILDREN:

**Working with Faith Communities and Partners to End Violence Against Children through Arigatou International's Initiatives**

#### Session Chair:

**Rev. Mitsuo Miyake**, Chief Minister and President, Konko Church of Izuo, Vice Chair of Council, World Federalist Movement, Board Member, Arigatou International

#### Venue:

**GRAN ANCON**

14:30 – 15:30

### Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC):

**Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali**, Secretary General, GNRC, Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi, and **Dr. Dorcas Kiplagat**, GNRC Network and Programs Coordinator

### Ethics Education for Children:

**Ms. Maria Lucia Uribe**, Secretary General, Ethics Education for Children, Director, Arigatou International – Geneva

### Prayer and Action for Children:

**Ms. Rebeca Rios-Kohn**, Director, Prayer and Action for Children, Director, Arigatou International – New York

### Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty (End Child Poverty):

**Rev. Fredrick O. Nyabera**, Director, End Child Poverty, Arigatou International – Nairobi

15:30 – 16:00

Break: **FOYER**

## PARALLEL SESSIONS: REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS

16:00 – 18:00

### WORKING GROUP A:

Session Coordinators:

### LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

**Ms. Mercedes Roman** and **Ms. Lizia Lu**

#### Venue:

**LA CALETA**

### WORKING GROUP B:

Session Coordinators:

### EUROPE

**Ms. Ismeta Begić** and **Ms. Laura Molnar**

#### Venue:

**CONTADORA II**

**WORKING GROUP C:** **AFRICA**  
**Session Coordinators:** Sr. Agatha Chikelue and Sheikh Ramadhan Aula

**Venue:** COLON

**WORKING GROUP D:** **ASIA**  
**Session Coordinators:** Dr. Vinya Ariyaratne and Dr. Chintamani Yogi

**Venue:** CONTADORA I

**WORKING GROUP E:** **MIDDLE EAST**  
**Session Coordinators:** Fr. Abdo Raad, Ms. Suha Mohmmad Ameen and Ms. Dorit Shippin

**Venue:** Arab Nations — TABOGA II  
Israel/Palestine — TABOGA I

**2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Forum Declaration Committee**

**Venue:** GATUN

**CULTURAL EVENING**

19:00 – 21:30

**Lead Organizer:** GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum Hosting Committee

**Venue:** CONVENTION CENTER AT THE CITY OF KNOWLEDGE

**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Forum Declaration Committee**

**Venue:** GATUN



DAY THREE: 11<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017

PARALLEL SESSIONS: SPECIAL THEMATIC SESSIONS

09:00 – 10:30

**“The Nexus Between Child Poverty and Violence Against Children”**

**Facilitators:**

**Rev. Adam Russell Taylor**, Lead, Faith-Based Initiative, World Bank Group, and  
**Rev. Fredrick O. Nyabera**, Director, End Child Poverty, Arigatou International – Nairobi

**Venue:** LA CALETA

**“The Role of Ethics Education in Strengthening Families and Nurturing Spirituality in Children”**

**Facilitators:**

**Dr. Kezevino Aram**, Co-Moderator, *Religions for Peace* International, President, Shanti Ashram, India, President, Interfaith Council on Ethics Education for Children, and  
**Ms. Maria Lucia Uribe**, Secretary General, Ethics Education for Children, Director, Arigatou International – Geneva

**Venue:** GRAN BARU I

**“Combatting Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children”**

**Facilitators:**

**Rabbi Diana Gerson**, Program Director, New York Board of Rabbis, and  
**Ms. Rebeca Rios-Kohn**, Director, Prayer and Action for Children, Director, Arigatou International – New York

**Venue:** GRAN BARU II

08:00 – 10:00

**4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum Declaration Committee**

**Venue:**

**GATUN**

10:30 – 11:00

Break: **FOYER**

**SIXTH PLENARY**

**COMMITMENT AND CALL TO ACTION**

**Venue:**

**GRAN ANCON**

**Session Co-Chairs:**

**Rev. Mons. Sidney Fones**, Chair, GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum International Organizing Committee, and  
**Sheikh Ibrahim Asmani Lethome**, Secretary General, Center for Sustainable Conflict Resolution (CSCR)

11:00 – 13:00

Commitment and Call to Action

13:00 – 15:00

Lunch Break — **GRAN SALON**

**SEVENTH PLENARY: CLOSING CEREMONY AND FORUM  
DECLARATION**

**Venue:** GRAN ANCON

**Session Co-Chairs:**

**H. L. Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini**, Bishop of Bukoba Diocese, Bukoba, Tanzania, and  
**Ms. Rosalina Tuyuc Velásquez**, President of CONAVIGUA, Member, Continental Network of  
Indigenous Women of Americas, Guatemala

15:00 – 15:10	<b>Sheikh Mohamed Sohaib Al-Chami</b> , the Grand Imam of Aleppo, Syria
15:10 – 15:20	<b>Dr. Agnes Abuom</b> , Moderator, Central Committee, World Council of Churches
15:20 – 15:30	<b>Dr. Alaa Murabit</b> , UN High-level Commissioner on Health, Employment and Economic Growth
15:30 – 15:40	<b>Children’s Presentation</b>
15:40 – 15:50	Reading of GNRC 5 <sup>th</sup> Forum Declaration, <b>Rev. Mons. Sidney Fones</b> , Chair, GNRC 5 <sup>th</sup> Forum International Organizing Committee
15:50 – 16:00	<b>H.G. Archbishop Felix Machado</b> , Archbishop of Vasai, India

**INTERFAITH PRAYER FOR PEACE**

**Venue:** GRAN BARU I & II

16:15 – 17:15	<b>Interfaith Prayer for Peace</b>
17:15 –	Departures

# GNRC 5<sup>TH</sup> FORUM CONCEPT NOTE

## Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action

### 1. INTRODUCTION: THE GNRC 5<sup>TH</sup> FORUM

Every five years, Arigatou International holds a Forum of its Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) initiative. The Fifth Forum will take place on 9, 10 and 11 May 2017 in Panama City, Panama. Four-hundred and thirty religious leaders, members of diverse faith communities, leaders of faith-based organizations, United Nations officials, and representatives of international and grassroots organizations from around the world are expected to attend the Forum. A Pre-Forum bringing together 60 children will take place on 6, 7, and 8 May. The theme for the Fifth Forum is: **“Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action.”**

The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum will build on the work that GNRC members from diverse faith traditions have been doing since the year 2000, working for and with children, to build a better world for children. Working locally, nationally, and globally, GNRC members have addressed several of the key challenges facing children, prioritizing areas such as child rights, education, poverty, and violence. The Fifth Forum will focus specifically on solutions for the challenges presented by various forms of violence against children, broken down into three sub-themes. These are: **“Protecting Children from Violent Extremism, Gang Violence and Organized Crime”**; **“Nurturing Spirituality and Ending Violence in Child Upbringing”**; and **“Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children.”** The role of faith communities in addressing these challenges—especially through interreligious cooperation—will be the main focus of the Forum.

In bringing faith communities together to address violence against children, the

Forum also aims to contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG16.2 focusing on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

### 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE GNRC 5<sup>TH</sup> FORUM

The Forum is intended to accomplish the following goals:

- a. **Learning and Sharing:** To highlight the scale and impact of violence against children, and facilitate exchanges among participating individuals and organizations of information, experiences, lessons learned and good practices that are effective in ending violence against children;
- b. **Shared Commitment and Call to Action:** To formulate concrete strategies and plans of action for the GNRC, its members, and supporters, which build on the existing efforts of Arigatou International's other global initiatives and diverse partners and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals; and issue a **Shared Commitment and Call to Action** to end violence against children; and
- c. **Building Partnerships to End Violence against Children:** To strengthen collaboration across the GNRC network by increasing the efficiency of and synergies among the work of its members, partners and supporters; and to strengthen existing and build new partnerships with key stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels aimed at ending violence against children.

### 3. THE GLOBAL CONTEXT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Violence against children is one of the gravest challenges facing the world today, but it does not receive attention commensurate with its gravity. The evidence is overwhelming. Violence is the leading cause of death and injury of children in the world. Every five minutes, a child is killed by violence. One billion of the 2.2 billion children from all walks of life around the world endure different forms of physical and sexual violence, irrespective of ethnicity, nationality, race, religion or income levels. In 2012 alone, 95,000 children and adolescents under the age of 20 were killed in homicide cases globally.

About 20% of women and 5 - 10% of men suffered sexual abuse as children; 3 out of every 4 children experience violent discipline at home; 85 million children (55 million boys and 30 million girls) are involved in hazardous work; over 1 billion children live in countries or territories affected by armed conflict; and almost half of all forcibly displaced persons (24 million in total) globally, are children. Only 52 out of 197 countries have prohibited physical punishment of children in institutional care; and 14% of girls and 7% of boys under 18 years old have experienced sexual violence in institutional care. Against the backdrop of these grim statistics about violence against children, the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum aims to consolidate and enhance the GNRC's previous efforts to address violence against children. Envisioning the potential of faith communities to turn around this crisis, the theme for the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum is **"Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action."**

### 4. SOLUTION-FOCUSED: THEMATIC AREAS OF THE FORUM

The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum will be solution-focused, with participants expected to discuss, recommend for action and make commitments to work together to build a

world free of violence against children. GNRC members and faith communities around the world have been taking steps to address this challenge at various levels. The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum seeks to inspire, reinvigorate, and encourage GNRC members and diverse faith communities to take even more action together, as well as to develop concrete partnerships with other stakeholders, to address violence against children. When crafting these action plans to eliminate violence against children, participants will take advantage of the effective tools offered by Arigatou International's other global initiatives: Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and End Child Poverty. It is expected that the Forum will give rise to creative new ways to bring these approaches and resources together in targeted ways to prevent, reduce, and stop recurrence of violence against children.

The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum will include plenary sessions, panel discussions, expert presentations and reflections on the three key thematic areas. Under **"Protecting Children from Violent Extremism, Gang Violence and Organized Crime: The Role of Faith Communities,"** Forum participants will discuss and frame the role of religious leaders and faith communities in preventing the recruitment of children into radicalized groups of violent extremists, gang violence and organized crime. The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum aims to share what is already being done in these areas, and to apply Arigatou International's Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and End Child Poverty initiatives to create new solutions and actions that can be deployed by religious leaders and faith communities around the world to prevent, reduce and end the manipulation and use of children for violent extremism, gang violence and organized crime.

Under **"Nurturing Spirituality and Ending Violence in Child Upbringing: The Role of Faith Communities,"** participants will discuss and recommend ways in which



a child's spirituality can be nurtured and promoted, in particular through positive parenting but also by the wider community, to protect them from violence and help them to develop to their full potential. The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum will reflect upon and explore the role of faith communities and their leaders in fostering spirituality in children, as well as in their caregivers, as a way of mitigating violence against children. Participants will review opportunities to take advantage of the Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and End Child Poverty initiatives for this purpose.

Under **"Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children: The Role of Faith Communities,"** participants will focus on and discuss possible partnerships among faith-based organizations and communities and international organizations which

address these challenges, as well as consider partnerships among or facilitated by Arigatou International's Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and End Child Poverty initiatives. Participants will explore the ethical and moral imperative that faith communities not only acknowledge the existence and grave consequences of this vice, but also confront and challenge it within their communities and in the wider society.

## 5. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Forum is expected to have the following main outcomes:

- a. **Learning and Sharing:** Increased understanding and appreciation of the scale and impact of violence against children as well as enhanced understanding and shared learning about effective methods for

**"I appeal to the conscience of all, institutions and families, that children may always be protected and their well-being be defended, so that they never fall into forms of slavery, into recruitment by armed groups or into mistreatment."**

- H.H. Pope Francis



The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum  
**#EndChildViolence**

preventing, reducing and ending violence against children;

**b. Shared Commitment and Call to Action:** Commitment to addressing violence against children and adoption of concrete plans of action by faith communities, partners and other stakeholders to prevent and reduce violence against children at the local, national, regional and global levels; a concrete new approach for GNRC members and partners to make the most of the potential synergies among Arigatou International's Ethics Education for Children, Prayer and Action for Children, and End Child Poverty initiatives to address the specific challenges of ending violence against children; the issuing of a **Shared Commitment and Call to Action**; and

**c. Building Partnerships to End Violence against Children:** Effective broad-based interreligious partnerships, as well as partnerships between religious and secular stakeholders aimed at ending violence against children by implementing the commitments and actions discussed at the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Transformed faith communities and their religious leaders can be a very powerful resource for mitigating, preventing, reducing and ultimately ending violence against children. There is much more that the GNRC, its friends and supporters can do to fully engage the world's faith communities in efforts to end violence against children utilizing both their tangible and intangible resources. The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum will be urging faith communities and their leaders to work together, making the most of their social capital and moral authority while inviting diverse other actors to cooperate with them in addressing violence against children.

The Forum envisions an end to all forms of violence against children, and seeks to generate a major new global impetus to accomplish this vision. In partnership with governments, inter-governmental, multilateral, faith-based and non-governmental institutions, Arigatou International and the GNRC members believe that it is certainly possible to build a world where all children everywhere can live in peace, in a world free of violence.

## CONFERENCE INFORMATION



**Wi-Fi** is available

### Assistance

If you need assistance during the forum:

1. Visit Information Desk located at the General Exhibition and Information Area/Desk.
- Or
2. Locate persons with blue jackets labelled 'Volunteer'

In 2012 homicide took the lives of almost **95,000 children and adolescents** aged 0-19.



UNICEF report, Hidden in Plain Sight

The GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum  
**#EndChildViolence**

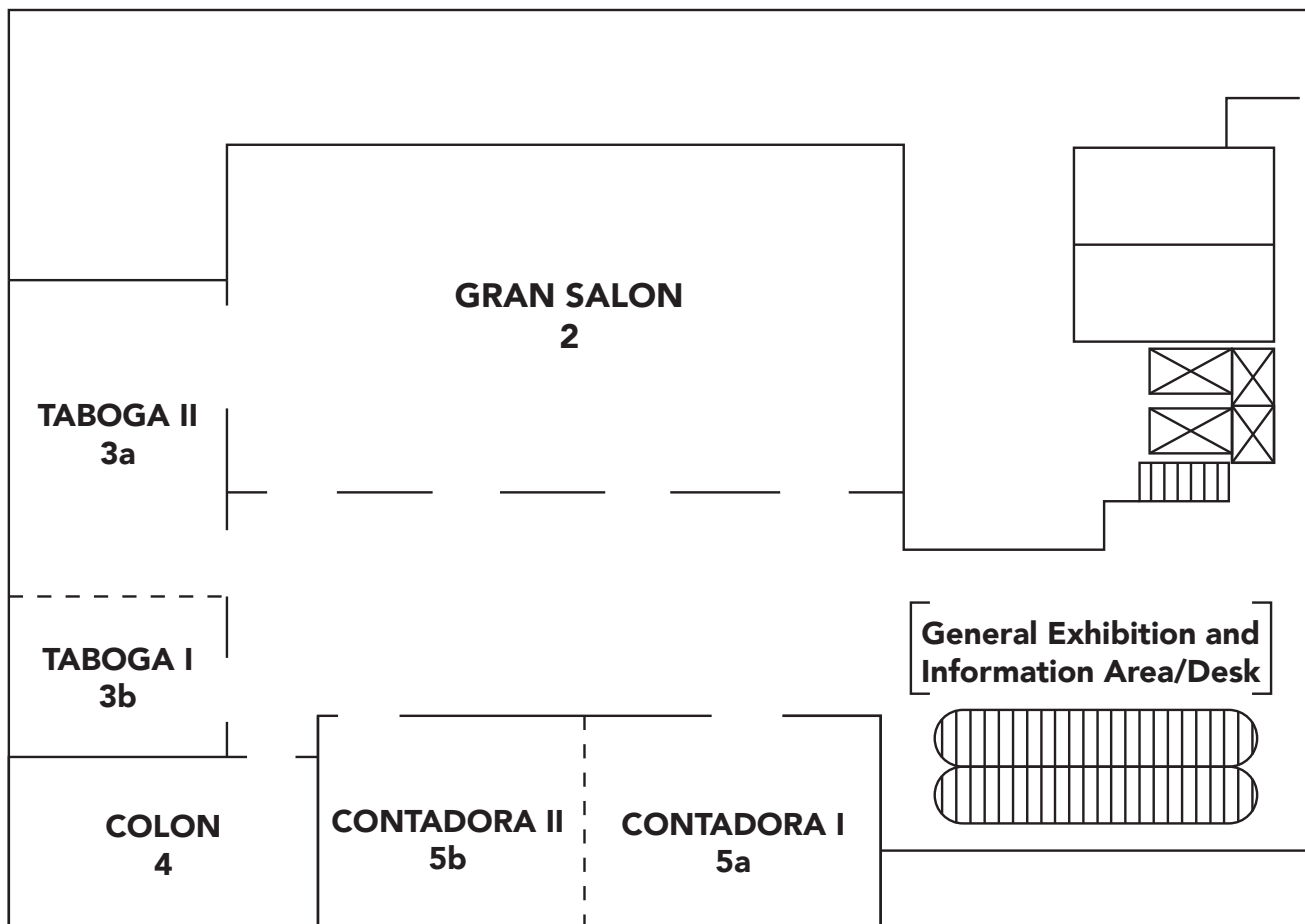
 **ARIGATOU**  
INTERNATIONAL | GNRC  
*All for Children*

# FLOOR PLAN

All conference rooms are located on the MEZZANINE level.

Below is a diagram of the floor plan to help familiarize you with the venue.

Myochikai/Arigatou  
International Exhibition



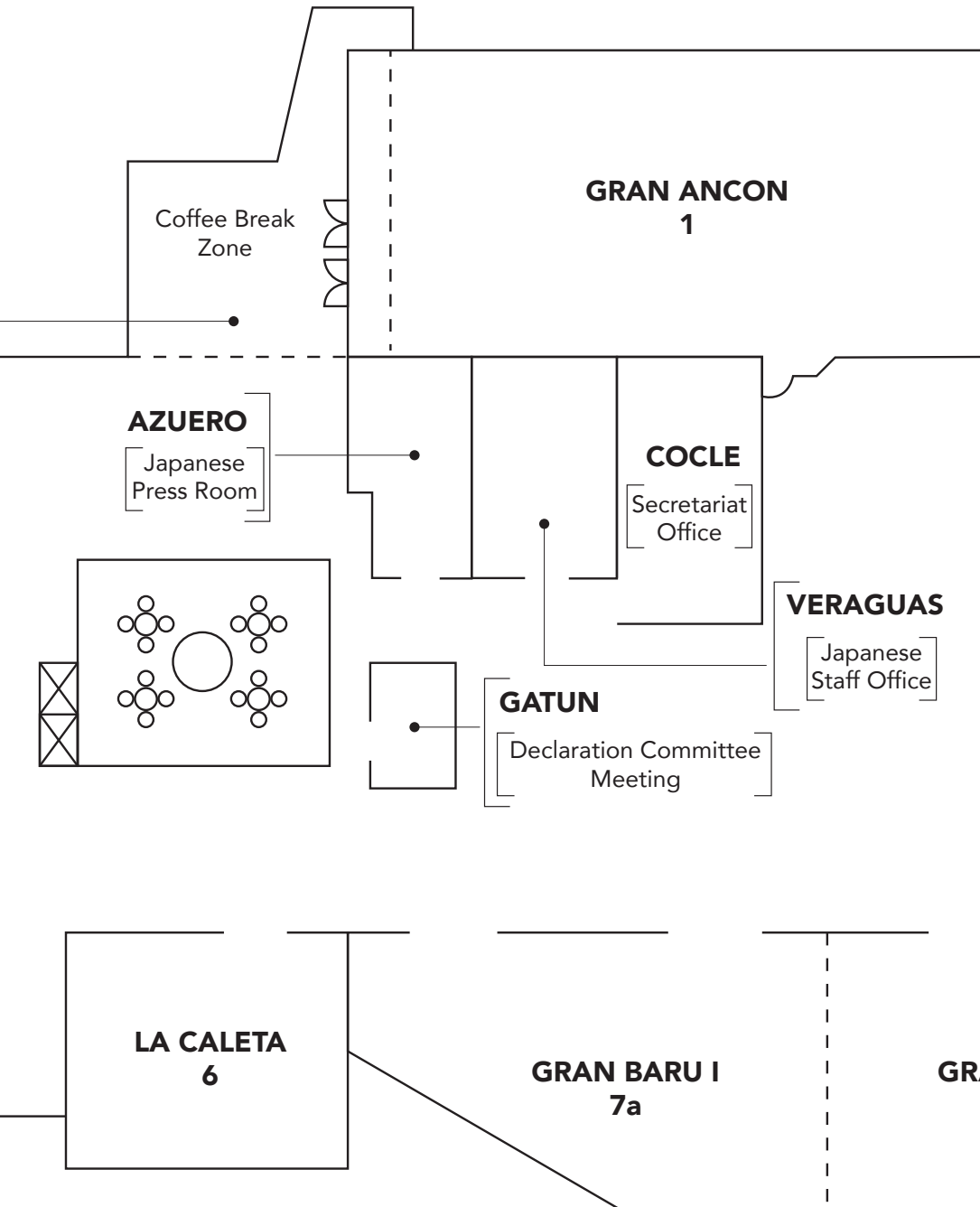
## Regional Working Groups

Israel/Palestine – 3b  
Arab Nations – 3a  
Africa – 4  
Asia – 5a  
Europe – 5b  
Latin America & the Caribbean – 6

## Parallel Sessions: Special Thematic Sessions

Workshop on The Nexus Between Child  
Poverty and Violence Against Children – 6  
Workshop on The Role of Ethics Education in  
Strengthening Families and Nurturing  
Spirituality in Children – 7a  
Workshop on Combatting Online Child Sexual  
Exploitation and Abuse of Children – 7b





### Thematic Panel Discussions

Protecting Children from Violent Extremism, Gang Violence and Organized Crime: The Role of Faith Communities – 6

Nurturing Spirituality and Ending Violence in Child Upbringing: The Role of Faith Communities – 7a

Ending Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children: The Role of Faith Communities – 7b

Plenary Sessions – 1

Lunch/Welcome Dinner – 2

Interfaith Prayer for Peace – 7a/b

## GNRC 5<sup>TH</sup> FORUM COMMITTEES

### GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum International Organizing Committee



**Rev. Monsignor Sidney Fones** is the Chairman of the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum International Organizing Committee (IOC). He is former Deputy Secretary General of CELAM and the Chilean Bishops Conference. Mons. Fones studied Civil Engineering at the Catholic University of Chile and Theology at the Fribourg Catholic University.



**Dr. Mustafa Yusuf Ali**, Secretary General, Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi



**Dr. Susan Bissell**, Director, Global Partnership and Fund to End Violence Against Children, New York



**Ms. Bani Dugal**, Representative to the United Nations, Baha'i International Community, United States



**Mr. Shozo Fujita**, Secretary General, Arigatou International Tokyo, Japan



**Ms. Silvia Mazzarelli**, Regional Head of Child Rights Policy and Programming, Plan International



**Rev. Fredrick O. Nyabera**, Director, End Child Poverty, Arigatou International – Nairobi



**Mr. Stefan Pleisnitzer,**  
National Director for  
World Vision Latin America  
and Caribbean Regional  
Leader



**Ms. Rebeca Rios-  
Kohn,** Director, Prayer  
and Action for Children  
and Director, Arigatou  
International – New York



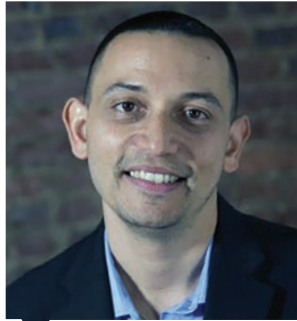
**Ms. Mercedes Roman,**  
Advisor, GNRC Latin  
America and the  
Caribbean (LAC)



**Mr. Silvio Sant'Ana,**  
Senior Economist and  
Advisor, Pastoral da  
Criança



**Ms. Marta Santos Pais,**  
Special Representative of  
the UN Secretary-General  
(SRSG) on Violence  
Against Children



**Rev. Adam Russell  
Taylor,** Lead, Faith-Based  
Initiative, World Bank  
Group

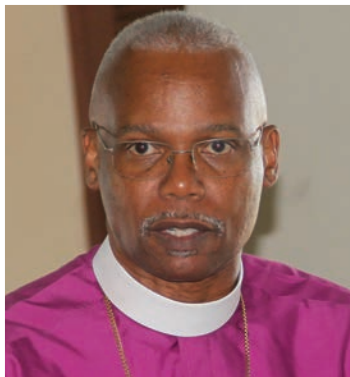


**Ms. Maria Lucia Uribe,**  
Director, Arigatou  
International – Geneva,  
Secretary General,  
Interfaith Council on Ethics  
Education for Children



**United Nations  
Children's Fund**

## GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum Hosting Committee



**The Rt. Rev. Julio E. Murray** is the Chairman of the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum Hosting Committee. He studied theology in the Latin American Biblical Seminary in San José, Costa Rica; at the National University of Heredia and at the Bossey Institute in Geneva, Switzerland. He was elected Diocesan Bishop in a Special Convention on May 20, 2000. Bishop Murray is a member of the Afro-Panamanian Religious Organizations (precursor of the Celebration of Black Ethnicity Day), and of the National Council of Black Ethnicity in Panama.



**Prof. Aurora Carrasco,**  
Comunidad Bahai



**Sheikh Mohamed El Sayyed,**  
Imam, Islamic Cultural Center  
of Panama



**Monsignor Jose Domingo  
Ulloa,** Archbishop, Diocese  
of Panama, Roman Catholic  
Church



**Ms. Isis Navarro Hurtado,**  
General Secretary, Comité  
Ecuménico- Coordinadora de  
GNRC-Panamá (COEPA)



**Father Georgios Kaleodis,**  
Greek Orthodox Church



**Rabbi Gustavo Kraselnik,**  
Spiritual Leader, Jewish  
Community, Congregation Kol  
Shearith



Ending Violence Against Children:  
FAITH COMMUNITIES IN ACTION



**Ms. Lizia Lu**, GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum  
Coordinator



**Lic. Betzy Farah Morán**, Vice  
President and Legal Advisor,  
Balboa Union Church

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**Rev. Pedro Araújo**, Bishop,  
Evangelical Methodist Church  
of Panama

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**Rev. Heinsley Johnson**,  
Methodist Church of the  
Caribbean and the Americas

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## VOICES OF PARTICIPANTS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN



**Dr. Susan Bissell – Director, Global Partnership and Fund to End Violence Against Children, New York**

What more could be done to protect children around the world from violence, abuse, and exploitation, if we put all of the world's leading thinkers together in a room? I believe we're at a tipping point of innovation and ideas. At the heart of many of these violations against children are political and social determinants.



**Prof. Abdulghafur El Busaidy – Chairman, Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims**

The measures to be taken to prevent violence against children will require immediate and long-term investment by government, civil society, faith communities and families in securing children's rights and well-being.



**Rabbi Diana Gerson – Program Director, New York Board of Rabbis**

When it comes to protecting children from sexual abuse, we must learn the facts, make pro-active choices, take risks and talk to the kids. It is our duty to report the abuse. If we don't do this then who will?



**Ms. Marta Santos Pais – Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on Violence Against Children**

The greatest challenge is the fact that violence against children is an issue that is still much hidden.



**Mr. Kailash Satyarthi – Indian Children's Rights and Education Advocate**

There's no greater violence than to deny the dreams of our children.



## THE GNRC 5<sup>TH</sup> FORUM SYMBOLS



In preparation for the Fifth Forum, GNRC hosted a junior art competition in Panama City, Panama in October 2016 to design the symbols for the Forum. The Fifth Forum's overarching theme, "Ending Violence Against Children: Faith Communities in Action," guided the contest. The contestants were children aged between 14 and 17 years from schools that are members of GNRC Panama. The schools have been working closely with GNRC in various activities, including last year's commemoration of the Day of Prayer and Action for Children on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2016, which is also the anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The junior art competition sought to bring out children's understanding and

interpretation of child violence across the world and the role of faith communities in curbing it. A total of 18 artworks, made using different techniques, were presented.

A group of judges—a plastic artist, a graphic designer and a photographer—selected the three winning symbols. They based their selection criteria on technique, message of the work, and interpretation of the theme. "Selecting the best works was a difficult task, because all the competitors showed great management of their technique, and all of them had a very unique interpretation of how violence impacts children's lives, but it was also very exciting to see their talent and motivation," said one of the judges.

# CHILDREN’S PRE-MEETING PROGRAM OUTLINE

## About the Children’s Pre-Meeting



GNRC welcomes the participation of children and young people as full and equal participants at the Fifth Forum. It remains committed to offer them a space and opportunity to express their views, share their own experiences and be listened to in a respectful and meaningful way. GNRC is organizing a ‘Pre-Meeting for Children’ just before the main event takes place.

The objective of the pre-meeting is to provide a child-friendly space for children to get to know each other, learn about each other’s experiences and become acquainted with the themes and sub-themes of the Forum. Through practical, participatory and child-friendly activities, based on Arigatou International’s *Learning To Live Together* (LTLT) program, the pre-meeting will help to prepare children for participation in the Forum.

### 6<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017

Day one

#### OPENING

09:00

#### GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

09.30

#### EXPLORING THE FORUM THEME

11:30

#### LEARNING ABOUT THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

14:00

#### REFLECTIONS AFTER THE VISIT

18.00

7 <sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017	
Day two	<div>MORNING MEDITATION</div> <div>09:00</div>
	<div>RECAP FROM PREVIOUS DAY</div> <div>09:30</div>
	<div>EXPLORING THE FORUM SUB-THEMES</div> <div>10:00</div>
	<div>WORKING IN GROUPS ON SUB-THEMES</div> <div>13:30</div>
	<div>PLENARY</div> <div>15:00</div>
	<div>LEARNING CIRCLES</div> <div>16:00</div>
	<div>CREATIVE IDEAS TO CONTRIBUTE TO PREVENT, AND ULTIMATELY END VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN</div> <div>17:00</div>
8 <sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017	
Day three	<div>MORNING MEDITATION</div> <div>08:30</div>
	<div>GETTING READY FOR THE FORUM</div> <div>09:00</div>
	<div>INSPIRATION AND CLOSING OF THE PRE-MEETING</div> <div>12:00</div>
	<div>VISIT TO THE PANAMA CANAL</div> <div>14:00</div>

## MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL, GLOBAL NETWORK OF RELIGIONS FOR CHILDREN



**Violence against children is intolerable. We must change it. We can do better.**

### LET'S BE THE AGENTS OF CHANGE TO ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

34

We meet every five years to review and plan how we can all work together to ease and end the suffering of the most vulnerable in the world: CHILDREN. At the GNRC 5<sup>th</sup> Forum, we are focusing our attention on three specific areas—all aimed to ending violence against children.

We meet in the context where, still, 95,000 children are killed every year in cases of homicide; 120 million girls are still subjected to sexual violence; 85 million children are involved in hazardous work; over 1 billion children still live in areas affected by armed conflict and have been exposed to some kind of violence; and 12 million children have been forcibly displaced from the comfort of their homes.

This is intolerable. We must change it. We can do better.

We can protect our children against violent extremism, organized crime and gang violence. We can end violence in child upbringing, sexual exploitation and abuse of our children.

Thank you for being here.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mustafa Y. Ali', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali,**  
Secretary General, Global Network of  
Religions for Children  
Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi



## ARIGATOU INTERNATIONAL

The primary supporter of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC), Arigatou International, is a non-profit organization which strives to bring people from all walks of life together to build a better world for children. Arigatou International is “All for Children,” and it draws on universal principles of common good to offer compelling new ways for people of diverse religious and cultural backgrounds to work together on children’s issues.

Arigatou International develops and sustains unique multi-stakeholder initiatives designed to ensure that all children are treated with dignity, all children’s rights are respected, and all children have the opportunity to freely pursue their full human potential. Involving diverse partners, these initiatives emphasize both grassroots action and international advocacy.

Arigatou International has great faith in children, and always invites them to help shape its work. Young people are deeply respected, active partners in every Arigatou initiative.



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

