



Hope for Children in a World in Crisis

Over the last six years, GNRC members and partners worldwide have worked tirelessly to fulfil the 2017 GNRC Fifth Forum 10 Panama Commitments on Ending Violence Against Children.

Thousands of children have had their lives transformed at the grassroots level by the efforts of hundreds of GNRC members across 75 countries.

Even as this transformation takes place, new challenges have emerged. Not since World War II has there been a time like today, when so many children are directly targeted for harm, or caught in harm's way.

The statistics are horrifying and deeply distressing.

Over 460 million, or one in six children globally live in areas of armed conflict. They live in constant fear, experiencing grave violations of their most basic rights, with serious impacts on their physical, social and mental well-being.

Many children, especially those living in lethal war zones are facing the impacts of climate change and unprecedented levels of hunger. As it is, before 2020, nearly half (47 percent) of the world's children, including those in the world's richest countries, lived in multi-dimensional poverty. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed an additional 150 million children into poverty – a figure that has likely risen as the ongoing energy, food and economic crises batter our communities.

Alongside this, the number of displaced children is at a historic high. Last year saw the steepest increase in the number of children forced to leave their homes due to conflict and poverty. Close to 10 million children were displaced in 2023, bringing the total number worldwide to 51.2 million as of January 2024.

This massive infringement of children's rights on multiple fronts should be a wake-up call for the world!

The Child is Calling!

World faith leaders and their communities, together with representatives from various governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations, and children, will meet in Abu Dhabi, UAE on November 16 – 21, 2024, on the occasion of the GNRC Sixth Forum, to answer this call.

Our coming together is driven by a singular objective — to deliver a truly meaningful and concrete response that will transform a world in crisis into one that is safe, secure, and sustainable for our children.

I look forward to seeing you at the Forum!

Mustafa Y. Ali (PhD)

Secretary General of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC)

Director, Arigatou International – Nairobi