



Committee of Religious NGOs

AT THE UNITED NATIONS

THE BUREAU 2022 - 2024

CO-CHAIRS

Beth Blissman

Loretto Community

Rev. Doyeon Park

Won Buddhism

Julia Grindon-Welch

*Brahma Kumaris World
Spiritual University*

SECRETARY

Dileepkumar Thankappan

World Yoga Community

TREASURER

Steve Chiu

Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

MEMBERS AT-LARGE

Carl Murrell

*National Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahá'ís of the United
States*

Rev. Margaret Rose

The Episcopal Church

Imam Saffet Abid Catovic

*UN Operations for Justice
For All*

EX-OFFICIO

Hiro Sakurai

Soka Gakkai International

Rev. Dionne Boissiere

*Chaplain at the Church
Center for the United Nations*

www.CRNGO.org

religiousngo@gmail.com

CRNGO Statement on Escalating Violence in Israel and Palestine

(Tuesday, 24 October 2023)

The Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations is a coalition of representatives of religious, spiritual, and ethical non-governmental organizations who are dedicated to the pursuit of peace, understanding and mutual respect. We express our deep concern as we witness the escalation of violence between Israel and Hamas. The horrific attack by Hamas on October 7 resulted in the killing of 1,400 Israeli Citizens and the taking of over 200 captives by Hamas. The UN reports that 5,087 Palestinians have been killed, 15,273 have been injured, and over 600,000 have been internally displaced due to the bombing of the Gaza Strip by Israel. The UN also reports that 35 UN staff have been killed in the bombings. There has been massive destruction of civilian infrastructure, including homes, hospitals and medical clinics, schools, and houses of worship.

May peace infiltrate the hearts of those perpetuating violence, and may a ceasefire be realized soon.

We stand ready as always to work with the UN and its agencies/departments, fellow members of civil society and the representatives of the family of nations, to help and assist in the realization of an end to the violence, protection, and preservation of life and realization of a just peace for all.

The delivery of initial humanitarian aid in terms of medical supplies and food is a welcome development, but much more is needed, including fuel to power the generators which power water pumps, hospitals and bakeries. The UN estimates that only 4% of pre-crisis aid is being delivered. Particularly alarming is the cutting off of Gaza's lifelines: electricity, water, fuel, medical supplies and food for the people living there. The bombing of the Palestinians in Gaza and cutting off of their lifelines, along with the attack on Israelis by Hamas on October 7, 2023 and taking of civilian hostages, are profound breaches of international law. We unequivocally condemn both of these acts.



Committee of Religious NGOs

AT THE UNITED NATIONS

THE BUREAU 2022 - 2024

CO-CHAIRS

Beth Blissman

Loretto Community

Rev. Doyeon Park

Won Buddhism

Julia Grindon-Welch

*Brahma Kumaris World
Spiritual University*

SECRETARY

Dilepkumar Thankappan

World Yoga Community

TREASURER

Steve Chiu

Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

MEMBERS AT-LARGE

Carl Murrell

*National Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahá'ís of the United
States*

Rev. Margaret Rose

The Episcopal Church

Imam Saffet Abid Catovic

*UN Operations for Justice
For All*

EX-OFFICIO

Hiro Sakurai

Soka Gakkai International

Rev. Dionne Boissiere

*Chaplain at the Church
Center for the United Nations*

Our coalition recognizes the complexity of this conflict and joins with many voices of faith in calling upon governments, international bodies, religious leaders of all faiths, and civil society organizations to bring about an immediate cessation to the violence and the initiation of a new round of peace negotiations.

Violence and war do not resolve underlying conflict. Most casualties - nearly 80 percent - end up being civilians, including families, the elderly, women, and children, who are especially vulnerable. In Israel and Palestine and all areas of the world where there is active violence and war, we urge all parties involved to sincerely and actively seek sustainable and just solutions to seemingly intractable conflicts, and to safeguard the safety and security of all their peoples.

We acknowledge the historical and religious significance of this region for Muslims, Christians and Jews, followers of the Abrahamic faith traditions, and the complexity of its history. We urge faith-based groups and their leaders to take a strong stand for peace and take concrete steps to stop the spread of violence.

Today, inter-state and intra-state violence inflict mass suffering, resulting in nearly 15 million refugees and displaced people in the Middle East and North Africa alone. Today our hearts go out to all the victims, and we hold the innocent who have been killed in our thoughts and prayers. We consistently and compassionately stand in solidarity with the victims and survivors of violence.

We remind our members, partners, and supporters worldwide that violence is not inevitable. It is a choice. It can be prevented. It can be stopped. Each of us has a role to speak up and interrupt its spread. We also need to work on increasing peace in our own lives and daily practices.

www.CRNGO.org

religiousngo@gmail.com