

Religions and International Relations

At the Intersection of Interreligious Engagement, Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) & Sustainable Development

Bologna, March 6-7, 2019

Programme

Religion is politically ambivalent: it can be part of the problem, as well as part of the solution to the global problems the world is facing. In the spirit of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the international community has finally started to recognise the positive impact of religion on sustainable development and fostering peaceful and inclusive societies. Religious and interreligious actors, however, are still rarely welcome at the leading global policy tables. How can these new innovative secular-religious partnerships between governments and interreligious dynamics be reinforced and rendered more impactful?

17.30 Wednesday, March 6th - PALAZZO ISOLANI (via Santo Stefano, 16)

Session I

Interreligious Engagement Strategies: A Policy Tool to Advance FoRB (Discussion of the Report)

Question: The key message of this report is that engagement with religious actors and interreligious dialogue and collaboration are crucial policy tools to combat intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief and to promote FoRB. Thus, the report calls for a change in the dominant policy approach adopted by governments and international organisations in response to the global crisis of FoRB: Religious actors should not only be seen by policymakers as either the victims or the perpetrators of FoRB violations but as partners in building long-term strategies to advance FoRB for all and foster pluralism, social cohesion and sustainable peace. What is your take on the report, its approach, key messages and recommendations? What do you see as the main opportunities and risks emerging from its suggested approach? How could its recommendations be moved to the implementation stage?

Welcome address: **Armando BARUCCO**, Head of Policy Planning Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation – Italy

Chair: **Fabio PETITO**, University of Sussex & Head of the ISPI-MFAIC Programme on 'Religions and International Relations' – UK/Italy

Kick off remarks

Pasquale FERRARA, Italian Ambassador to Algeria

Silvio FERRARI, Professor of Law and Religion, University of Milan – Italy

Nazila GHANEA, Associate Professor in International Human Rights Law, University of Oxford – UK

Jean-Christophe PEAUCELLE, Advisor for Religious Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development – France

20.00 BUFFET DINNER

Thursday, March 7 - PALAZZO ISOLANI (via Santo Stefano, 16)

9.00 Session II

Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD)

Question: The TPNRD was created in 2015 to facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration between diplomats and policy officials in Europe and North America whose portfolios focus on the role of religion and religious engagement in foreign policy. At the beginning of 2019 the TPNRD Secretariat launched a new website on Religion & Diplomacy (<https://religionanddiplomacy.org.uk/>). How do we enhance collaboration between policymakers and researchers on matters of religion and diplomacy? What more can be done to foster 'religious literacy' and 'policy literacy'?

Chair: Judd BIRDSALL, Managing Director, Cambridge Institute on Religion & International Studies, Clare College, Cambridge – UK

Kick off remarks

James ALEXANDER, Policy Advisor, Office of Religion and Global Affairs, US Department of State – US

Jocelyne CESARI, President, European Academy of Religion – Italy

Sonya ELMER DETTELBACHER, DFA Federal Department Of Foreign Affairs Human Security Division - Switzerland

Erin WILSON, Associate Professor of Politics and Religion, University of Groningen – The Netherlands

11.00 COFFEE BREAK

11.30 Session III

Where is the Policy Discussion on Religion in International Relations going?

Question: In 2019 the Italian initiative on 'Religions and International Relations' will celebrate its 10th anniversary. How do you assess the state of the art of the discussion around the role of religions in international relations and in foreign policy-making? Where are new challenges and opportunities arising? In your view, what's the next big thing on the religious engagement agenda in foreign policy? Will and how may the role of religions take us (again) by surprise and unexpectedly impact future developments of global politics?

Chair: Michael D. DRIESSEN, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Political Science and International Affairs, John Cabot University – Italy

Kick off remarks

Mohamed ELSANOUSI, Executive Director, Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers - Finland

Massimo INTROVIGNE, Director, CESNUR - Center for Studies on New Religions – Italy

Pekka METSO, Ambassador for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue Processes, Unit for UN and General Global Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs – Finland

Brett SCHARFFS, Brigham Young University Law School – USA

13.15 BUFFET LUNCH

PARTICIPANTS

Kristina ARRIAGA, President, Oxford Society for Law and Religion – UK

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Mustafa Cenap AYDIN, Director, Tevere Institute – Italy

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Judd BIRDSALL, Managing Director, Cambridge Institute on Religion & International Studies, Clare College, Cambridge – UK

Francesca CAEDDU, Researcher, John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies – Italy

Roberto CATALANO, Co-Director of the International Office for Interreligious Dialogue, Focolare Movement – Italy

Jocelyne CESARI, President, European Academy of Religion – Italy

Fadi DAOU, Chairperson & CEO, Adyan: Foundation for Diversity, Solidarity and Human Dignity – Lebanon

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Scott THOMAS, Senior Lecturer /Associate Professor of in International Relations and Politics of Developing Countries, Department of Politics, Languages & International Studies, University of Bath – UK

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