

COMMISSION I:

Advancing *Shared Well-Being* as a
Multi-Religious Vision of *Positive Peace*

Report from the 10th World Assembly



Religions for Peace 

Commission I Report: Advancing *Shared Well-Being* as Multi-Religious Vision of *Positive Peace*

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Overview

In this commission we explored *positive Peace* from 2 different vantage points: the first being the **Religions for Peace** concept of *Shared Well-Being* and shared moral values amongst the world's religions, and the second being the Institute of Economics and Peace's (IEP) 8 pillars of *positive Peace*, derived from statistics, empirical research and analysis. These two conceptions of *positive Peace* presented are different, but also inter-related and complementary.

The overarching theme emerging from the commission papers, consultations and discussions thought the commissions was that religions have a vital role in the development of inner spiritual values that foster peace. This inner personal development is fundamental if we are to achieve our goal of creating a world that is both at peace and characterized by *positive peace*. Our religious and spiritual traditions provide us with the guidance and teachings to transform ourselves into more peaceful, humble and loving human beings; and this process of personal transformation needs to occur in parallel with societal development and transformation. These personal values and the importance of this personal development must be seen as a vital aspect of the institutional and empirical conceptualizations of *positive peace*.

1. In light of this, we come to our first recommendation: **we recommend that the concept of *Shared Well-Being* as a multi-religious vision of *positive Peace* be integrated into the *positive Peace* framework.**

Furthermore, there was a significant emphasis on education throughout the commission papers, and discussions amongst participants. The form of education needs to not only imparts knowledge and information, but also take a more holistic and values-based approach to the development of young people, which is integral to the formation of peaceful individuals, communities and societies. A balanced education of hearts and minds is essential for a holistic, inclusive and equitable human development.

2. This brings us to our second recommendation: We recommend that **Religions for Peace** national chapters work to advocate for the inclusion of peace education into their curricula. **We recommend that Religions for Peace chapters collaborate with organizations in their home countries to support the delivery of 'Education for Peace' programs into schools.**

Commission

At the commission sessions, each of the regions gave an overview of their understanding of the role that religious communities can and should do to further *positive peace* in their respective countries and regions. **Dr. Vendley [Secretary General Emeritus, Religions for Peace]** then presented the concept of *Shared Well-Being* as a multi-religious vision of *positive Peace*. He discussed the deeply important and vital role that religions play in moral and ethical

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personal development of human beings and of the shared values amongst religions which contribute to *positive* Peace. **Steve Killelea [Founder and Executive Chairman: Integrated Research LTD.; Charitable Foundation; Institute for Economics and Peace; Honorary President, *Religions for Peace*]** presented an overview of the positive peace framework and the research that has been undertaken by the Institution of Economics and Peace to help uncover what factors contribute to the creation and sustainment of peaceful societies. *Positive* Peace refers not just to the absence of violence. It is described as the “attitudes, institutions and structures which create and sustain peaceful societies.” The pillars therefore of *positive* Peace describe the “attitudes, institutions and structures that **underpin** peaceful societies.” Those pillars are:

1. Well functioning government
2. Sound economic regulation
3. Equitable distribution
4. Assuring the rights of others
5. Good relations with neighbors
6. Free flow of information
7. High levels of human capital
8. Low levels of corruption

Throughout the discussion, the participants reflected on their past peacebuilding projects and explored how their work aligns with the 8 pillars of *positive* Peace and contributes to building peace in their respective societies. Attendees then broke into groups and brainstormed projects, applying the *positive* Peace framework and drawing from varied ideas and experiences from other attendees. The projects focused strongly on education projects, along with others on health and community radio projects. This was a productive exercise and participants expressed interest in continuing to learn more about the framework and ascertain the value that the approach could have to their activities. In light of this we come to our third and fourth recommendations:

3. From this arises our second and third recommendation: **we recommend that for *Religions for Peace* and the IEP to work together to develop a customized version of the *positive* Peace training course that takes into account the multi-religious context.**
4. We recommend that the *Religions for Peace* consider working with the IEP to **implement *positive* Peace workshop training to their members as a capacity building initiative, with the aim of introducing the approach to their projects.**