

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Africa High Level Faith Leaders' Forum on Peace, Security and Environment

Nairobi, 21 October 2022: Leaders representing diverse faith traditions from 31 countries in Africa met in Nairobi on 19th and 20th October 2022 to deliberate and reflect on various issues affecting the continent. Convened by *Religions for Peace* and one of its six regional affiliate, the African Council of Religious Leaders – *Religions for Peace* (ACRL-RfP), religious leaders deliberated on the impact of climate change on the ecological, social and economic systems, and how it threatens the wellbeing and security of communities across Africa and precludes the realisation of the vision outlined in the African Union's *AGENDA 2063: The Africa We Want*, the blueprint for inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development to transform Africa into the global powerhouse of the future.

The two-day deliberations came out with a joint [statement on the Ethiopia/Tigray Conflict](#) and [a Communiqué](#) on the *Africa Interfaith Roadmap to Agenda 2063: Saving the Environment, Securing the Peace* in preparation for COP27 and the *Religions for Peace Manresa Forum: At a Cross Road: An Intergenerational and Multireligious Response to the Social and Environmental Crises* with the objective of magnifying the voices of African Religious Leaders at the conference. The deliberations also touched on; political unrest in the Sahel region and the need to mitigate the effects of the prolonged drought and famine as a result of climate change exacerbated by the war in Ukraine which is affecting global food prices and distribution.

“The ACRL-RfP Governing Board provided both policy and strategic direction that will see more concerted efforts by religious leaders at regional and national level being more pro-active in seeking solutions to the emerging and perennial challenges facing Africa. We want to continue praying but also turn faith into action by deploying the spiritual and moral assets of faith in solving these problems” ~ Dr Francis Kuria, Secretary General (ACRL)

The contribution of the Africa Women of Faith was acknowledged with a call for increased recognition and opportunities for women in the conceptualisation, implementation and reporting of initiatives and actions in country contexts. In addition, to embed their work within and in line with the national, regional and international charters and conventions on gender equality, Sr. Agatha Ogochukwu Chikelue; Co-Chair African Women of Faith Network, stated, *“Armed conflicts in Africa continue to affect women and children more than anyone else. This is the reason why the voice and agency of women needs to be included in all formal and informal platforms that are created to seek solutions. Women of Faith are a consistent voice, and our contribution will continue to catalyse practical actions that stop the suffering of our communities”*

The meeting reinforced and reaffirmed the commitment of *Religions for Peace* and the African Council of Religious Leaders - *Religions for Peace* in collaborating with different Governments, development partners and communities, for concrete actions in addressing conflict situations, climate justice and environmental management. The role and voice of Interfaith Youth in these conversations was a running theme, as Prof. Azza Karam, Secretary General, *Religions for Peace International*, emphasized, *“The youth are not only leaders of tomorrow but today as well; for more than 50 years, Religions for Peace has continued to provide spaces for intergenerational dialogue and action to facilitate exchange of knowledge, experience and insights so that youth are not necessarily only doing new things but can find new ways of doing the old things better and this applies to all aspects of interventions.”*

The convenings come at a time when the world is faced by multiple crisis from wars, food shortages and prolonged drought in Africa. ACRL-RfP continues to mobilise practical action even as we continue calling for multi-religious prayers and action.

This event is a pre-cursor to the 27th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (**COP 27**) and the conference on *“At a Crossroads: A Multireligious Intergenerational Response to the Social and Environmental Crises”* jointly organised by *Religions for Peace* and City of Manresa (Catalonia, Spain) on 27-30 November 2022.

For further information and requests, please contact:

African Council of Religious Leaders-RfP: *Dr. Francis Kuria, Secretary General* fkuria@acrl-rfp.org
Religions for Peace: Ms. Sohaa Khan: skhan@rfp.org

Notes to Editor

1. [The African Council of Religious Leaders – Religions for Peace \(ACRL-Religions for Peace\)](#) is the largest and most representative multi-religious platform in Africa. ACRL-*Religions for Peace's* Vision is sustainable peace and justice in Africa with a mission in mobilising religious leaders and their communities to promote peaceful, just and inclusive societies. ACRL-*Religions for Peace* is comprised of 5 sub-regional hubs in West, East, Central, Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands; 31 National Inter Religious Councils and two integral networks - the Africa Women of Faith Network (AWFN) and the African Interfaith Youth Network (AIYN).
2. [Religions for Peace](#) was founded in 1970 by a group of religious leaders representing diverse religious institutions and faith communities. It serves as the world's largest representative coalition of all faiths (from senior most leadership to grassroots interfaith youth and women's networks), dedicated to multireligious collaborations and multi stakeholder partnerships for the common good - specifically in the areas of peace and security, human rights and sustainable development. [Religions for Peace](#) operates through an International Secretariat headquartered in New York, five regional Interreligious Councils (IRCs) and over 90 national IRCs.