

Religions for Peace

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

***Religions for Peace* and UNHCR Host Field Mission to Moldova by Multi-Religious Council of Leaders**

31 January 2023 | New York: *Religions for Peace* and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have assembled their [Multi-Religious Council of Leaders](#) for a two-day field mission to Chisinau, Moldova, calling for people of all faiths, across the globe, to increase their support of Ukrainian refugees and host communities. The Multi-Religious Council of Leaders, comprised of 20 religious and spiritual leaders, was born from the need to enlist the collaboration of faith leaders and communities to address refugee crises. During this two-day mission, the Multi-Religious Council of Leaders will increase visibility of the refugee situation in Moldova by visiting various sites and by engaging in dialogue with host and refugee communities.

The main objectives of the *Religions for Peace* and UNHCR field mission and its international multi-religious delegation of senior faith leaders are: to recognise and expand awareness of the Moldovan government's efforts to host and integrate Ukrainian refugees; to show solidarity and spiritual communion with the Ukrainian refugees and people of Moldova; to contribute financially to support the services of UNHCR and the Moldovan government; and, to provide support to build strategic partnerships and relationships with interfaith and humanitarian actors.

Today, the interreligious panel on Solidarity and Peace, moderated by Professor Azza Karam, Secretary General of *Religions for Peace*, featured remarks from local religious leaders and international, senior religious leaders as part of the Multi-Religious Council of Leaders. Professor Karam noted, "As people are forcibly displaced across national boundaries and face multiple challenges, *Religions for Peace* leaders commit to support UNHCR in Moldova to ensure limitless compassion and multiple forms of mercy through religious institutions and communities."

Imam Sayed Razawi, Director-General and Chief Imam of the Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society in Scotland spoke about how, "Today, we witness a historic moment as both UNHCR and *Religions for Peace* convene a high-level meeting in Moldova with representatives of the Moldovan government, and local actors in not only a show of solidarity, but concrete support for ongoing efforts, both in relation to refugees and reconciliation." Bishop Elias Toumeh, Bishop of the Greek Orthodox Church in Venezuela and the Caribbean, called for everyone present to "work together so that we can do together what we cannot do alone."

The Moldova field mission anticipates several outcomes including the acknowledgement of the tireless support provided by faith communities, and documentation of the essential role of interfaith engagement and collaboration in governmental policymaking and decision-making processes. Further, by highlighting this field mission and the different religious leaders in attendance, *Religions for Peace* and UNHCR aim to emphasise the need for faith-based organisations and faith actors in humanitarian and refugee crises responses.

This mission would not have been made possible without the [Religions for Peace Multi-Religious Humanitarian Fund](#) and its contributors, most notably the GHR Foundation and Risho-Kosei kai. *Religions for Peace* would like to thank the supporters of the Multi-Religious Humanitarian Fund for allowing us to forge spiritual and practical solidarity between faith communities worldwide.

[Read more about the mission.](#)

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