



Religions for Peace



**ICYF**  
ISLAMIC COOPERATION YOUTH FORUM  
منتدى التعاون الإسلامي للشباب  
FORUM DE LA JEUNESSE DE LA COOPÉRATION ISLAMIQUE

# Engaging Youth in the Abolition of All Forms of Racism from a Faith Perspective to Achieve a Sustainable Future for All

THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2023, 9:00AM - 11:00AM EDT

777 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA, 8TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10017 & ZOOM

## BACKGROUND

Racism is a problem that affects people of all ages, cultures, ethnicities, religions, and backgrounds. It has far-reaching implications for individuals and societies, hindering progress on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the context of faith, racism is also a violation of the core principles of most religious traditions that emphasize the value of diversity, equality, equity, and justice. As such, it is important to engage young people from a faith perspective in combating racism and promoting a sustainable future for all.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in racism and discrimination toward individuals and communities, particularly faith communities. A recent [report](#) by the UN Special Rapporteur on the freedom of religion or belief has reported that suspicion, discrimination, and outright hatred towards Muslims have reached “epidemic proportions.” In both developed and developing nations, racism is also a major source of inequality, especially in areas such as education, employment opportunities, and access to healthcare. The SDGs seek to promote peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, as well as equitable access to the fundamental rights and freedoms that all human beings need to thrive. SDGs 11 and 17 are particularly relevant in the prevention and eradication of discrimination and racism; the promotion of inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable urbanization; and the advancement of collaboration and partnerships among religious and faith communities, civil society, governments, businesses, and other sectors of society.

As key drivers of change, the engagement of young people is key to ensuring effective actions towards the achievement of the SDGs and the eradication of racism. All stakeholders must empower and build upon their creativity, energy, and innovative thinking in addressing the world’s most pressing issues by facilitating platforms for meaningful youth engagement – such as youth-led campaigns, policy discussions, coalitions, and collective efforts.

In this context, this side event on *Engaging Youth in the Abolition of All Forms of Racism from a Faith Perspective to Achieve a Sustainable Future for All* seeks to promote youth engagement in the achievement of the SDGs, particularly SDGs 11 and 17, from a faith perspective. The event is organized in partnership with *Religions for Peace*, the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF), and the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA).

## OBJECTIVES

- Raise awareness about the systemic nature of racism and its detrimental impact on youth and communities.
- Explore the different manifestations of racism, including discrimination, prejudice, Islamophobia, and violence, and their far-reaching consequences on marginalized youth and communities.
- Develop strategies for combating racism, at both the individual and systemic levels, and the potential of engaging youth in building inclusive and diverse communities.
- Share best practices and success stories from around the world on anti-racism initiatives, policy interventions, community-based approaches, and educational programs.
- Promote collaboration and partnerships among civil societies and youth NGOs, governments, and international organizations to strengthen their cooperation in combatting racism.
- Emphasize the importance of engaging young people as powerful agents of change in combating racism and promoting shared values of diversity, equality, and justice.
- Exemplify the importance and value added of meaningful youth engagement, youth-led campaigns, policy discussions, coalitions, publications, workshops, and collective efforts in combating racism effectively.

## FORMAT

The side event, *Engaging Youth in the Abolition of All Forms of Racism from Faith Perspective to Achieve a Sustainable Future for All*, is co-organized by *Religions for Peace*, the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF), and International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA). It focuses on the harmful and far-reaching implications of racism on marginalized youth and communities, which have hindered progress on achievement of the SDGs. The 120-minute event will feature opening remarks and a keynote presentation on the impact of racism on marginalized youth and communities, followed by an interactive panel discussion and closing remarks on the different manifestations of racism and effective strategies to combat these harmful practices.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR SPEAKERS

- How do the social structures of racism perpetuate harmful narratives of racism worldwide?
- Can you identify major systems in place that encourage ongoing racism in your region of the world? How similar are these to other parts of the world?
- How can we effectively involve youth in combating racism, particularly in areas such as education, employment opportunities, and equitable access to healthcare?
- What strategies can we adopt to address the various manifestations of racism, including discrimination, prejudice, Islamophobia, and violence?
- How can we create and sustain inclusive and diverse communities that are respectful of different cultures and faiths?
- Can you share some examples of successful youth-led anti-racism initiatives, policy interventions, community-based approaches, and educational programs?



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## AGENDA

<b>9:00 - 9:01AM</b>	Moment of Silence
<b>9:01 - 9:20AM</b>	Welcome and Opening Remarks
<b>9:20 - 9:40AM</b>	Keynote Presentation on the Impact of Racism on Marginalized Youth and Communities
<b>9:40AM - 10:20AM</b>	Interactive Panel Discussion
<b>10:20AM - 10:40AM</b>	Q&A
<b>10:40AM - 11:00AM</b>	Closing Remarks