



***Beyond War and Towards Reconciliation:
Multi-Religious Peace Roundtables***
The Second Tokyo Peace Roundtable
18-22 February 2024
Tokyo, Japan
Concept Note

Background

Against a backdrop of myriad threats to our common home, the international community is plagued by a pervasive sense of insecurity, stemming from what the United Nations [reported](#) to be the highest number of ongoing violent conflicts since the Second World War. In every region of the world, the foundations of peace and security are currently threatened. Simultaneous armed conflicts in Afghanistan, Colombia, Ethiopia, Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, Myanmar, and Ukraine stand as horrifying examples of the many threats.

The urgent need for new and renewed approaches to peacebuilding led by multi-religious organisations and diverse religious leaders remains vital and clear. The Second Tokyo Peace Roundtable will focus on these new and renewed approaches, as well as concrete examples of multi-religious action.

Global humanitarian needs are at record levels. Over 360 million people worldwide are in need of humanitarian assistance, of which over 110 million have been forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, violent conflict, or human rights violations. The “silent victims” - women, children, and marginalised peoples - are caught in the crossfire, disproportionately deprived, and impacted by gross human rights violations.

Addressing global challenges to peace and security, sustainable development, and human rights requires sustained collaboration across faiths, cultures, peoples, and sectors. In this context, all religious and faith traditions call upon their followers to work together for the common good of all people and the planet. As foundational pillars of society and critical agents of change, religious and faith actors, policymakers, and governmental and intergovernmental entities are well-positioned to inform and strengthen each other’s capacities and efforts in facilitating reconciliation and (re)building the foundations for peace, security, and human dignity.

It is with this understanding that *Religions for Peace* launched the [Beyond War and Toward Reconciliation: Multi-Religious Peace Roundtables](#), which convene multi-religious leaders experienced in serving diverse communities in times of both war and peace (and doing so together), alongside secular policymakers. The inaugural convening of the first Roundtable, the [Tokyo Peace Roundtable](#), in September 2022



created a 'safe space' for religious leaders from otherwise warring countries – including Ethiopia, Myanmar, South Sudan, Russia, and Ukraine - to inspire and support each other to heal social divisions, redress trauma, and foster forgiveness and reconciliation for more peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

The Second Multi-Religious Peace Roundtable

Building on this foundation, *Religions for Peace* International and *Religions for Peace* Japan, in collaboration with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), will convene diverse religious and faith leaders and actors, policymakers, and experts for the second Multi-Religious Peace Roundtable from **19-21 February 2024** in Tokyo, Japan. The second Peace Roundtable will build on the commitments made by leaders from the first Peace Roundtable, particularly:

1. A *commitment* from all stakeholders to initiate long-term processes of reconciliation, to avoid the reoccurrence of cycles of violence, based upon the need for healing and forgiveness and the charter thereof;
2. A *continuation* of multi-religious peace dialogue roundtables, to bring together religious leaders from all sides of conflicts to share wisdom and build multi-religious cooperation and advance peace;
3. A *recognition* of the sanctity of human life, and the imperative for all of us to continue to cultivate love for every single human being.

As the world's oldest and most representative multi-religious leadership platform, *Religions for Peace* has over a 50-year legacy of facilitating mediation efforts, interreligious dialogue and cooperation, as well multi-religious critical service provision, through its Interreligious Councils, Women of Faith and Interfaith Youth Networks in nearly 100 countries. Across the globe, religious and faith leaders from the *Religions for Peace* movement advance common action not only with one another, but also with secular civil society organisations, policymakers, and governmental and intergovernmental entities.

Objectives and Outcomes

Religions for Peace International and *Religions for Peace* Japan, in collaboration with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), will convene diverse religious and faith leaders and actors, together with secular policymakers and experts to:

- i. Identify and assess the specific roles that leaders from diverse faith traditions fulfil in war-torn and humanitarian contexts, as they execute collaborative efforts;
- ii. Identify and evaluate the various strategies employed by multi-religious platforms (including Interreligious Councils) in reconciliation and rebuilding social cohesion efforts;
- iii. Assess the unique contributions of multi-religious humanitarian support provided in diverse contexts and the lessons learned in how such humanitarian efforts contribute to (re)building socially cohesive contexts.

As a result, the second Multi-Religious Peace Roundtable will directly contribute to:



- i. Providing a replicable and a scalable platform for effective peacebuilding actions between multi-religious and secular leaders and policymakers.
- ii. Developing a clear understanding of how multi-religious actions provide positive influences on policymakers' efforts in rebuilding and reconstructing peaceful and inclusive societies.
- iii. Strengthening bonds of solidarity, engagement and trust between diverse faith leaders, and between religious and secular policy makers and peacebuilders.

Relevant Links

Documents from the First Tokyo Peace Roundtable (2022)

- [Press Release for the First Tokyo Peace Roundtable \(2022\)](#)
- [Report of the First Tokyo Peace Roundtable \(2022\)](#)
- [Statement from the First Tokyo Peace Roundtable \(2022\)](#)

Religions for Peace Publications and Resources

- [Religions for Peace 2022 Annual Report](#)
- [Religions for Peace: The Global Movement Through Impact](#)
- [Faithful Peace: Why the Journey to Build Resilience is Multi-Religious](#)
- [Religions for Peace Multi-Religious Humanitarian Fund](#)