

# Forging Paths *for* Shared Sacred Flourishing

International Council Meeting | June 23-25, 2026 | Mauritius

## THEMATIC DIALOGUE I

### Artificial Intelligence in Conflict Settings

#### Human Dignity and Multifaith Perspectives

According to the 2025 SIPRI report, military expenditures have reached record levels, surpassing USD 2.7 trillion annually, as states rearm in response to shifting geopolitical rivalries, proxy conflicts, and rapid technological change.<sup>1</sup> The multilateral disarmament architecture built in the late twentieth century is under severe pressure: key treaties have collapsed or stalled, nuclear modernization and testing is accelerating again, and new forms of warfare increasingly blur the line between combatant and civilian. The outcome is the deterioration of international laws and a normalization of perpetual, technologically enabled conflicts.<sup>2</sup> Among the most consequential developments is the rapid integration of artificial intelligence and autonomous systems into military doctrine and security operations, raising urgent questions regarding accountability, human oversight, and the ethical limits of machine-enabled decision-making.<sup>3</sup> These developments pose a direct threat to the principles universally agreed upon in the aftermath of WWII. The emergence of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS), capable of selecting and engaging targets without meaningful human control, poses significant challenges for existing international humanitarian law frameworks

governing accountability, proportionality, distinction, and civilian protection during war.

In *Magnifica Humanitas* (2026), Pope Leo XIV has warned against the increasing integration of AI into systems of warfare, surveillance, and domination, cautioning that the delegation of life-and-death decisions to autonomous systems risks eroding moral responsibility, accountability, and human dignity.<sup>4</sup> The encyclical calls for AI to be “disarmed” from logics of exclusion, control, profit, and war, and urges the international community to ensure that human conscience and ethical judgment remain central in decisions affecting human life and security.

Religious and faith actors, connected through a shared sacred worldview, have an important role to play in advancing ethical reflection, promoting accountability, and reaffirming the primacy of human dignity and moral responsibility in the development and governance of emerging technologies. Through interfaith dialogue, youth engagement, and collaboration with policymakers, civil society, and technology leaders, faith communities can contribute to shaping more inclusive and human-centered approaches to AI governance, peacebuilding, and conflict prevention.

1 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2025. SIPRI Fact Sheet. Solna: SIPRI, 2025.

2 United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. The State of Arms Control and Disarmament 2023. Geneva: UNIDIR, 2023.

3 United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. The Weaponization of Increasingly Autonomous Technologies: Artificial Intelligence. Geneva: UNIDIR, 2021.

4 Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas: On Safeguarding Human Dignity in the Age of Artificial Intelligence* (2026); Vatican statements and reflections on AI ethics, warfare, and responsible governance.

## Expected Outcomes

- Strengthened multifaith dialogue on the ethical, humanitarian, and governance implications of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies.
- Increased awareness of the risks associated with AI-enabled warfare, autonomous weapons systems, and the erosion of meaningful human accountability in conflict settings.
- Greater recognition of the role of religious and faith actors in advancing ethical reflection, human dignity, and moral responsibility within global discussions on AI governance.
- Identification of opportunities for collaboration among faith leaders, youth representatives, policymakers, civil society, and technology experts on responsible and human-centered approaches to emerging technologies.

## Guiding Questions

1. How are artificial intelligence and emerging technologies reshaping the nature of conflict, security, and human accountability?
2. What ethical and legal concerns arise from the development and deployment of autonomous weapons systems and AI-enabled military technologies?
3. What does “meaningful human control” mean in the context of AI and lethal decision-making, and why is it essential for protecting human dignity and civilian life?
4. How can international institutions, governments, and technology actors strengthen governance frameworks to ensure accountability, transparency, and compliance with international humanitarian law?
5. How can religious and faith actors contribute to global efforts to ensure that artificial intelligence remains guided by human dignity, moral responsibility, and the protection of life, particularly in conflict settings?
6. How can multistakeholder dialogue help prevent the misuse of AI in ways that deepen violence, exclusion, surveillance, and social fragmentation?

# Principles of Algor-Ethics

In July 2024, representatives of 11 world religions convened **AI Ethics for Peace**, promoting “Algor-ethics” — namely the ethical use of AI. The six principles of Algor-Ethics include:

- **Transparency:** AI systems must be understandable to all
- **Inclusion:** AI systems must not discriminate against anyone — because every human being has equal dignity
- **Responsibility:** there must always be someone who takes responsibility for what a machine does
- **Impartiality:** AI systems must avoid bias and discrimination
- **Reliability:** AI systems should produce consistent, accurate, and trustworthy results
- **Security and Privacy:** AI systems must be secure and respect the privacy of users

Developed by the Pontifical Academy for Life

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## THEMATIC DIALOGUE II

### Climate, Conflict, and Debt

#### Interlinked Risk and the Responsibility to Sustain Life

According to the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations, the nexus between climate change, violent conflict, and unsustainable debt burdens has resulted in creation of a polycrisis that has disproportionately affected fragile and climate sensitive societies.

In many countries rising temperatures, water scarcity, food insecurity, and environmental degradation are increasingly interacting with political instability, displacement, weak governance, and economic fragility. Many of these countries are often low-and-middle income countries who face debt

obligations which significantly constrain their ability to address the challenges through development of long-term sustainable solutions. As a result, an endless cycle of climate shock, violent conflicts, and deep economic downturns plagues the countries.<sup>1</sup>

Although international frameworks increasingly recognize the links between climate, conflict, and debt, responses often remain fragmented across humanitarian, financial, environmental, and security institutions.



**Rapid growth in the use of renewable energy is one reason for hope in the fight against climate change. But urgent measures are needed to prevent catastrophe, experts say.**

Addressing these overlapping crises will require “a whole of society” approach, accorded with the shared sacred worldview that places human dignity and shared responsibility at the center.

In this context, religious and faith actors have an important role to play in strengthening social cohesion, promoting solidarity with vulnerable communities, and advancing ethical approaches to environmental stewardship and economic justice. They hold significant moral authority and have a wide network that can reach

affected societies, making them a crucial partner in fostering dialogue, advocating for more equitable and human-centered policies, and reinforcing collective responsibility to sustain life.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 2025: A Matter of Choice: People and Possibilities in the Age of AI (2025) [https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2025?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://hdr.undp.org/content/human-development-report-2025?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

## Expected Outcomes

- Increased understanding of the interconnected nature of climate change, violent conflict, and unsustainable debt burdens, particularly in fragile and climate-vulnerable contexts.
- Exchange of experiences and locally grounded approaches related to climate resilience, social cohesion, peacebuilding, and community-based adaptation in contexts affected by environmental crisis and instability.
- Greater reflection on the role of religious and faith actors in promoting solidarity, ethical stewardship, climate justice, and community resilience in the face of overlapping global challenges.
- Contribute to broader policy discussions on strengthening multilateral cooperation and collective responsibility to sustain life, protect human dignity, and support future generations.

## Guiding Questions

1. How do climate change, conflict, and unsustainable debt interact to deepen fragility and vulnerability, particularly in climate-sensitive and conflict-affected contexts?
2. In what ways do rising debt burdens constrain investments in climate adaptation, peacebuilding, social protection, and long-term resilience?
3. What responsibilities do wealthier states, international financial institutions, and multilateral actors have toward countries facing compounded climate, conflict, and debt-related pressures?
4. How can religious and faith actors contribute to strengthening social cohesion, advancing climate justice, and supporting community resilience in contexts affected by instability and environmental stress?
5. What ethical and human-centered approaches are needed to ensure that global responses to climate change, conflict, and debt prioritize human dignity, solidarity, and the protection of future generations?



A woman waters a tree nursery in Mali, using water from a solar-powered borehole. Projects like this, implemented by the African Council of Religious Leaders-*Religions for Peace*, are helping communities mitigate the impacts of climate change.

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## THEMATIC DIALOGUE III

### Reimagining Multilateralism

#### Trust Deficits, Fragmentation, and the Role of Religious Actors in Inclusive Global Governance

The multilateral architecture built in the late twentieth century is under severe pressure as geopolitical rivalries intensify, international norms weaken, and trust in global institutions continues to erode. Across many regions, armed conflict, political polarization, economic inequality, forced displacement, and climate-related pressures are contributing to growing fragmentation within and between societies.

In this context, there is growing recognition that addressing today's challenges, rebuilding trust, and strengthening inclusive global governance requires reimagining global governance and multilateralism. Religious multilateralism—defined as the structured engagement of diverse faith traditions within international policy frameworks—presents a vital pathway for bridging these systemic gaps. Religious and faith actors have long played a critical role in their societies and often retain significant levels of community trust and local legitimacy where confidence in political institutions has weakened.

Furthermore, robust multi-religious collaboration serves as a powerful antidote to polarization,

demonstrating that diverse belief systems can unite around shared human values. Through grassroots presence and long-standing engagement in conflict prevention, mediation, and reconciliation, these

collaborative interfaith networks and individual faith actors can contribute to fostering multilateral cooperation and global solidarity.

At the same time, religious actors also face important questions regarding representation, accountability, and how to engage constructively within increasingly polarized political environments. Their engagement in public life may also raise concerns related to politicization, exclusionary narratives, and alignment with

universal human rights norms.

Reimagining multilateralism in the current global context requires renewed attention to inclusive participation, ethical leadership, and the strengthening of trust between institutions and communities. As international institutions confront increasingly complex and interconnected challenges, there is a growing need for more inclusive forms of cooperation – anchored in religious multilateralism and inspired by a shared sacred worldview – that bridge global policymaking with local realities and community-based approaches to peace, resilience, and sustainable development.



**The importance of interreligious dialogue in an increasingly fragmented world cannot be overstated.**

## Expected Outcomes

- Increased understanding of the ways in which growing trust deficits and societal fragmentation are affecting the effectiveness of multilateral institutions.
- Greater reflection on the opportunities and limitations in engagement of religious and faith actors in multilateral governance, peacebuilding, and humanitarian efforts.
- Identification of practical approaches for strengthening inclusive partnerships between governments, international organizations, and faith-based actors in responding to global crises.
- Encouragement and support for communities in fighting for their human rights during times of political crisis.
- Exchange of experiences and good practices on fostering dialogue, social cohesion, and locally grounded approaches to peace, resilience, and sustainable development.

## Guiding Questions

1. What are the principal drivers of growing trust deficits and fragmentation within the current multilateral system?
2. How can multilateral institutions become more inclusive, representative, and responsive to the realities faced by local communities and vulnerable populations?
3. What role can religious and faith actors play in rebuilding trust, strengthening social cohesion, and advancing dialogue across political, cultural, and social divides?
4. In what ways can communities support and work with faith leaders towards unity?
5. What challenges and opportunities arise from greater engagement of religious actors within multilateral processes and international policymaking spaces?
6. How can partnerships among governments, international organizations, civil society, and faith communities strengthen collective responses to today's interconnected global crises?



Targeted support is helping to strengthen Interreligious Councils across the *Religions for Peace* movement—building the infrastructure for dialogue. In this photo, diverse religious leaders convened in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, to reflect on improving interreligious collaboration.