



LAUNCHING OF:

Concept Note

FAITH AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: A MULTI-RELIGIOUS STUDY ON THE CONVENTION RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

CELEBRATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



BACKGROUND



The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and has been ratified by virtually all Member States of the United Nations. The CRC's 30th Anniversary will be celebrated at a time when the world is facing critical challenges that are having a profound effect on many children in many parts of the world and include climate change, rise of extreme and violent ideologies, massive migration and forced displacement of millions of families, growing inequality, as well as new threats such as online sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

Based on the important and influential role that religion and religious communities play in society and in the lives of people around the world, Arigatou International and partners have developed a multi-religious study of the CRC. The study examines for the first time the ways in which seven of the world's major religions—the Bahá'í Faith, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and the Sikh Faith—affirm the sanctity of life and dignity of the child and it reflects on how the tenets of these religions are compatible with the CRC's principles and values. Also addressed is the important role that the CRC and these religions ascribe to the family as the natural environment for the

full and harmonious development of children and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.

This Study identifies some of the inconsistencies between the religious tenets and actual practices which result in many shortcomings in the fulfilment of children's rights. They include harmful practices against children by some groups who have misused or misinterpreted religious tenets. The Study identifies the critical role played by religious groups as advocates for child protection and highlights a number of achievements and good practices by religious communities. It further provides recommendations for interfaith dialogue among religious leaders, and dialogue with human rights advocates and child protection practitioners to strengthen collaboration and build solidarity for children's rights. Ultimately, the Study presents the added value of the CRC as a guiding reference in any action that concerns the care and protection of children and provides a supporting framework for diverse religious communities to promote the realization of children's rights.

The Study was developed in collaboration with UNICEF, the former Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) and with the support of partners, KAICIID and World Vision International. The development of the Study brought together experts on children's rights and religious scholars and leaders to reflect and review the CRC and its implementations by religious communities since its adoption thirty years ago.

PANEL DISCUSSION AND LAUNCHING OF STUDY

11:00 – 13:00

PALAIS DES NATIONS, ROOM XVI

For the CRC's 30th Anniversary a panel discussion has been organized followed by the official launching of the multi-religious Study. The panel discussion will present the findings of the Study and reflect on the way forward for strengthening the CRC's implementation and the critical role of religious communities in this context. The panel will bring together child rights experts, diverse religious leaders, representatives of UN agencies, faith-based organizations and civil society organizations.

LAUNCH OF STUDY AND RECEPTION

13:00 – 14:00

RESTAURANT DES DÉLÉGUÉS,
8TH FLOOR

Presentation of **Faith and Children's Rights: A Multi-Religious Study on the Convention on the Rights of the Child** to religious leaders and UN representatives. Remarks from representatives from children, OHCHR, Permanent Missions to the United Nations, and religious leaders.

INTERACTIVE PANEL DISCUSSION

OBJECTIVES

- Present the findings of the Multi-Religious Study on the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- Discuss challenges that children face today and how religious communities, in partnership with governments, UN agencies, and other civil society organizations can better respond;
- Reflect on the role that religious communities can play in furthering the implementation of the CRC;
- Share practical ways in which the recommendations of the Study can be brought to religious communities and other partners for implementing at the national, regional and global levels.

OPENING REMARKS

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto
President of Arigatou International

Ms. Kate Gilmore
Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

Ms. Afshan Khan
UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia

CLOSING REMARKS

H.E. Ambassador Alvaro Albacete
Deputy Secretary General
KAICIID

Ms. Daniela Buzducea
Vice-President - Advocacy and External Engagement, World Vision International.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Professor Savitri Goonesekere
Member of the Faith and Children's Rights Study Authorship Team. Member of the Board of the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children.

INTERACTIVE PANEL DISCUSSION:

Dr. Benyam Dawit Mezmur
Member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and former Chair.

Rabbi David Rosen
International Director, Interreligious Affairs, The American Jewish Committee, Member of Arigatou International Advisory Group

Sheikh Mohammad Abu Zaid
Senior Judge of Saida Islamic Sunni Court, Lebanon

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
Secretary-General, World Council of Churches

MODERATED BY:

Ms. Rebeca Rios-Kohn
Director, Arigatou International New York