

Inspire

Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change.



GNRC Fourth Forum Newsletter

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Interfaith Cooperation for a Better World for Children

INSPIRED: A New Global Interfaith Initiative to Fight Child Poverty Launched

By Hawa Noor

A global interfaith initiative to end child poverty has been launched at the Fourth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) held from 16th to 18th June 2012 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, with the theme: Ending Poverty, Enriching Children: Inspire. Act. Change.

The initiative, “Mobilizing Faith-Based Resources to End Child Poverty,” is designed to mobilize faith communities, their leaders, civil society and political organizations to address corruption and poor governance, war and violence, and unequal distribution of resources. The initiative will utilize interfaith advocacy and grassroots action to overcome poverty by bringing together children and young people, religious leaders and faith communities, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, the African Union and other multi-lateral institutions, educators, governments, development banks, businesses and the media to build a world where no child will live in poverty.

Over 400 participants from 64 different countries around the

world attended the Fourth Forum, including about 50 children and young people, senior religious leaders and representatives from different religious constituencies –Buddhists, Bahais, Christians, Hindus, Indigenous traditions, Jews, Muslims, Shintoists and others, UN officials and leaders from various multilateral institutions and development agencies. A distinguished panel of speakers, guests and eminent persons including President Jakaya M. Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania were also present at the GNRC Fourth Forum.

This is the first time in the history of the GNRC, that the forum was held in Africa, the first one having been held in Tokyo, Japan, in the year 2000, the second one in Geneva, Switzerland in 2004 and the third in Hiroshima, Japan in 2008.

During the opening ceremony, all participating children presented their inspiring stories of poverty while at the same time, emotionally pleading with governments and religious leaders present to act urgently in order to end poverty, that they boldly said, affects millions of their fellow children.



Significant Quotes By Leaders Present at the GNRC Fourth Forum

Compiled by Hawa Noor



H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania

"I implore you to continue the good work. The good thing about it is that it crosses the boundaries of faith and I want to assure you that, my government is satisfied with your invaluable contributions. I pledge our readiness to strengthen the co-operation with your organization and work with you towards the realization of our shared goal of ensuring that Tanzanian children get the opportunity to live and grow in a conducive and secure environment.

We are confident and inspired when we have partners like the GNRC, development agencies and other national and international stakeholders ready to work together with us."



Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, President of Arigatou International

"Trusting in your heart for children and your continued support, I can confidently call for a dramatic new global initiative to end child poverty. We are here for this Forum in Africa, where poverty eradication is at the top of the agenda. If we all together at this Forum can rise to the challenge of launching a new initiative to end child poverty, I am certain we will take a great step towards a world fit for children by adding this third initiative. I count on your spirited engagement over the next three days to help shape this new GNRC effort against poverty, and all of our work for children in the months and years to come."

"In these three remaining countdown years to the MDGs target, let us think beyond the year 2015, and address what has become the gravest injustice to humanity, the injustice that children should still die of causes that we can easily prevent."



Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali, Chairman of the GNRC Fourth Forum Organizing Committee

"I call upon other local and international organizations to emulate what GNRC is doing. I declare my full support for the New Poverty Initiative and call upon all the other First Ladies from around the world to support this noble initiative and where possible work with GNRC to fulfill this historical duty. On my part, I assure you that we will walk with you in this journey."



H.E. Mrs. Salma Kikwete, First Lady of the United Republic of Tanzania

Significant Quotes By Leaders Present at the GNRC Fourth Forum

“I am confident that the next time you meet at the Fifth Forum you will be taking stock of the good work and achievement undertaken after Dar es Salaam. You will share experiences and expertise on how you were able to turn ideas of Dar es Salaam into action. But thanks due to you; The Global Network of Religions for Children, and the noble work that you do. By implementing the resolutions passed here in Dar es Salaam, I believe we will humbly make our case before the Lord, that we did our best. With blessings, we will overcome poverty, greed and provide for the children. We will then be able to Enrich, Inspire and Act. Inshallah.”



Hon. Prof. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development, Tanzania

“Religious communities are an indispensable partner in UNICEF’s work to advance children’s rights and enhance their well-being. Such partnerships are especially important in UNICEF’s renewed focus on reaching the poorest, most vulnerable and hardest to reach children and families. I hope and I’m sure that the Fourth Forum will pave the way to further our collaboration.”



Mr. Elhadj As Sy, Regional Director of the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional office, UNICEF

“The theme of this forum, Eradicating Poverty, Enriching Children, comes at a most timely period. The significance of the three thematic areas identified; unequal distribution of resources, ending wars and violence and corruption and poor governance cannot be over emphasized. In all these, children are often the most affected.”



Dr. Salim A. Salim, Co-Patron of the GNRC Fourth Forum

“The time has come for us to work together to address the challenges raised by these problems, each of us drawing on the strengths of our own religious tradition as we endeavour to translate moral obligation into effective action.”



Jean Louis Cardinal Tauran, President, Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue

H.E. Alhaji Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania



“In this regard, I can see that the global-scale initiative on poverty will readily find a home in Africa, and we ourselves must lead the fight against poverty.”

Photos: GNRC Fourth Forum





Our Most Sincere Appreciation for Making the GNRC Fourth Forum a Success

Esteemed participants, well-wishers, friends and partners of the GNRC,

Compiled By **Hawa Noor**

We would like to express our appreciation for your time with us in Dar es Salaam for the Fourth Forum, for your input and prayers that contributed to making the Fourth Forum a great success.

As part of the GNRC team, we sincerely hope that your experience at the Forum was meaningful and delightful in every way, and that your journey back to your home was safe and smooth. We credit your presence and support for its outstanding success.

As we watched the Forum unfold and shared the joyous fellowship with you and all of our other brothers and sisters there, we were personally inspired, refreshed and renewed in our determination to do all that we can to build a world where no child ever has to live in poverty. We sincerely hope you felt the same way. There is so much left to do, but if we do it together, we can surely prevail.

Please let us close this brief note of thanks with an earnest request for your ongoing guidance, cooperation and support for the Global Network of Religions for Children as a whole, as well as for the new initiative against child poverty. We are so grateful to have you as a partner in our shared commitment to children.

Sincerely yours,

Rev. Keishi Miyamoto
President, Arigatou International

Dr. Mustafa Y. Ali
Chairman, GNRC 4th Forum Organizing Committee

The seniority of all leaders in attendance, the diversity of participants, the impact of the site visits, the excellent speeches and group sessions and most importantly the presence of children as a constant reminder of the fundamental reason for the meeting, all played great roles in making the Fourth Forum a success.

I thank the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania under the leadership of His Excellency President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, Arigatou International under the leadership of Rev. Keishi Miyamoto, UNICEF, the Forum Organizing Committee, the Local Hosting Committee, Co-patrons, His Excellency Ambassador Salim Ahmed Salim and His Lordship Bishop Method Kilaini, the secretariats in Dar es Salaam, Tokyo, Geneva and New York, not forgetting volunteers and all participants at large. Thank you all for your attendance, support and contribution.

The Fourth Forum was only one step of a long process and for it to be a true success, all of you must be part and parcel of the long process of eradicating child poverty. This is now the challenge before us and so let us do it together.

Abubakar Francis Kabwogi, Secretary General, GNRC Fourth Forum

Asante Sana, Arigatou, Muchas Gracias, Thank You!

On behalf of the Local Hosting Committee I would like to extend a blessing of gratitude to everyone who worked so hard over the past two years to make the Fourth Forum a memorable event, most particularly for the more than 300 children who were able to participate in so many different ways.

A huge bundle of thanks belongs to Rev. Miyamoto and all the staff from the Arigatou Foundation for bringing

the Fourth Forum to Africa and to the Haven of Peace, Dar es Salaam. With Dr. Mustafa Ali at the helm of the Organizing Committee, all traveled extensively and spent many midnight hours in cyberspace; a huge vote of thanks to each of you on this committee for making the Fourth Forum shine.

The Hosting Committee is well aware of the enormous work of the Secretariat who knocked themselves out under the guidance of Abubakar Kabwogi, Secretary General of the Fourth Forum, to make it possible for us to host this auspicious Forum in Dar es Salaam. It is the hope that this gratitude fuels the energy to make changes happen in the lives of so many impoverished children for whom this Forum was held.

In caring for our children,

Sr. Jean Pruitt, Chairperson, Local Hosting Committee

The just concluded GNRC Fourth Forum was a great event for Tanzania. The commitment of the President, H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, to officially open the Fourth Forum, the First Lady as the guest of honor at the dinner reception and to close the ceremony the outspoken Minister for Lands and Settlement, Hon. Prof. Anna Tibaijuka, was a true sign of just how significant the fight against child poverty is.

We thank the Arigatou International and in particular Rev. Keishi Miyamoto for the generous support, Dr. Mustafa Ali and his entire organizing committee, Sr. Jean Pruitt and the local hosting committee and Mr. Abubakar F. Kabwogi and his secretariat.

The response of the participants, religious leaders, UNICEF, and other partners was awesomely good and most importantly, the children who fully participated and sent a clear message to the leaders to fight child poverty.

To all of you, many thanks and may God bless you.

His Lordship Bishop Dr. Method Kilaini
Co-Patron of the GNRC Fourth Forum

H.E. Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim
Co-Patron of the GNRC Fourth Forum

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