



THE PONTIFICAL  
ACADEMY OF SOCIAL  
SCIENCES



UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME



WORKSHOP ON

# RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF PEACEMAKING



10-11 July 2025  
Casina Pio IV, Vatican City



***“It is the peace of the risen Christ. A peace that is unarmed and disarming, humble and persevering. A peace that comes from God, the God who loves us all, unconditionally”***

First Blessing “Urbi et Orbi”  
of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, Central Loggia of  
the Vatican Basilica, Thursday, 8 May 2025

# Concept Note

We define ‘peacemaking’ as efforts to prevent imminent violence or end current violence. This can happen through preventive diplomacy, mediation, negotiations, dialogue facilitation, confidence-building etc. Our focus will not extend to the broader realms of peace-building, just war and promoting a culture of peace and tolerance.

We have a flexible understanding of the ‘religious dimensions’ of peacemaking. As discussed below, we are interested in the engagement of religious peacemakers in significant conflicts; the engagement of secular peacemakers in conflicts that include religious actors and issues; and the effects that religious disputes and perspectives have on efforts to resolve conflict.

## Motivation

From the days of antiquity to the present time, Christian and other religious actors have played an important role in helping conflict parties to prevent and end violence. Faith-inspired peacemaking is at the heart of Gospel, and this vision has become increasingly important within Catholic teaching and practice, including Holy See advocacy and diplomacy. The 1965 Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes* emphasized how peace promotion and engagement are fundamental to the mission of the Church in this world. This commitment is also held by other faiths and has become a significant theme of inter-religious dialogue.

In light of Pope Francis’s emphasis on peace as a central theme of the 2025 Jubilee year, as well as the 60th anni-

versary of *Gaudium et Spes*, this conference advances a research- and practitioner-based discussion of the religious dimensions of peacemaking. The timing of this event is propitious as inter- and intra-state violence ravages many parts of the world and generates massive fatalities, suffering and trauma.

## Conference orientation and themes

The conference will cover academic and practitioner perspectives; theory, concepts and case studies; a focus on the Catholic Church as well as other faiths and institutions; and peacemaking at global, national and local levels.

In thinking about these themes, we will avoid a simplistic approach and instead pay attention to the following essential points:

- there are important differences between parties whose identity is defined by their religion and secular parties that have some religious orientation
- there is a distinction between inter-religious and intra-religious divisions and conflicts
- there is no clean divide between ‘secular’ and ‘religious’ peacemakers
- the simplistic binary notion of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ religion is unhelpful, and
- there may be a big difference between conflicts informed by religious views and conflicts over religious practices and sites etc.

# Programme

Pre-conference reception, Wednesday, July 9, 18:30 at Casina Pio IV

## THURSDAY JULY 10, 2025

### SESSION 1 - THE RELIGIOUS IMPERATIVE OF PEACEMAKING

Moderator: **Card. Peter Turkson**, Chancellor PAS/PASS

- 9:00 **Welcome:**  
**Sr. Helen Alford**, President PASS  
**Prof. Mary Gallagher**, Dean, Keough School, Notre Dame University
- 9:10 **Prof. Laurie Nathan**: Conference aim and scope
- 9:20 **Card. Pietro Parolin**: The Catholic Church's commitment to peacemaking
- 9:30 **Card. George Jacob Koovakad**: Religious dialogue a pathway to peace
- 9:40 **Prof. Gregory Reichberg**: Peacemaking in *Gaudium et Spes* (60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year)
- 9:50 **Ms. Eiko Ikegaya**: UN mediation in conflicts with religious dimensions
- 10:00 **Amb. Tor Wennesland**: Reflections on peacemaking in the Middle East
- 10:15 Coffee break

### SESSION 2 - CONCEPTS & VISIONS OF PEACE AS THE GOAL OF PEACEMAKING

*What are the theoretical (theological & religious) perspectives that inform approaches to peacemaking? Is there a tension between the peacemaking goals of peace and justice? To what extent does peacemaking seek to be transformative rather than only seeking to end physical violence?*

Moderator: **Prof. Laurie Nathan**

- 10:45 **Prof. Atalia Omer**  
**Prof. Mahan Mirza**  
**Prof. Andrea Bartoli**
- 11:15 Discussion
- 12:15 Break
- 12:30 Lunch at Casina Pio IV

### SESSION 3 – PEACE DIPLOMACY OF THE HOLY SEE

*How has the Holy See engaged in peacemaking historically and in the current period? What are the characteristics, strengths and limitations of its approach? Has it been effective?*

Moderator: **Sr. Helen Alford**

- 13:30 **Card. Peter Turkson**  
**Prof. Andrea Bartoli**  
**Msgr. Henao Fabio Henao Gaviria**
- 14:00 Discussion

#### SESSION 4 – SECULAR MEDIATION IN CONFLICTS WITH RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS

*How have secular mediators dealt with the religious dimensions of conflict? How seriously do they take these dimensions? How are they perceived by conflict parties with a religious identity? Is there a cultural empathy gap?*

Moderator: **Mr. Matthias Siegfried**

15:00 **Mr. Alejandro Posada-Tellez**  
**Mr. Martin Albani**  
**Mr. Luca Fratini**

15:30 Discussion

16:30 Coffee break

#### SESSION 5 – RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF PEACEMAKING

*How does religion matter in peacemaking? How do the theologies, perspectives and practices of religious conflict parties affect peacemaking? Do the parties have preferences for certain kinds peacemaking and outcomes? Do their preferences facilitate or impede peacemaking?*

Moderator: **Prof. Gregory Reichberg**

17:00 **Dr. Fatima Gailani**  
**Amb. Endre Stiansen**  
**Mr. Mikhael Manekin**

17:30 Discussion

18:30 Reception in the oval courtyard of the Casina Pio IV

19:00 Dinner at Casina Pio IV

**FRIDAY JULY 11, 2025**

**SESSION 6 – FAITH-BASED PEACE INITIATIVES ON THE GROUND**

*What lessons can be drawn from faith-based peace initiatives? What are their strengths and limitations? Do they have sufficient leverage to drive peace processes? Do they have appeal beyond faith communities?*

Moderator: **Rev. Trond Bakkevig**

9:00     **Msgr. Munib Youan**  
            **Fr. James Oyet**  
            **Rev. Rigobert Minani**

9:45     Discussion

10:45    Coffee break

**SESSION 7 – FAITH-BASED PEACE INITIATIVES ON THE GROUND, CONTD.**

*What lessons can be drawn from faith-based peace initiatives? What are their strengths and limitations? Do they have sufficient leverage to drive peace processes? Do they have appeal beyond faith communities?*

Moderator: **Prof. Mary Gallagher**

11:15    **Msgr. Jean Baptist Odama**  
            **Msgr. Thomas Menampampil**  
            **Ms. Myla Leguro**

11:55    Discussion

12:30    Lunch

**SESSION 8 – INTER-FAITH PEACE INITIATIVES AND NETWORKS**

*Do inter-faith peace initiatives have particular advantages and tensions? How do they interact with secular peacemakers? How do they interact with anti-peace faith constituencies?*

Moderator: **Prof. Josefina Echavarria Alvarez**

13:30    **Prof. Azza Karam**  
            **Rev. Trond Bakkevig**  
            **Mr. Mohamed Elsanousi**

14:00    Discussion

15:00    Coffee

**SESSION 9 – INSIGHTS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED FROM THE CONFERENCE?**

Moderator: **Prof. Laurie Nathan**

15:30    **Prof. Josefina Echavarria Alvarez**  
            **Mr. Mathias Siegfried**  
            **Ms. Melinda Davis**

16:00    Discussion

17:00    Conference ends



# List of Participants

**ALBANI, Martin** Senior Peace Mediation Advisor, former Head of the EU's Peace Mediation and Dialogue Sector - European External Action Service

**ALFORD, Sr. Helen** President of PASS

**BAKKEVIG, The Rev. Trond** Canon of the Church of Norway (ret.), and former convener of the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land

**BARTOLI, Dr. Andrea** President of the Sant'Egidio Foundation for Peace and Dialogue

**DAVIS, Ms. Melinda** Research Associate, Peace Accords Matrix, Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, Keough School of Global Affairs University of Notre Dame

**DI GIOVANNI, Dr. Francesca** Former Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs, Secretariat of State, Vatican City

**ECHAVERRIA ALVAREZ, Prof. Josefina** University of Notre Dame

**ELSANOUSI, Mr. Mohamed** Executive Director, The Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers

**FERRARA, Amb. Pasquale** Professor of Diplomacy and Negotiation, LUISS University, Roma

**FERRARO, Dr. Giulia** Project Manager, Agency for Peacebuilding

**FRATINI, Mr. Luca** Coordinator for Peace Mediation Policies, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

**GAILANI, Dr. Fatima** Chair of Afghanistan Future Thought Forum and former President of the Afghan Red Crescent Society

**GALLAGHER, Professor Mary** Dean of the Keough School of Global Affairs, University of Notre Dame

**HENAO GAVIRIA, Msgr. Héctor Fabio** Delegate for Church - State Relations in Colombia

**IKEGAYA, Eiko Ms.** Head of the UN Mediation Support Unit

**KARAM, Dr. Azza** Prof. of Religion and Development, Vrij Universiteit of Amsterdam

**KILLILEA, Mr. Steve** Founder of the Institute for Economics and Peace

**KOOVAKAD, H.Em. Card. George Jacob** Prefect of the Dicastery of Interreligious Dialogue

**LEGURO, Myla** former head of Catholic Relief Service's global initiative on interreligious peacebuilding

**MANEKIN, Mr. Mikhael** Director of the Alliance Fellowship program, an Arab-Jewish political network in Israel

**MENAMPARAMPIL, The Rev. Thomas** Archbishop (ret.) of Guwahati (India)

**MINANI, The Rev. Rigobert, SJ** Regional Coordinator for Ecclesial the Network for the Congo Basin Forest

**MIRZA, Dr. Mahan** Exec Director, Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion, Keough School of Global Affairs, University of Notre Dame

**NATHAN, Laurie** Professor of the Practice of Mediation, Kroc Institute, University of Notre Dame

**ODAMA, The Rev. Jean Baptist** Archbishop of Gulu (Uganda)

**OMER, Atalia** Prof of Religion, Conflict and Peace Studies, Kroc Institute, University of Notre Dame

**OYET, The Rev. James** Former General Secretary of South Sudan Council of Churches

**PAROLIN, H.Em. Card. Pietro** Secretary of State

**POSADA-TELLEZ, Mr. Alejandro** Ph.D. Candidate, Oxford University

**REICHBERG, Gregory** PASS Academician; Research Professor, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO)

**ROPELATO, Prof. Daniela** Associate Professor, Dept. of Social Studies, Economics and Management, SOPHIA University Institute, Firenze; Angelicum, Faculty of Social Sciences

**SIEGFRIED, Mr. Matthias** Senior Mediator Advisor, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

**STIANSEN, Amb. Endre** Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Special Representative for the Horn of Africa

**TURKSON, H.Em. Card. Peter K.A.** Chancellor, PASS

**WENNESLAND, Tor Amb.** Norwegian Diplomat (ret.) and former United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process

**YOUNAN, The Rev. Munib** Bishop Emeritus of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land

## MEMORANDUM

### ATTENDANCE

Pickup schedule from the Domus Sanctae Marthae:

- On 9 July a bus will leave the Domus Sanctae Marthae at 6.15pm to accompany guests to the dinner reception to the Casina Pio IV from 6.30 to 8.30pm.
- On 10 and 11 July a bus will leave the Domus Sanctae Marthae at 8.45am to accompany participants to the Casina Pio IV, where the meeting starts at 9.00am
- On 10 July the same bus will take you back to the Domus Sanctae Marthae at 8.30pm (after dinner);
- On 11 July at the same bus will take you back to the Domus Sanctae Marthae at 5.00pm
- Lunch and dinner for the participants will be served at the Academy on 10 and 11 July; on 11 July only lunch. If you are a vegetarian or have any dietary restrictions (food allergies, and/or religious restrictions), please let us know as soon as possible.

### ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS TO THE VATICAN CASINA PIO IV

You can enter Vatican City through the entrance called Perugino (Via della Stazione Vaticana, no number, it's a very short street). Instructions to the Casina Pio IV, headquarters of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, can be found in the following link: <http://www.casinapioiv.va/content/accademia/en/about/contacts.html>

Just inside the gate there is a Vatican Security checkpoint. The Vatican Gendarmes already have the names of the invitees and will make sure everyone reaches us.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please refer to [www.pass.va](http://www.pass.va) for further information on the Academy, the Academicians, and current and past events.

- Security: Invitations are for the persons designated and are not transferable. Please remember to bring a valid ID.
- Dress code is business attire.
- Due to security protocols, please do not walk around Vatican areas, including the gardens.
- Assistance phone numbers: "In the event assistance is urgently needed, please call the Secretariat, +39 0669881441 or the conference organizer, Prof. Greg Reichberg, + 47 402 86 222



**WI-FI network:** academy-guest  
**Password:** G@rdens1936

THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

CASINA PIO IV | V-00120 VATICAN CITY

Tel: +39 0669883451 | Fax: +39 0669885218 | Email: [pass@pass.va](mailto:pass@pass.va)

For further information please visit: [www.pas.va](http://www.pas.va) and [www.pass.va](http://www.pass.va)

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