



Center for Sustainable Development  
EARTH INSTITUTE | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

P A T H W A Y S T O P E A C E

---

# Trust, Truth, and Social Bonds

First Seminar

10 – 11 JUNE 2026

---

## Overview

In contemporary societies, the erosion of shared truth undermines not only institutional legitimacy but the very possibility of genuine social bonds. Truth is not a mere abstraction: it is the medium through which people recognize one another, share meanings, and engage in cooperative life. When truth becomes fragmented—through the proliferation of disinformation, deep fakes, and algorithmic echo chambers—trust, both in personal relations and in institutions, collapses, and along with it the moral tissue that binds communities.

A particularly troubling trend is the rise of selective trust in political figures or online communities, which often challenge factual or scientific truths. Such disregard for scientific truth, often in the name of common sense or superior truths, presents itself as a correction, in the name of the people, of “truth-regimes” that supposedly advance particular interests. Yet, by subordinating truth to power in this way, we give way to epistemic tribalism and erode the common social ground that makes cooperation and solidarity possible. Drawing from classical and contemporary sources—including reflection on the social virtues, social epistemology, and current analyses of the digital media environment—this seminar explores the conditions under which truth and trust can once again become the foundation of civic friendship and peace.

# 10 JUNE 2026

## Session 1. Introductory session

9:00	<b>Cardinal Peter Turkson</b>	
9:15	<b>Sister Helen Alford</b>	
9:30	<b>Ana Marta González</b>	Society, Trust and Truth
10:00	<b>Jeffrey Sachs</b>	Trust Between Nations
10:30	<b>Albino Barrera</b>	Social Virtues as Necessary Conditions for Peace: Scriptural Foundations

11:00 *Coffee break*

## Session 2. Trust in the modern social order

11:30	<b>Stefano Zamagni</b>	Trust in Pre-Modern and in Modern Economy
12:00	<b>Christoph Engel</b>	The Modern Problem of Trust
12:30	<b>Krzysztof Wielecki</b>	Truth, the Civilizational Crisis, and Subjectivity
13:00	<b>Archbishop Roland Minnerath</b>	Truth in a Post-Truth Society

13:30 *Lunch*

## Session 3. Trust within society (I)

14:30	<b>Vera Songwe</b>	Trust, Development, and Institutions
15:00	<b>Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo</b>	The Need for Grace in the Pursuit of Truth and Peace
15:30	<b>Emilce Cuda</b>	Social and Synodal Dialogue as a Method for Rebuilding Political and Economic Trust
16:00	<b>Klaus Leisinger</b>	Trust: A Key Component of Social Capital

16:30 *Coffee break*

## Session 4. Trust within society (II)

17:00	<b>Pierpaolo Donati</b>	How Can Individual Virtues, such as Trust, Become Social Virtues?
17:30	<b>Fabio Ferrucci</b>	Justice, Dignity and Relationality
18:00	<b>John McEldowney</b>	Trust between Government and Citizens
18:30	<b>Mario Marazziti</b>	Trust Across Ethnic and Religious Groups

19:00 *Dinner*

11 JUNE 2026

---

**Session 5. Restoring social trust**

---

9:00 **Rodrigo Guerra López** A Path to Building Peace: Philosophical Considerations on Transitional Justice and the Restoration of Social Trust

---

9:30 **Riccardo Pozzo** The Relational Foundations of Peace

---

10:00 **Kim Samuel** Truth, Belonging and Isolation

---

10:30 *Coffee break*

**Session 6. The social circulation of truth**

---

11:00 **Jenn Gross** Information Imperative: Journalism, Peace and Democratic Resilience

---

11:30 **Gustavo Beliz** Emotions, Algorithms and the Crisis of the Modern Public Sphere

---

12:00 **Grigory Yavlinsky** The End of an Era: How Can We Pave the Way for Prosperity and Peace?

---

12:30 **Discussion**

---

13:00 *Lunch*

**Session 7. Politics and diplomacy for peace**

---

14:00 **Jeffrey Sachs** Politics and Diplomacy for Peace

---

14:30 **Rocco Buttiglione** Politics and Peace

---

15:00 **Virgilio Viana** Pathways to a Peace Agenda in Forest Landscapes

---

15:30 *Closing Discussion*

## General Information

---

- For agenda inquiries, please email **Sybil Fares** [[sybil.fares@unsdsn.org](mailto:sybil.fares@unsdsn.org)]
- In case of any problems, please call the Academy on +39 0669883195 or +39 0669881441.
- If you will be using a PowerPoint presentation, please send it in advance.

### Access instructions to the Vatican and the Casina Pio IV

Please enter through the Perugino Gate in Via della Stazione Vaticana. The Gendarmes at the Gate will request your ID and check your name on the guest list.

Instructions to reach the Casina Pio IV, headquarters of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, can be found at the following link: <https://www.pass.va/en/about/contacts-and-maps.html>

---

## THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Casina Pio IV | 00120 Vatican City

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

[www.youtube.com/c/CasinaPioIV](https://www.youtube.com/c/CasinaPioIV) X [@casinapioiv](https://twitter.com/casinapioiv)

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

Wi-Fi network: **Academy-Guest** • Password: will be available in the Casina Pio IV