World Interfaith Harmony Week was first proposed at the United Nations General Assembly on September 23, 2010 by H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan. His Majesty proposed the first week of February, every year, to be observed as World Interfaith Harmony Week.

The unique occasion was built on the foundation of three important UN resolutions:
- Resolution A/Res/65/5 proclaiming the first week in February as the annual World Interfaith Harmony Week.
- Resolution A/Res/67/104 on the Promotion of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, Understanding and Cooperation for Peace.
- Resolution A/Res/67/106 on the Follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

Continue this tradition of promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue by sharing and celebrating our humanity, on February 7, 2018, The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in partnership with the Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN, hosted the event:

“World Interfaith Harmony Week:
Inspiring Faith in Humanity”

The event featuring eminent speakers from the United Nations, Member States, civil society and religious organizations, and has attracted hundreds of people to the Church Center for the United Nations.
H.E. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,  
High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

It is a great pleasure to be with you again. I would like to thank the Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN for their persistent commitment to interfaith dialogue by bringing together spiritual, traditional and religious leaders to advance global unity. This initiative aims to celebrate our common values instead of our differences, and thus provide a vision of peace and harmony to our communities. I would like to take a moment to recognize all NGOs present here for their extraordinary efforts in promoting and protecting human rights across the globe, and "Inspiring Faith for Humanity".

I believe that interfaith and cross-cultural dialogues are interlinked, as the moral imperatives of all religions, convictions and beliefs call for peace, tolerance and mutual understanding. Therefore I am encouraging the trend towards dialogue with religious and interfaith organizations at the United Nations with the goal to eliminate conflict and sustain peace.

My faith is Islam. At the heart of Islam is the call for justice. Those who misuse and abuse Islam to support a political agenda do injustice to the basic teachings of our religion. Too often politics divides people, while faith, or belief in something more transcendent than ourselves, should be a tie that binds all of us together. As such, promoting respect among human beings and embracing the diversity of their beliefs and cultures and languages is at the core of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the UN Charter. The Alliance is one of the United Nations leading entities promoting interfaith and intercultural dialogue, reconciliation and forgiveness. We have organized more than 30 events involving religious leaders since 2013. We have taken the time to understand the dynamics and social processes that drive interfaith dialogue and encourage peaceful coexistence. We recognize that we must give every group—no matter its faith—an equal chance, an equal voice in decision-making. Whether you follow a certain faith, or are not practicing any at all, there is no set of beliefs that endorses violence, destruction and harm. In fact, every major religion and philosophy is based on the idea of "Love your neighbour as yourself".

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to draw your attention on the crucial role of youth in this regard. It is essential to provide young people with adequate tools and instruments to understand freedom of religion, of belief and tolerance of the other, and promote it worldwide to overcome every form of discrimination. In accordance with SDG 16, we must resist the siren song of virulent nationalism that promotes me and mine over our shared human needs and values. Instead, we must promote social and cross-cultural harmony with inclusive societies that unify rather than divide people. There is no single country, no single race or religion that has a unique or exclusive claim to universal truth. Each has something positive to contribute to social harmony and human values. I invoke the mantra of UNAOC: Many Cultures, One Humanity.

H.E. AMBASSADOR KATALIN ANNAMARIA BOGYAY  
Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations

"Diversity is the source of inspiration. Pause in the music is as important as a note in the music, because pause is time for reflection. If we go deep down in our own faith, we will be open and be able to understand all of the other ideas coming from different faiths. We must open ourselves toward others and hope that other person open themselves as well. Hopefully this way, we can prevent terrible things that have been happening throughout the history of humanity. Many people, especially many young people, probably won’t listen to what we, diplomats, ambassadors and governments, tell them. But they would hopefully listen to religious leaders. That is why this aspect [interfaith] is so important. Tolerance is not enough. We need mutual acceptance and respect to be able to celebrate together our common, colorful heritage."

"Prevention is better than wars. Preventive diplomacy is how we think, relate, listen and at least try to understand each other. It is due to lack of knowledge, ignorance or lack of time that we don’t really focus on the other person."
"The wall offered a kind of false security, because hiding behind the wall are hatred, fear, violence and most destructive of all, ignorance. We need to tear down that wall of ignorance and open our hearts and minds.

We must build a bridge in South and North Korea. The DMZ should become a peace zone and fight off angry unification. We must reconnect the Korean Peninsula. Together, the countries must play games together, eat together, learn together and unify together. It is a big breakthrough that they are actually playing together in the Pyeongchang Olympics."

Quotes from Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.
American civil rights activist, Baptist Minister and politician

Msgr. Hilary C. Franco
Adviser - Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations

"ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS. LET YOUR WORDS TEACH AND YOUR ACTIONS SPEAK!"

This, perhaps, should be our motto and our program for a future humanity which – we hope and pray – will be blessed with reciprocal understanding and lasting peace.
Gratitude from the Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations.

February 28, 2018

Revered participants, members and well-wishers,

On behalf of CRNGO bureau members I want to thank you for your presence and participation in WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK 2018. It was such an honor to serve in Inspiring Faith in Humanity.

What a delight to see the dedication of Member States, UN agencies and civil society in harmony in lifting our being to consciousness, a state where we became one. It was divine to hear prayers, devotional singing and enjoy dances from diversified faith traditions. Truly it was a spiritual experience that gave an insight to the solution for all problems.

Infinite blessings.

Swarni Parmeshvananda
President, CRNGO at the UN
Vice Chair, CSVGC
UN & Intl. Rep Bharat Sevashram Sangha Inc.

To honor and continue the traditions of the First Interfaith Harmony Ceremony, representatives of indigenous and faith traditions each offered a prayer for peace in a beautiful Symphony Of Peace Prayers

An Iroquois Prayer in Powerful Prayers for Everyday Living by Mark Linden O’Meara

We return thanks to our mother, the earth, which sustains us. We return thanks to the rivers and streams, which supply us with water. We return thanks to all herbs, which furnish medicines for the cure of our diseases. We return thanks to the corn, to her sisters, the beans and squash, which provide us with life. We return thanks to the bushes and trees, which provide us with fruit. We return thanks to the wind, which, moving the air, has banished diseases. We return thanks to the moon and the stars, which have given us our light when the sun was gone. We return thanks to our grandfather the sun, who has given to us his rain. We return thanks to the sun that he has looked upon the earth with a beneficent eye. Lastly, we return thanks to the Great Spirit, in whom is embodied all goodness, and who directs all things, for the good of his children.

The Beatitudes - Matthew 5:3-12

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

JAIN MAANGIC

These four are the most auspicious benefactors in the universe: The anhants, the siddhas, the asectics (including Acharyas, Upadhyayas, and Sadhus/Sadvis), and the religion expounded by the omniscient beings.

A benefactor is one who possesses the ability to remove sins and bring real happiness. The Panch Parmeshhis are the embodiment of benefaction and devotion to them brings supreme happiness. These four are the most divine and supreme in the universe: The anhants, the siddhas, the asectics, and the religion expounded by the omniscient beings.

May I take refuge in these four: The anhants, the siddhas, the asectics, and the religion expounded by the omniscient beings. A person taking refuge in the Panch Parmeshhis obtains bliss and becomes free from all miseries, such as the cycle of birth and death.
KEN KITATANI - SUKYO MAHIKARI
Kamunagara (in Ancient Shinto):
The spiritual era has now begun and the Creator is counting on the collaboration of all human beings to help accomplish the sacred plan, regardless of whether their position in society is high or low.
The more I manifest my gratitude to God the greater the happiness God grants me. Who would have thought that such boundless happiness could be granted to someone like me?
The period of great transition from the age of materialism to the age of spirit-centered has come. The Creator is manifesting power so that the sacred plan can be accomplished.

HANIFA D. MEZOUI, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
Surah Al Fatihah
In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.
All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds - The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement.
It is You we worship and You we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path - the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked your anger or of those who are astray.

THOU KIND LORD! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence. O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy.
O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.
O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind.
O God! Establish the Most Great Peace.
Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together.
O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.
Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

THE TEACHING OF SRI GURU GRANTH SAHEB JI, AS SUNG BY BHAGAT KABEER PARBHATI
Firstly God created light and then by his Omnipotence, made all the mortals.
From the One light has welled up the entire universe. Then who is good and who is bad?
O men, my brethren, stray ye not in doubt.
Creation is the Creator and the creator is in Creation. He is fully filling all places.
Clay is but the same, but the Fashioner has fashioned it in various ways.
There is no fault with the vessel of clays, nor is there any fault with the potter.
He, the One True Lord, is a midst all and it is in his will that everything is done. Whosoever realizes the Lord’s will, he alone knows the One Lord and He alone is said to be His slave.
The Lord is invisible and can be seen not. The Guru has blessed me with sweet molasses of His Name.
Say Kairi, my Doubt has been dispelled and I now see the Immaculate Lord every where.

WE VOW TO HELP ALL SENTIENT BEINGS.
WE VOW TO ELIMINATE ALL DELUSIONS.
WE VOW TO LEARN INFINITE TEACHINGS.
WE VOW TO ATTAIN SUPREME ENLIGHTENMENT.

KEN KITATANI - SUKYO MAHIKARI
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Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.
All praise and glory be unto Thee, oh Lord,
The Giver of Life and All Good and Perfect Gifts.
We glorify You and Your Sacred Name, and thank you for this Sacred Gift of Immortal, Eternal Life.
In all ways, Lord, guide, us, shine your light upon us and upon our pathway as we journey through life.
Illuminate our hearts, our minds and our spirits that we may become radiant beacons of Your Light, Hope and Inspiration to all those whose lives we touch.
Grant us Your Grace that we may cultivate from more to more each day, our love and devotion to You within the sacred chamber of our own hearts.

Holy One of Blessing, Creator God,
Help us to celebrate the different ways we build community, learn to love one another, our world and you. Grant us curiosity and a desire to listen that we might appreciate our neighbors not because of their similarities to us. May we discover how we are not alike and rejoice in those differences. For it is in the bonds of difference that we expand our world; through bonds of difference that we are able to see and know and love all of humanity; through bonds of difference that true peace is found.

Give us courage to speak, to live and to act each day with respect for every human being. Help us to resist evil that we might strive for justice and peace among people of every tribe, race, people and nation.

Song: Stand
Reverend. Joni Carley
Let there be peace,
I am a stand for peace
Let there be love,
I am a stand for love
Let there be joy,
I am a stand for joy

Swami Parameshananda,
Bharat Sevashram Sangha Inc
Om Bhur Bhuva Swaha,
Tat Savitur Varenyam,
Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi,
Dhiyo Yonah Prachodayat

O God, the protector, the basis of all life, who is self existence, who is free from all pains, and whose contact frees the soul from all troubles, who pervades the universe and sustains all, the creator and Energizer of the whole universe, The Giver of happiness, the most excellent who is pure and the purifier of all, let us embrace that very God so that he may direct our mental faculties in the right direction.
We affirm human responsibility to model the way toward the end of violence in all forms.

We affirm the sacred nature of all life and our interdependent relationship with Mother Earth.

We affirm our collective capacity to achieve world peace and harmony among all nations.

We affirm the power of every religion to promote respect and cooperation and goodwill among all peoples.

We consecrate ourselves to the work of elevating all forms of discourse toward understanding, trust and goodwill among all people.

We consecrate ourselves to promote inter-cooperation among all religions amid the widest diversity of religious expressions.

We consecrate ourselves to promote the highest principles of the United Nations through the accurate expression of our religious beliefs.

We consecrate ourselves to spread truth and to disseminate the good work of the United Nations throughout the world.

We consecrate ourselves to assist the United Nations especially in their humanitarian support for the poor, the marginalized, the hungry, the migrant, the refugee and those suffering catastrophe from Climate Change.

We consecrate ourselves to work toward the implementation of all Resolutions that promote the Culture of Peace.

Chorus by all attendees: WE ACT TO INSPIRE FAITH IN HUMANITY
WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK
INSPIRING FAITH IN HUMANITY

With the support of:
The Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations
Permanet Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations
United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

Sponsored by:
Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations (CRNGO)
Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns-NY (CSVGC-NY)
Bharat Sevashram Sangha Inc
The United Methodist Women
The United Sikhs
United Religions Initiative
Mennonite Central Committee
The Salvation Army

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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
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