

# The Role of Religious Leaders in Peacebuilding in the Middle East

*A follow-up of the 2016 Alicante Summit of Religious Leaders for Peace in the Middle East*

**July 18, 2017 | 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm | Conference Room 3, UNHQ**



Organized by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations



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# PANEL DISCUSSION:

## The Role of Religious Leaders in Peacebuilding in the Middle East

Tuesday, 18 July 2017, Conference Room 3, UN Headquarters, New York

A Follow-up to the "Summit of Religious Leaders for Peace in the Middle East"  
held in Alicante, Spain, 14-16 November 2016

15:00-15:45	Opening Session	
	<p><b>H.E. Mr. António Guterres</b> United Nations Secretary-General ✉ @antonioguterres @UN</p> <p><b>H.E. Mr. Alfonso María Dastis</b> Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain ✉ @AlfonsoDastisQ @SpainMFA</p> <p><b>H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser</b> High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations ✉ @UNAOC</p> <p><b>Moderator: Ms. Nihal Saad</b> ✉ @nsaad777 @UNAOC Chief of Cabinet and Spokesperson for the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations</p> <p>(Short video during a brief pause for a podium change)</p>	<p><b>Sheikh Imad Abed Al-Hamid Al-Falouji</b> Chairman of the Adam Center for Dialogue of Civilizations in Palestine</p> <p><b>Rabbi Michael Melchior</b> Community Rabbi in Jerusalem, President of the Mosaica Religious Peace Initiative</p> <p><b>Patriarch Theophilos III</b> Greek Orthodox Church, Patriarch</p>
15:45-17:45	Panel of Religious Leaders	
	<p><b>Muslim:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sheikh Imad Abed Al-Hamid Al-Falouji</b> Chairman of the Adam Center for Dialogue of Civilizations in Gaza</li> <li><b>Sheikh Raed Badir</b> Leading Islamic law (Shari'a) Arbitrator and Member of the southern branch of the Palestinian Ulama Council, Israel</li> <li><b>Dr. Ali M. Musleh Sartawi</b> Professor of Law at An-Najah National University in Palestine</li> </ul> <p><b>Jewish:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Rabbi Michael Melchior</b> Community Rabbi in Jerusalem, President of the Mosaica Religious Peace Initiative</li> <li><b>Rabbi Avraham Giesser</b> Rabbi of Ofra and Council Head for the state religious educational system of Israel</li> <li><b>Dr. Adina Bar Shalom</b> Founder and President of Haredi College in Jerusalem</li> </ul> <p><b>Christian:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Patriarch Theophilos III</b> Greek Orthodox Church, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and all Palestine, Syria, Arabia, and beyond the Jordan River, Kana of Galilee and Holy Sion</li> </ul>	
17:45-18:00	Closing Session	
	<p><b>H.E. Mr. Alfonso María Dastis</b> Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain</p>	<p><b>H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser</b> High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations</p>

## SPEAKERS



**H.E. Mr. António Guterres**  
*United Nations Secretary-General*

H.E. Mr. António Guterres, the ninth Secretary-General of the United Nations, took office on 1st January 2017. Having witnessed the suffering of the most vulnerable people on earth, he is determined to make human dignity the core of his work, and to serve as a peace broker, a bridge-builder and a promoter of reform and innovation. Prior to his appointment as Secretary-General, he served as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from June 2005 to December 2015, heading one of the world's foremost humanitarian organizations during some of the most serious displacement crises in decades. Previously, he spent 20+ years in government and public service, including as prime minister of Portugal (1995-2002), and president of the European Council in early 2000, during which he co-chaired the first European Union-Africa summit. From 1981 to 1983, he was a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, where he chaired the Committee on Demography, Migration and Refugees. In addition, he founded the Portuguese Refugee Council, and served as president of the Centro de Acção Social Universitário, an association carrying out social development projects in poor neighborhoods of Lisbon, in the early 1970s.



**H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser**  
*High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations*

H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser assumed his position as the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations on 1 March 2013. Throughout his career, he has contributed to advancing the multilateral agenda in the realms of peace and security, sustainable development and South-South cooperation. Previously, he held the position of President of the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly from 2011 to 2012. Since 1998, he has represented Qatar in the United Nations and has worked on core issues such as security, terrorism, poverty, hunger, and natural disasters. He has received numerous awards and honorary doctorates from various countries and universities for his work on fostering cross-cultural understanding.



**H.E. Mr. Alfonso María Dastis**  
*Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain*

H.E. Mr. Alfonso María Dastis served as a Legal Advisor and Diplomat for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the Office of the President of the Government. He was an advisor at Spain's Permanent Representation to the United Nations in New York; Director of the Support Unit of the Organising Committee of the Spanish Rotating Presidency of the EU in 2002, and Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation between 2002 and 2004. Prior to his appointment as the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, he was the Spanish Ambassador to the Netherlands (2004-2007) and to the European Union in Brussels (2011-2016).



**Sheikh Imad Abed Al-Hamid Al-Falouji**  
*Chairman of the Adam Center for Dialogue of Civilizations in Palestine*

Born in the Jabalya Camp in Gaza, Sheikh Imad Abed Al-Hamid Al-Falouji was one of the five founders of Hamas and the movement spokesperson. In 2009, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas appointed him as a member of the Islamic-Christian commission for patronizing Jerusalem and the holy sites. Today, he works to promote religious peace values in cooperation with the Mosaica Center.



**Sheikh Raed Badir**  
*Leading Islamic Law (Shari'a) Arbitrator and Member of the southern branch of the Palestinian Ulama Council, Israel*

Sheikh Raed Badir is the Executive Director of the Adam Center for Interreligious Dialogue in Kfar Kasem, Israel, and a prominent leader in the Islamic Movement in Israel. He is also an attorney, trained in Shari'a, representing clients in religious court on personal and family matters.



**Dr. Ali M. Musleh Sartawi**  
*Professor of Law at An-Najah National University, Palestine*

Dr. Ali M. Musleh Sartawi teaches in the faculties of Law and Islamic Law at Al-Najah National University in Nablus, Palestine. He served as Minister of Justice in the national unity government of the Palestinian National Authority and as the Dean of the Faculty of Law at Al-Najah National University.



**Rabbi Michael Melchior**  
*Community Rabbi in Jerusalem, President of the Mosaica Religious Peace Initiative*

Rabbi Michael Melchior is a former Minister for Social Affairs, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Minister of Education, Culture and Sport. Today he is a leading advocate for social justice in Israel, Jewish-Arab reconciliation and co-existence, interreligious diplomacy, Israel-Diaspora relations, and education for all.



**Rabbi Avraham Giesser**  
*Rabbi of Ofra and Council Head for the state religious educational system of Israel*

Rabbi Avraham Giesser is an ordained rabbi from Jerusalem's Merkaz Harav Yeshiva. In 2000, he founded the Mishpetay Eretz Institute –the Institute for Halacha and Law of which he is the head. He is also a member of "Tsohar," the rabbinical council of religious Zionism.



**Dr. Adina Bar Shalom**  
*Founder and President of Haredi College in Jerusalem*

Adina Bar Shalom is the eldest daughter of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef. She received the Israel Prize for lifetime achievement and special contribution to society and the State. She also received honorary doctorates from Ben Gurion University and the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya in Israel.



**Patriarch Theophilos III**  
*Greek Orthodox Church, Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and all Palestine, Syria, Arabia, and beyond the Jordan River, Kana of Galilee and Holy Sion*

His Beatitude Theophilos III studied theology at the University of Athens in Greece, and went on to complete his MA at Durham University in England. He served as the Archbishop of Tabor before he was officially enthroned as Patriarch of Jerusalem and All Palestine.



**Ms. Nihal Saad (Moderator)**  
*Chief of Cabinet & Spokesperson for the UNAOC High Representative*

At UNAOC, Ms. Saad was the Head of the Organizing Committee for the 6th and 7th UNAOC Global Forums in Bali (2014) & Baku (2016). Previously, she was the Spokesperson for the President of the 66th UN General Assembly, and the Head of the Press and Information Bureau at the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the UN. She was also a Senior Political Correspondent and TV host for Egypt's TV. She has appeared on several TV shows as a commentator on international affairs.





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