

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

International Center for
Law and Religion Studies

Working at the Headwaters



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The idea of “working at the headwaters” captures the spirit and ambition of our ICLRS work. In promoting human dignity for everyone everywhere and freedom of religion and belief for all people in all places, we are endeavoring to keep the waters that sustain us clean and pure—waters that give life and that make it possible for each of us to continue upon our journey.

In this volume we report on our most important activities of 2022, a remarkable year that saw us return to a full slate of in-person events that often included hybrid components and built upon what we learned during the pandemic.

Our 29th Annual Symposium addressed the theme “Religion’s Roles in Peacebuilding” and brought together a truly remarkable global gathering of religious leaders, political leaders, and academics.

Our Religious Freedom Annual Review was built around the idea of “Living Peaceably: Religious Freedom as a Foundation for Civic Harmony.” It featured a keynote discussion led by Elder Quentin L. Cook and a remarkable group of religious leaders from New York City.

The highlight of this 2022 report is a speech that President Dallin H. Oaks, first counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, delivered at the Notre Dame Religious

Liberty Summit in Rome in July. We are grateful that he has allowed us to reproduce it here. I believe it is a landmark summary of the value of religion, the background of religious freedom, and the challenges facing religious liberty. The specific mechanisms and priorities for strengthening religious freedom that President Oaks suggests will greatly influence our future activities.

Please also note the accomplishments of our students, the tireless work of our Center team, and our 2022 publications and law reform efforts. On the last two pages, look for a detailed list of the more than 90 events that we participated in during the calendar year.

This coming October, we will celebrate the 30th Annual Law and Religion Symposium at BYU Law School during the same year that the Law School celebrates its 50th anniversary. We view these milestones as important markers of where we came from and guideposts to where we hope to go.

Gratefully, as always,

Brett G. Scharffs, Director

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All communication should be sent to:

International Center for Law and Religion Studies, BYU Law
452 JRCB, Provo, UT 84602 USA

PHONE: +1 801-422-6842 | EMAIL: INFO@ICLRS.ORG | WEB: ICLRS.ORG
TWITTER: [@ICLRSORG](https://twitter.com/ICLRSORG) | INSTAGRAM: [@ICLRSBYULAW](https://www.instagram.com/ICLRSBYULAW) | FACEBOOK.COM/[ICLRS.ORG](https://www.facebook.com/ICLRS.ORG)

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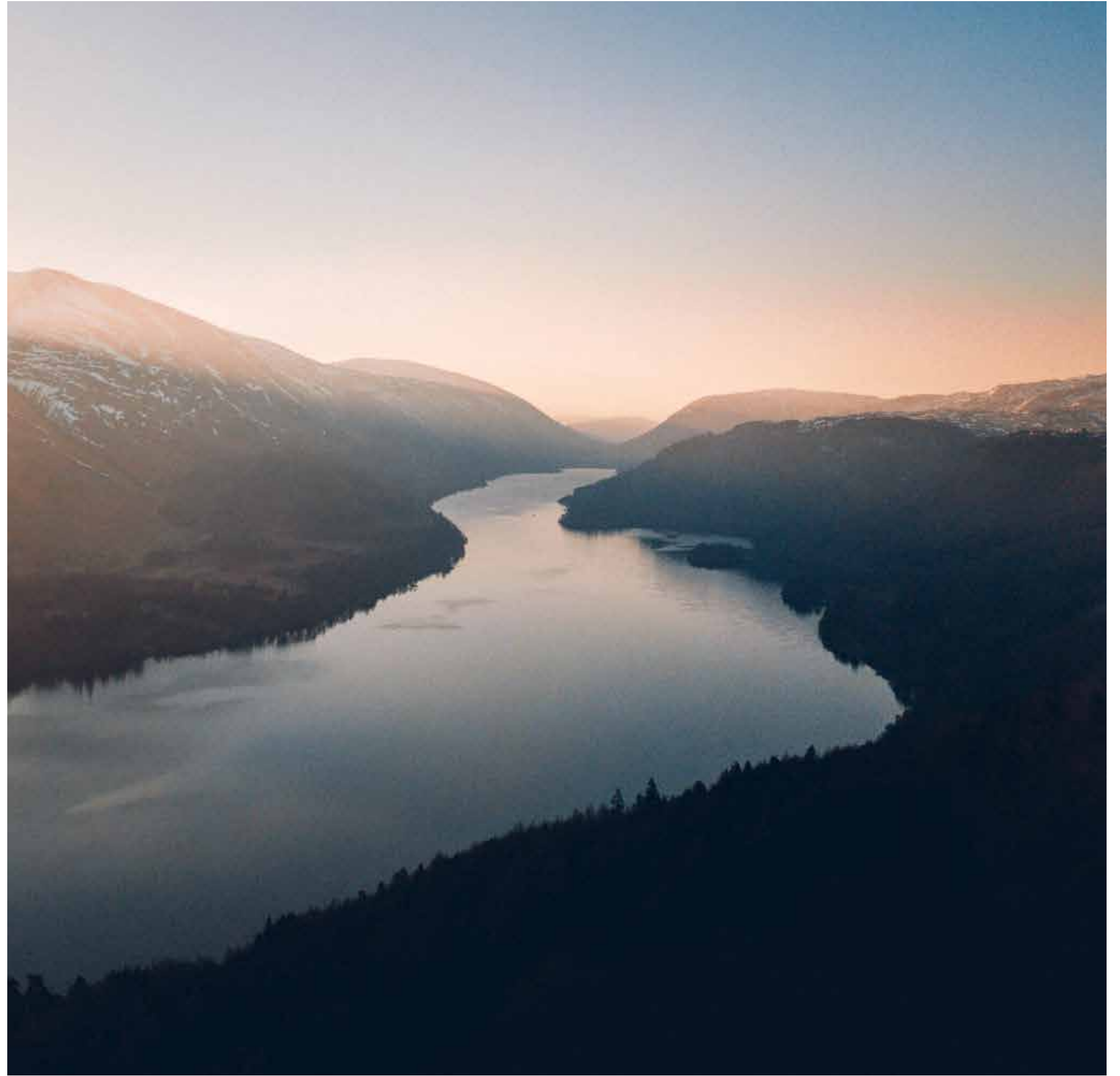
OUR MISSION

It is the mission of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University to help secure the blessings of freedom of religion and belief for all people by

Expanding, deepening, and disseminating knowledge and expertise regarding the interrelationship of law and religion

Facilitating the growth of networks of scholars, experts, and policy makers involved in the field of religion and law

Contributing to law reform processes and broader implementation of principles of religious freedom worldwide





Working at the Headwaters

By Brett G. Scharffs, ICLRS Director

Adapted from remarks delivered at the annual IAC dinner, 10 November 2022.

At the end of this year’s Law and Religion Symposium, I had a conversation with Joel Sybrowsky, a relatively new member of our International Advisory Council. Joel commented, “I have really enjoyed what I’ve seen over the past four days. I’ve decided to continue supporting the work of the Center and to encourage my friends to do the same. Do you want to know why?”

Naturally, I was curious. “Yes, I do,” I replied.

Joel explained, “It’s because the Center is working at the headwaters.”

This idea hit me like a freight train: *Working at the headwaters*. I love this image of working at the source of water, the wellspring.

We know who the source of living water is—the headwaters from which we want to drink. Speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well, Jesus said, “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”¹

A few verses later, the Savior explains further, “Whosoever drinketh of this water [the water from the well] shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”²

And the woman answered Him—as should we—“Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”³

The woman at the well—perhaps also like us—may not have fully understood the

significance or nature of the living water that Jesus offers. It is the same water we drink when we embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ, repent of our sins, and partake of the sacrament.

Joel Sybrowsky’s observation brought to my mind a powerful image of how important working at the headwaters can be, especially when they are the headwaters of what becomes a mighty river.

The headwaters are the place where a river originates. Working at the headwaters includes finding the sources of water, helping facilitate the flow of that water, and working to keep the water clean, pure, and fit for sustaining life. Though we work at the headwaters, we know *we* are not the water nor its source. We simply help keep the water pure and flowing and help facilitate its prophesied, unstoppable movement throughout the world.

In 1842, Joseph Smith responded to a request by John Wentworth, editor of a Chicago newspaper, for information about “the rise, progress, persecution, and faith of the Latter-day Saints.” The Wentworth Letter contains the Church’s 13 Articles of Faith and what we now call the Standard of Truth, which prophesies the rolling forth of an unstoppable flood of truth:

*The standard of truth has been erected: no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished and the great Jehovah shall say the work is done.*⁴

Waters, both literal and figurative, were a recurring theme in the early days of the Restoration. In 1831, Joseph Smith received several revelations on the banks of the wide and rolling Missouri River.⁵ When faced with opposition, Joseph was undeterred, noting, “deep water is what I am wont to swim in.”⁶ And significantly, in Liberty Jail during one of his most challenging experiences, Joseph declared:

*How long can rolling waters remain impure? What power shall stay the heavens? As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints.*⁷

It is a privilege and a blessing to work beside each of you at the headwaters—to witness this prophesied “pouring down” and to aid the rolling forth.

My prayer, together with my colleagues at the Center, is that we will strive to stand for and defend the mutually sustaining concepts of religious freedom and human dignity for all. If we protect *human dignity* for everyone everywhere, we will protect and defend *religious freedom* for all. If we protect *religious freedom* for everyone everywhere, we will protect and defend *human dignity* for all.

We have seen the hand of the Lord in this work and continually pray to be guided by it. As we work together at the headwaters, may we help facilitate the “rolling waters”—indeed, the living water—that will fill and fulfill the earth and its people. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.



SNAPSHOTS FROM THE HEADWATERS

I have had many significant experiences while “working at the headwaters” with the ICLRS. Following are four snapshots from the mental memory book that I have compiled during my years at the Center.

SNAPSHOT 1
Religious Freedom for All

I have often shared the story of a conversation I had with King Husein many years ago as we were riding a bus in India. He was intrigued by our work at the Center and told me that he and his wife, Diane, would consider donating if I could articulate the Center’s work in five words or less. After several false and lengthy starts, I answered in four: “Religious freedom for all.”

Those four words, which I believe came through inspiration, eventually expanded to become the slightly longer mission statement that continues to guide our work today. The Center exists “to help secure the blessings of freedom of religion and belief for all people.”⁸

SNAPSHOT 2
Living the Best Version of Our Faith

Recently I found myself ruminating on this question: “What is the most important thing I can do to promote freedom of religion or belief?” With sudden illumination—the kind I experience only infrequently—I saw the answer in its completeness and in an instant.

For me and for other members of the Church, the most important thing is to live the gospel of Jesus Christ—the best version of our faith—more fully, more faithfully, more joyfully, more purposefully, more peaceably, and more conspicuously.

For those who are not Latter-day Saints, the answer would be similar: the most important way to promote freedom of religion or belief is to live the best version of their own faith.

SNAPSHOT 3
Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere

In 2017, Ján Figel’, former European Commission Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief, and I discussed how we could mark the upcoming 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in a meaningful way. Ambassador Figel’ noted that in his work with government officials and others around the world, he had found the concept of human dignity to be a productive entry point for discussing human rights.

Both the Preamble and Article 1 of the UDHR mention human dignity as the foundation of human rights, but through the years that principle had been somewhat overlooked. We decided to commemorate the UDHR by bringing renewed emphasis to human dignity as the *foundation and goal* of human rights. One result of this effort was the 2018 Punta del Este Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere.

Our renewed emphasis on human dignity has had a marked effect on discussions, conferences, and actions related to international human rights. We have found that beginning with human dignity depoliticizes conversations about those rights. While some regard

human rights as a purely Western construct imposed by overreaching Western governments, *human dignity* is a concept recognized by almost every culture around the world. Nearly every culture and people recognize the inherent worth of individuals. As a result, focusing on human dignity builds bridges to places where human rights generally—and freedom of religion or belief specifically—are unfamiliar or even unpopular concepts.

We have also found that focusing on human dignity as the foundation and goal of human rights emphasizes the reciprocal character of those rights. A recognition that all individuals have inherent dignity means that every right carries reciprocal duties—to the state, to others, and even to ourselves. Legally speaking, agents are people with special duties of loyalty, fidelity, and care. And as agents unto our ourselves,⁹ we have those duties in relation to ourselves as well as others.

The highest form of agency, of course, is when we live God’s commandments, particularly the two great commandments: first, loving the Lord with all our heart, might, mind, strength, and soul; and second, loving our neighbors as ourselves.¹⁰ The second denotes that our duties include honoring the inherent dignity of our neighbors by loving them, as well as honoring our own inherent dignity as children of God by loving ourselves.

SNAPSHOT 4
The Hand of the Lord Is In It

It has been reported to us that when approval for the Center was before the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, President Gordon B. Hinckley said as he signed the approval, “We believe the hand of the Lord is in it.”¹¹

President Hinckley’s words echo those that Joseph Smith wrote to his wife, Emma, in 1834 discussing the progress of what became known as Zion’s Camp. Some 200 men, along with approximately 10 women and 7 children, felt compelled to embark on a perilous journey to advance the work of the Lord by regaining lands to rebuild a Zion community.

They undertook a journey that by some measures was a failure, but participants believed they had seen the hand of God and His intervention on their behalf throughout the journey. Notably, Zion’s Camp prepared its participants for leadership in the Church, including on the westward journey to the Salt Lake Valley.

We have seen and felt the hand of the Lord guiding the work of the Center and are grateful for all the hands that lift and support us in that work.

NOTES

1. John 4:10.

2. John 4:13–14.

3. John 4:15.

4. Joseph Smith, “Church History,” *Times and Seasons* 3, no. 9 (1 March 1842): 709, Joseph Smith Papers.

5. See Doctrine and Covenants 61–62.

6. Doctrine and Covenants 127:2.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 121:33.

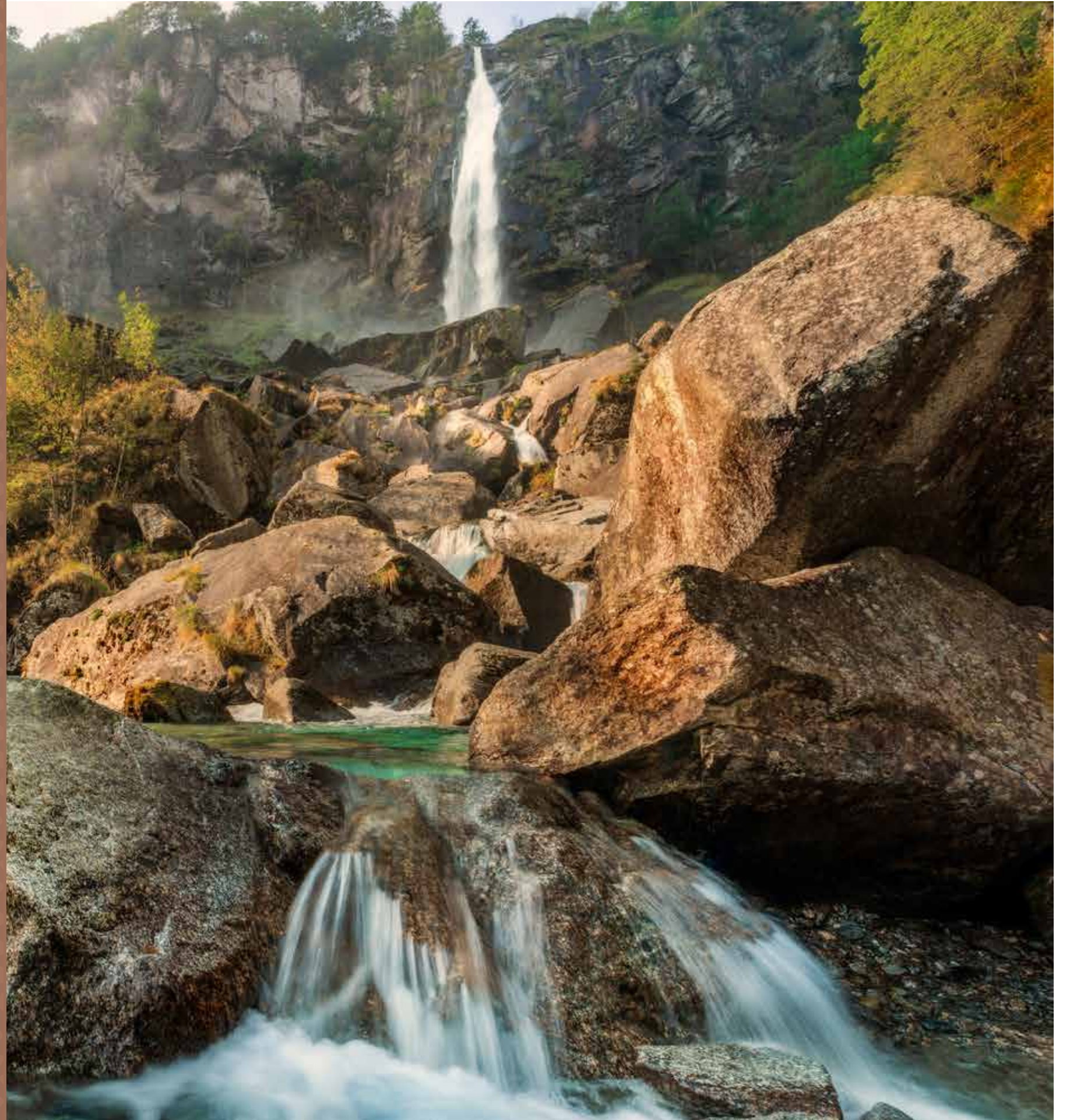
8. “Our Mission,” International Center for Law and Religion Studies (ICLRS), About Us, iclrs.org/our-mission.

9. See Doctrine and Covenants 58:27–28.

10. See Matthew 22:37–39; Doctrine and Covenants 59:5–6.

11. Gordon B. Hinckley, quoting Joseph Smith, letter to Emma Smith, 4 June 1834, “Joseph Smith Letterbook 2,” p. 57, Joseph Smith Papers.

SYMPOSIUM



29th Annual International Law and Religion Symposium

RELIGION'S ROLES IN PEACEBUILDING

2-4 OCTOBER 2022 | PROVO, UTAH, USA

For the Center—an organization that seeks to facilitate “the growth of networks of scholars, experts, and policy makers involved in the field of religion and law”—holding their signature event, the Annual International Law and Religion Symposium, virtually for the last two years has been a challenge. While much good has come from online events and the reach of the symposium has been wider with the ability to stream, there is still value in face-to-face interaction, which participants have missed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 29th Symposium was once again held in person in 2022 with 77 delegates hailing from 39 countries and regions.

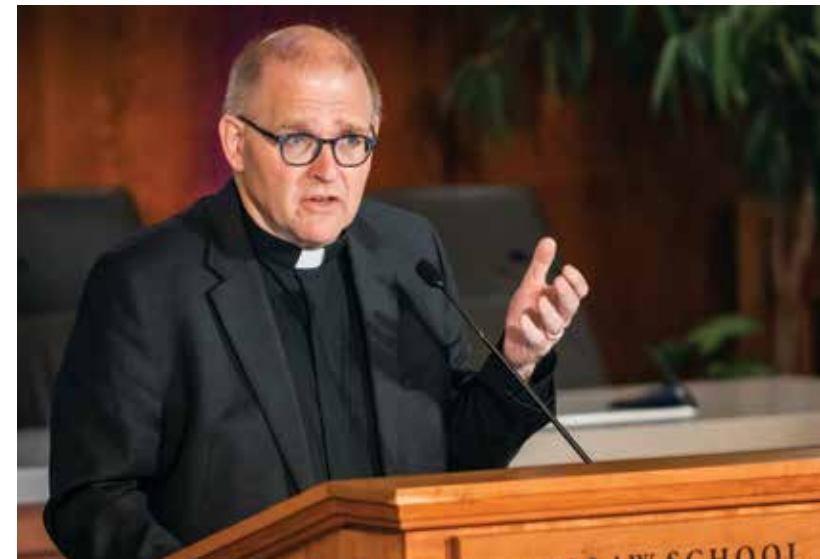
The theme for this year focused on the role religion and religious organizations play in establishing lasting peace and justice throughout the world. Peacebuilding is broader than just ending conflicts; it also includes building a just society that will be able to remain at peace. To what extent have religiously motivated individuals and groups helped to build peace in our communities? What remains to be done? Scholars, government and intergovernmental leaders, civil society activists, and religious leadership addressed these questions on a global and national level at this year’s symposium.

Keynote and plenary sessions were live streamed on iclrs.org, and interpretation was provided in seven languages. The symposium opened on 2 October with keynote speakers Daniel Philpott, professor of political science at the University of Notre Dame, and Nury Turkel, senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and chair of

the US Commission on International Religious Freedom. Reverend Dr. Andrew Teal, chaplain, fellow, and lecturer in theology at Pembroke College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom, delivered a keynote on 4 October, and Rashad Hussain, ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom for the United States, spoke in the closing session. Plenary sessions focused on understanding religion and peacebuilding; peacemaking, religion, and diplomacy; and religion and interfaith engagement in times of conflict and disaster. Breakout sessions centered on different regions of the world as well as media perspectives, Islamic perspectives on human dignity, and reflections from judges, religious leaders, and lawyers representing religious organizations.

Attendees were grateful for opportunities to share their ideas in a safe space and to develop new friendships. Anna Mariya Basauri Ziuzina, board member for Ukraine’s Workshop for the Academic Study of Religion, said, “It was an incredible experience. I have met so many wonderful people! I have felt so much support and understanding, which keeps me going.”

After attending the symposium, Robin Garcia, a pastor and the presidential commissioner for religious freedom in Guatemala, expressed a renewed dedication. “It was an extraordinary opportunity to grow in knowledge, networks, and commitment,” he said. “We will continue making efforts to contribute to religious freedom in the world and develop new ways to approach unity and peace for a better world.”



RECLAIMING OUR FOUNDING VALUES: THE BONDS THAT MAKE US FREE

By Brett G. Scharffs, ICLRS Director

This is an edited version of remarks delivered 4 October 2022 at the 29th Annual International Law and Religion Symposium.

Thanks to everyone for being here with us at our annual symposium. After two years of online-only conferences, it is wonderful to be together in person.

During our time here, I have spoken with concern about major societal forces that worry us—religious nationalism (that occasionally morphs into authoritarianism) and political polarization (that has become so divisive in the United States that political scientists here say we have never been so divided as a country¹ since the years before the Civil War). Now I would like to introduce a metaphor that might help us think about how we can integrate the many good ideas we have heard over the past few days.

When I was 14 years old, our Boy Scout troop decided to have each boy build a kayak out of fiberglass. I recognize that this experience may not be universal, so I will briefly describe the process:

- Making something with fiberglass includes creating numerous layers. You begin by putting a base layer of resin into a mold. This acts as the binding agent for the fiberglass.
- You then spread a thin sheet of fiberglass—which has a fabric-like appearance—over the resin.
- Using rollers, you force out the excess resin and stretch the fiberglass until it is taut.
- You repeat this process numerous times, using a roller each time to dispose of the excess resin and to press the layers tightly together.
- You also have elements that you need for shape, such as the foam that forms different parts of the canoe. You repeat the process to cover these elements in several layers of fiberglass.

- Finally, using vacuum pressure, you bind everything together.

In this metaphor, we can think of the many ideas about the roles of religion in peacebuilding as sheets of fiberglass fabric. This raises the question: What is the resin that holds them together and makes them strong?

I would argue that the binding agents here are our basic foundational values, including our inalienable rights outlined in documents such as the United States Declaration of Independence, the US Bill of Rights, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As we have discussed political polarization and religious nationalism, we are also very aware of what is sometimes called the Böckenförde Dilemma—the realization that a “liberal secularized state lives by prerequisites which it cannot guarantee itself.”²

Speaking of this, German legal scholar Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde said:

*A liberal state . . . can endure only if the freedom it bestows on its citizens takes some regulation from the interior, both from a moral substance of the individuals and a certain homogeneity of society at large. On the other hand, it cannot by itself procure these interior forces of regulation that is not with its own means, such as legal compulsion and authoritative decree. Doing so, it would surrender its liberal character and fall back, in a secular manner, into the claim of totality it once led the way out of.*³

The challenge for liberal democracies is cultivating the conditions that make the perpetuation of the liberal democracy possible—conditions that the liberal democracy per se does not itself create.

I hope you won’t mind my focusing on a US perspective of how democracies can hold themselves together, using our first president, George Washington, as an

example. I emphasize this primarily because I fear that we, as Americans, are losing confidence in the basic and beautiful ideas and ideals that grounded the foundations of this country.

In the United States tradition, the resin that binds us together is perhaps best described by Washington as “a spirit of amity” and “mutual deference.”⁴ In a letter he sent to all the states announcing his retirement from military service, Washington offered an “earnest prayer” that God “would incline the hearts of the Citizens . . . to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another.”⁵ Without “these things,” he said, “we can never hope to be a happy nation.”⁶

Washington wrote important letters to religious groups when he was elected president. One of these was to the Society of Friends, also known as the Quakers. This was significant because Quakers were pacifists and would not fight in the American Revolutionary War or even lend money for the war effort. They were widely seen as supporting the British. Yet at the end of the war, Washington wrote them this very conciliatory letter:

*I assure you very explicitly that in my opinion the conscientious scruples of all men should be treated with great delicacy and tenderness, and it is my wish and desire that the laws may always be as extensively accommodated to them as a due regard to the protection and essential interests of the nation may justify and permit.*⁷

In this, I think we can detect an early iteration of what became the compelling state-interest test: the idea that we should accommodate conscience whenever possible and limit it only when protecting the essential interest of the nation makes it necessary.

Washington also wrote an important letter to the Hebrew congregation in Newport,

Rhode Island. Jews in Revolutionary America were a tiny, misunderstood minority, and they suffered a great deal of discrimination. But Washington wrote:

*All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happily the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens in giving it on all occasions their effectual support.*⁸

Washington then concludes with an allusion to the Old Testament prophet Micah’s vision of a day when swords would be turned into plowshares, and everyone would dwell safely under their own vine and fig tree:⁹

May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here,

*and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy.*¹⁰

I was deeply moved during the conference by two examples of people who stood up for each other. Simon Siah from Malaysia shared the story of a Catholic archbishop who was met by a rowdy group of Muslim men protesting him as he came out of a court of law where he had been trying to vindicate the rights of Christians. He was in physical peril. Another Muslim man stepped forward, wrapped his arms around the archbishop, and escorted him to safety through the crowd, admonishing the young men to not embarrass themselves and their faith with their bad behavior.

Sharon Eubank shared the second story, which took place in Jordan more than a hundred years ago. To help fund wars that were raging in the Ottoman Empire, the government decided to impose a tax on all Christians. They did this by marking the houses of Christians to let them know that the tax collector would arrive the following day. Muslims in the community responded by marking all homes—including those of Muslims—in the same way, because they knew it was unfair to tax only Christians.

Standing up for each other, as Sister Eubank suggested, may lie at the heart of peacemaking.

I would like to conclude with a parable taught by one of our church’s apostles, Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf. He described a group who were trying to move a heavy grand piano without much success. Finally, one older gentleman said, “Let’s each lift where we stand.”¹¹

Those words have inspired me to try to lift where I stand, here at the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University. And I am confident that as each of us lift where we stand, we can make real contributions to peacebuilding in our communities, in our countries, and in the world.

I have been thinking about a new formulation based on all the ideas we have shared about religion’s roles in peacemaking, and I have come to believe that our shared commitment to each other’s freedom—including religious freedom—is the binding agent that tethers us to other people. It is the bond that makes us free.

As Jesus Christ said in the New Testament, “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”¹² May we each strive to be peacemakers, and may God bless us, every one.

NOTES

1. See Michael Dimock and Richard Wike, “America Is Exceptional in the Nature of Its Political Divide,” Pew Research Center, 13 November 2020, [pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/11/13/america-is-exceptional-in-the-nature-of-its-political-divide](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/11/13/america-is-exceptional-in-the-nature-of-its-political-divide).
2. Translation of Ernst Wolfgang Böckenförde, *Staat, Gesellschaft, Freiheit: Studien zur Staatstheorie und zum Verfassungsrecht* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976), 60; see also Ernst Wolfgang Böckenförde, *State, Society, and Liberty: Studies in Political Theory and Constitutional Law*, trans. James Amery Underwood (New York: Berg, 1991), 45.
3. Böckenförde, *Statt, Gesellschaft, Freiheit*, 60; see also Böckenförde, *State, Society, and Liberty*, 45.
4. George Washington, letter to the president of Congress, 17 September 1787, *Founders Online*, National Archives, founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/04-05-02-0306.
5. George Washington, letter to the States, 8 June 1783, *Founders Online*, National Archives, founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/99-01-02-11404.
6. Washington, letter to the States.
7. Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address, 4 March 1865; punctuation modernized.
8. George Washington, letter to the Society of Quakers, 13 October 1789, *Founders Online*, National Archives, founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-04-02-0188.
9. George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, 18 August 1790, *Founders Online*, National Archives, founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-06-02-0135; punctuation modernized.
10. See Micah 4:3–4.
11. Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregation.
12. See Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Lift Where You Stand,” *Ensign*, November 2008.
13. Matthew 5:9.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES





North America

REGIONAL CONFERENCE

2022 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ANNUAL REVIEW

Living Peaceably

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AS A FOUNDATION FOR CIVIC HARMONY

16 JUNE 2022 | PROVO, UTAH, USA

The 2022 Religious Freedom Annual Review, held June 16 at the BYU Conference Center, addressed multiple religious topics under this year’s theme “Living Peaceably: Religious Freedom as a Foundation for Civic Harmony.”

This year’s diverse board of speakers and panelists included Elder Quentin L. Cook of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as well as Reverend Marian Edmonds-Allen, executive director of Parity, an organization that seeks to bridge the divide between faith and LGBTQ+ concerns, and four members of the Commission of Religious Leaders NYC: Reverend A. R. Bernard, founder and CEO of the Christian Cultural Center; Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, executive vice president of the New York Board of Rabbis; Imam Talib Shareef, president of Masjid Muhammad, the Nation’s Mosque; and Simran Jeet Singh, executive director of the Aspen Institute’s Religion and Society Program. The panelists, speakers, and many

others shared their individual perspectives on the varying topics that fell under this year’s theme.

“We have different forms of worship, we have different practices, but . . . there is enough space in our society for all of us to practice freely,” said Rabbi Potasnik. Religious freedom indicates the provision of this right to people of all belief systems or non-belief systems.

Elder Quentin L. Cook emphasized two of the benefits of religious freedom. “The first is the way religious accountability benefits secular society,” he said, noting that faith inspires people to be morally upright and obey laws. “The second is the multitude of good works that religion inspires people of faith to perform on behalf of others.”

Cosponsored by the Wheatley Institute, the Religious Freedom Annual Review was once again held in person. Select sessions were live streamed and available in Spanish.





Why Religious Freedom Matters to Me

The opening plenary session of this year's Religious Freedom Annual Review, held 16 June 2022, focused on the theme "Why Religious Freedom Matters to Me." Panelists Reverend Marian Edmonds-Allen, Chris Seiple, and Simran Jeet Singh discussed individuals—historical and modern—who were at the headwaters of religious freedom in their respective communities. Excerpts from those presentations are featured below. The full text of the presentations can be found on the Center's blog, Talk About: Law and Religion, at talkabout.iclrs.org.

Reverend Marian Edmonds-Allen is the executive director of Parity, a nonprofit that works at the intersection of faith and LGBTQ+ concerns.

Religious freedom is our best hope for our country and for our world. At a time when divisions threaten to rend the very fabric of society, when seemingly intractable disagreements split communities and even families, it is religious freedom that is our very best hope.

That may seem like a strong statement, but I have a perhaps unusual perspective on religious freedom. I am a walking



embodiment of our current divisions. You see, I am a person who scares people: I am a genderqueer, bisexual person and an ordained Christian pastor. I would guess that there is something about that statement that is surprising, if not a little bit scary, to people. In fact, when I introduce myself in faith contexts as LGBT, I can watch the body language in the room and see a reaction. And when I am speaking to LGBT groups and not wearing a clerical collar but “out” myself as clergy, I can, once again, watch people recoil. I am not offended. I understand the reaction because that used to be my reaction too.

I was 40 years old before I met my first out LGBT person, and I will admit to you that I felt some revulsion myself. But I was in theological school, learning to be a pastor, so it was important to me to be comfortable to minister with all people, no exceptions.

You can guess my ugly duckling story: after a while I realized that was me too—that I was LGBT.

But as a new pastor and a lifelong follower of Jesus, this was a crisis for me spiritually and personally. It took a lot of study, prayer, worship, and wrestling with God before I started to feel comfortable in my own skin. And it then took years before I realized that my being LGBT made me a better Christian and a better pastor. For a time I thought God hated me; why else would God have done “this” to me? But then I realized God did not hate me. God loved me then; God loves me now. People often ask me why I stayed Christian. My answer is always the same: through it all, God never let go of me. And being a follower of Jesus is too much a part of me to ever let go of God.

But it is not because I am clergy that I am passionate about religious freedom. It is because I am LGBT and an advocate for LGBT youth that I am passionate about religious freedom. In fact, I believe religious freedom is the very best hope for the world, including for people who are LGBT.

Here is one reason why: I was recruited to Utah in 2011 to pastor in Salt Lake City, and right away I realized I needed to work on LGBT youth homelessness and suicide prevention. Soon after, I was hired as the executive director of an LGBT youth center in Ogden called OUTreach. At the youth center I quickly realized that *every single* LGBT youth there knew someone who had died by suicide. One young person had known 19 who had died. And many young people there had already attempted suicide themselves. I also learned that of the 700 youth who came to the center, one-third were homeless, some as young as 12 years old. They slept out in camps and railroad cars; one found a safe spot in a tree near Temple Square. In the canyon above Salt Lake, near a homeless youth camp, a place was named “suicide rock.”

I did everything I could to help them—public events, protests—but I was not making any headway. That is, until I started working with, and stopped working against, people whom I had blamed for the dire circumstances of LGBT youth: religious people and institutions.

That did not happen until I met Laura, a loving, active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and a legislative

If you want to be known by the company you keep, work with the International Center for Law and Religion Studies. If you want to execute with excellence, work with them. They're the best in the business, and you never have to apologize for your partners. [The Center is] truly a gift to the world.

—Chris Seiple

aide in Utah. Laura had not met LGBT people before, but she cared about everyone, young people especially, and she knew that no child should be homeless or at risk of suicide. She and I became collaborators in changing laws in Utah so that LGBT youth could be safer and sheltered. Laura did all of this for one simple reason: as an expression of her faith. Laura and I are dear friends still, yet we do not agree on much. We have different political views and theology, but Laura's freedom to live her faith—her religious freedom—saved countless lives, then and now.

Religious freedom is the key.

As a bridge builder, a healer of the LGBT and faith divide, I have come to realize that what seems to tear the LGBT and faith communities apart—the fight over religious freedom—is actually what both movements need to thrive and survive. I am part of both movements and am well aware of the rhetoric and chatter on both “sides.” So I will be very frank here: For many LGBT people, the phrase “religious freedom” is simply code that is used as cover by people who want to take their very lives away. For some, the threat is *that* palpable: religious freedom is seen as code for a movement that wants to deny the very existence of LGBT people and to impose a white nationalist Christianity as the political and societal framework in the United States and world.

On the religious freedom side, some believe that the “LGBT agenda” is to outlaw religion in the United States and beyond and to remove the ability and access to worship God. Many in the religious freedom movement see the LGBT agenda as wanting to impose an LGBT world order that would take away life as they know and cherish it, redefine gender and family, and destroy the moral fabric of the United States and world.



It is easy to imagine that these two movements will not rest until the other is destroyed; after all, it is a matter of survival for each one.

But there is a way forward that will not preference one over the other and will allow each to have the freedom to be who they are, to have not only respect but also surprising allies who care for and about them. And it is through religious freedom itself.

Chris Seiple is president emeritus of the Institute for Global Engagement, a think- and do-tank operating at the intersection of religion, realpolitik, and reconciliation.

Why does religious freedom matter to me? The answer is that religious freedom is the only thing that works. It is the only thing that brings together principles and practicality in a way that speaks to all audiences and serves all citizens. It is as simple as that. It is a philosophy of self, societal, and state governance, holistic from the bottom up (the individual) to the top down (the institution).

So how do we make religious freedom work? One step is to work with the nonmajorities. But the most important, useful, and practical step is thinking through how to work with the ethno-religious majority. How do you give them permission to participate in a new paradigm of inclusion that is consistent with the best of who they already are? An example from United States history provides insights.

Roger Williams, I believe, is the most consequential American in us history. Williams came from England, was a pupil of Edward Coke and Francis Bacon, and had the same theology as the Puritans. But his application of that theology for living together in society was fundamentally different. Puritans said, “You can worship any way you want, as long as you agree with me.” Roger Williams understood scripture differently.

Importantly, he acted from the best of his faith tradition—not despite it but because of it. I have found that when you root values in your own holy scriptures and moral framework, sustainability results because the majority and the nonmajorities find a common language of mutual respect.

Williams spoke his mind, saying, for example, that the King of England did not have the right to give away Native American land. He called it “a solemn public lie.”¹ Doing so won Williams no friends, so he moved around New England trying to find a home. Many wanted to send him back to England for execution. Warned by his best friend, Williams fled to the areas west of Massachusetts and was received by the Wampanoag and Narragansett tribes.

Williams’s story illustrates the essence of why religious freedom works: because it is the right thing to do, and it is in your self-interest. If both of those reasons are kept at the forefront, things will work for the majority and the nonmajorities.

Why did Native Americans welcome Williams? Because he was already friends with them. He had previously traveled among them and learned their language. He did the first ethnolinguistic survey of Native Americans because he respected them as being made in the image of God. He also wanted them to know Jesus as he did, but he realized that such knowledge could only result if he shared the gospel in their own language. Speaking a language others can understand shows respect. It does not mean all have to agree, but you want to speak a language that others can hear.

Native American tribes were, at that time, still the majority in the region. Williams asked, in essence, “Can I be a part of this community?” Relative to self-interest, Native Americans knew that the Whites would soon be the majority and that it would probably be beneficial to have a good relationship with them. Williams’s self-interest was self-preservation but also to provide for others what the Native Americans had provided for him—“a shelter for persons distressed for conscience.”²

Williams developed this philosophy further in a letter written in 1655 to the city of Providence, in which he says, basically, “Imagine we’re all on one ship (relating to his audience by drawing on a shared experience of crossing the Atlantic Ocean). The majority of people in the ship will likely be White English-speaking Protestant Puritans. But there will probably also be Muslims, Catholics, Jews, and others, including those who have no belief at all. What is the best way for all of us to achieve our common goal? The right thing to do is to make sure nobody is forced to worship like the majority.”³

That is still hard to do in the United States today. Because of the social cohesion of the ship or state, the officers of the state—the seamen who run the ship—must make sure you get safely to your destination, and the commander of the ship must be in a position to provide for peace and justice. There is a balance between the responsibility of individuals to live out their faith from the bottom up and the responsibility of the state to protect that responsibility from the top down in a way that everybody gets along.

Williams’s philosophy evolved toward its institutionalization in the 1663 Rhode Island Colonial Charter. It is a beautiful work

with which most people are unfamiliar. It states that the right thing to do is to establish a “flourishing civil state . . . with a full liberty in religious concernments.”⁴ Why is that important? Because its existence “will give the best and greatest security to sovereignty, and will lay in the hearts of men the strongest obligations to true loyalty.”⁵ In other words, if you repress the nonmajority (the wrong thing to do), they are more likely to agitate and rebel against the state (which is not in one’s self-interest).

Put differently, it is not in the interest of the state or the ethno-religious majority to assimilate nonmajorities to look and act like the majority, as instability will result. Besides being the right thing to do, it is in the self-interest of both state and society to integrate the nonmajorities by inviting them to the common public table as equal citizens under the transparent rule of law.

Later, in 1670, Roger Williams famously concluded that “forced worship stinks in God’s nostrils.”⁶ Coercion is both wrong and works against self-interest.

How do we know Roger Williams was a success? In 1790, 107 years after Williams died, George Washington visited Rhode Island after the state had ratified the US Constitution. The head of the synagogue there sent Washington a letter. You may ask why there was a synagogue in Rhode Island. It was built in 1763, and it is still operating today as a steward of everything Roger Williams believed—that a religious nonmajority could worship freely as equal citizens.

Washington’s response essentially repeated what the synagogue’s leader had written to him, and it reiterated principles advocated by Williams, namely, that the right thing to do is to recognize we all have “liberty of conscience” as an “inherent natural [right].”⁷ Relative to self-interest, the government will protect that



right so we can all get along. Social cohesion can exist in a land of many nations and beliefs, but the inhabitants must “demean themselves as good citizens.”⁸

Washington then reiterates that the right thing to do is to “continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants.”⁹ In other words, continue to be the best of who you are and treat others as you would like to be treated. Quoting the Old Testament book of Micah, Washington concluded that if citizens do these things, “every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid.”¹⁰

Simran Jeet Singh is executive director of the Aspen Institute’s Religion and Society Program.

My story begins in Texas. I’m not sure why my parents thought it would be good to leave their comfortable homes in India and emigrate to South Texas, but they did. And that is where my three brothers and I were born—brown-skinned, turban-wearing, beard-loving boys. We faced our share of challenges because of our visible religious identity. I am not saying life was terrible; we had wonderful, happy, normal childhoods. But part of our upbringing was dealing with racism on a daily basis because of how we looked and our religious identity. And those experiences shaped my commitment to the work of religious freedom.

What does religious freedom mean to me? For me, it is very personal. The touchpoints I will share are not my only personal experiences related to religious freedom, but they were formative for my concern and understanding of the issue, and they can inform how we move forward.

My first memory of being denied rights because of how I looked is from when I was about 10 years old. My brothers and I went to a roller-skating rink with friends for a class party. It was the same rink we had gone to often. The manager must have been new because when we arrived, he immediately came over and said in a pretty angry tone, “Get out of here with those damn rags on your heads.” We had, even at that young age, experienced our share of such moments. We knew our mom, who was with us, would do the dirty work, so the four of us walked away. But after five minutes, it had not been resolved, which was unusual. We were anxious to join our friends, and so I walked over to my mom and saw that she was crying.

I had never seen her cry before. I did not know what to do. I started crying too. She put her arm around me and asked, “What’s wrong? Why are you crying?”

I said, “It’s not fair. They should let us skate.”

She responded, “We’re actually pretty lucky.”

For a moment, I thought my mom had no idea what was happening, so I asked, “What do you mean?”

She answered, “I shared with the teachers and parents what is happening, and they’ve all agreed to walk out together. Aren’t we lucky to have such good friends?”

There were many lessons learned that day: (1) the importance of sharing your experiences with others and giving them the chance to care; (2) the power of community; (3) the value of understanding your own commitments and principles and sticking by them. But the one I want to emphasize is what we might call *solidarity*. It was the feeling I remember having at that moment, for the first time in my life: people who were around me, my friends, cared enough about me to give up something they wanted to stand up for my rights. Remembering that these people have my back made me want to do the same for other people when this happens to them.

The next major touchpoint was when I was a senior in high school. We began hearing rumors during class that there was a terrorist attack in New York City. Some of my friends and I ran over to my history teacher’s room and watched on tv as the Twin Towers collapsed. For a while, nobody said anything, dumbfounded. We could not really comprehend what was happening. Then it was reported that they had a suspect. They named Osama bin Laden and flashed his image on the screen. My heart dropped because I saw a turban, brown skin, and a beard just like mine.

Among my group of friends, I did not have concerns. I knew that they knew me. But I had experienced enough to know that most Americans would not know or trust me, and that my life was about to change. And it did. There were many changes, swift and difficult—the racist backlash. Essentially, we went home and locked the doors. The death threats immediately began. It was challenging. During the day, we would watch tv and try to understand what had happened to our country. In the evenings, we would get on a national conference call with the Sikh community all over the country. Local leaders would report who had been attacked and how they were doing and then move on to strategy: what should we do?

The immediate impulse was to tell people that we are not Muslims; that will save us, and we will be safer. The community

conversation was formative for me. I learned through that conversation that though it might be easier to educate people about who we are—“*We’re not Muslim, we’re Sikh. Let us educate you about us.*”—that approach would not be consistent with our ethics. What we would really be saying is “*Don’t attack us. Go get them, the bad guys.*” Our faith teaches that no one should be attacked for how they look or what they believe. At home, the conversation with our parents was also tough because they could have created more safety for our family by taking this approach. As a father now, I better understand how difficult that conversation was for my parents.

This was the decision point for our community. We might be safer in the moment, but in the long term, deflecting hate is never the answer. You’re not addressing the issue, and you’re making life worse for other people. It’s not the right thing to do, either ethically or strategically.

There is an example from our tradition that was raised at that time and has guided me in my vision for religious pluralism. In the late 1500s and early 1600s in South Asia, as the Sikh community was coming forward, there was intense religious persecution from the state against minoritized communities. The Kashmiri Brahmins, a Hindu group who were essentially the majority in South Asia, were being persecuted by those in power, who were in the minority, and they could not find a solution. Eventually, the Kashmiri Brahmins came to the Sikh guru Tegh Bahadur and said, “We know you are of a different faith. We know you disagree with how we live and practice, but you believe that everyone should have the right to live this way.” And Guru Tegh Bahadur responded, “Yes, that is right, and I am willing to stand up for you.” And he did. He went to Delhi and was arrested, imprisoned, and executed for his belief that all people should have the right to live and practice as they choose.

NOTES

1.

John Winthrop, *A Journal of the Transactions and Occurrences in the Settlement of Massachusetts and the Other New England Colonies from the Year 1630 to 1644* (Hartford, Connecticut: Elisha Babcock, 1790) 122; spelling modernized.
2.

James D. Knowles, *Memoir of Roger Williams, the Founder of the State of Rhode-Island* (Boston: Lincoln, Edmands, and Company, 1834), 113.
3.

See Roger Williams, letter to the town of Providence, January 1655, *Letters of Roger Williams, 1632-1682*, ed. John Russell Bartlett (Providence, Rhode Island: Narragansett Club, 1874), 278.
4.

Rhode Island Royal Charter, 1663, sos.ri.gov/assets/downloads/documents/ri-Charter-annotated.pdf.
5.

Rhode Island Royal Charter.
6.

Roger Williams, letter to Major John Mason, 22 June 1670, *Letters of Roger Williams*, 347.
7.

George Washington, letter to the Hebrew congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, 18 August 1790, *Founders Online*, National Archives, founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-06-02-0135.
8.

Washington, letter to the Hebrew congregation.
9.

Washington, letter to the Hebrew congregation.
10.

Washington, letter to the Hebrew congregation; see also Micah 4:4.



WEB EXTRA
Scan to watch in English.



WEB EXTRA
Scan to watch in Spanish.





Latin America

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

THE 1ST BRAZILIAN SYMPOSIUM ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Religious Liberty

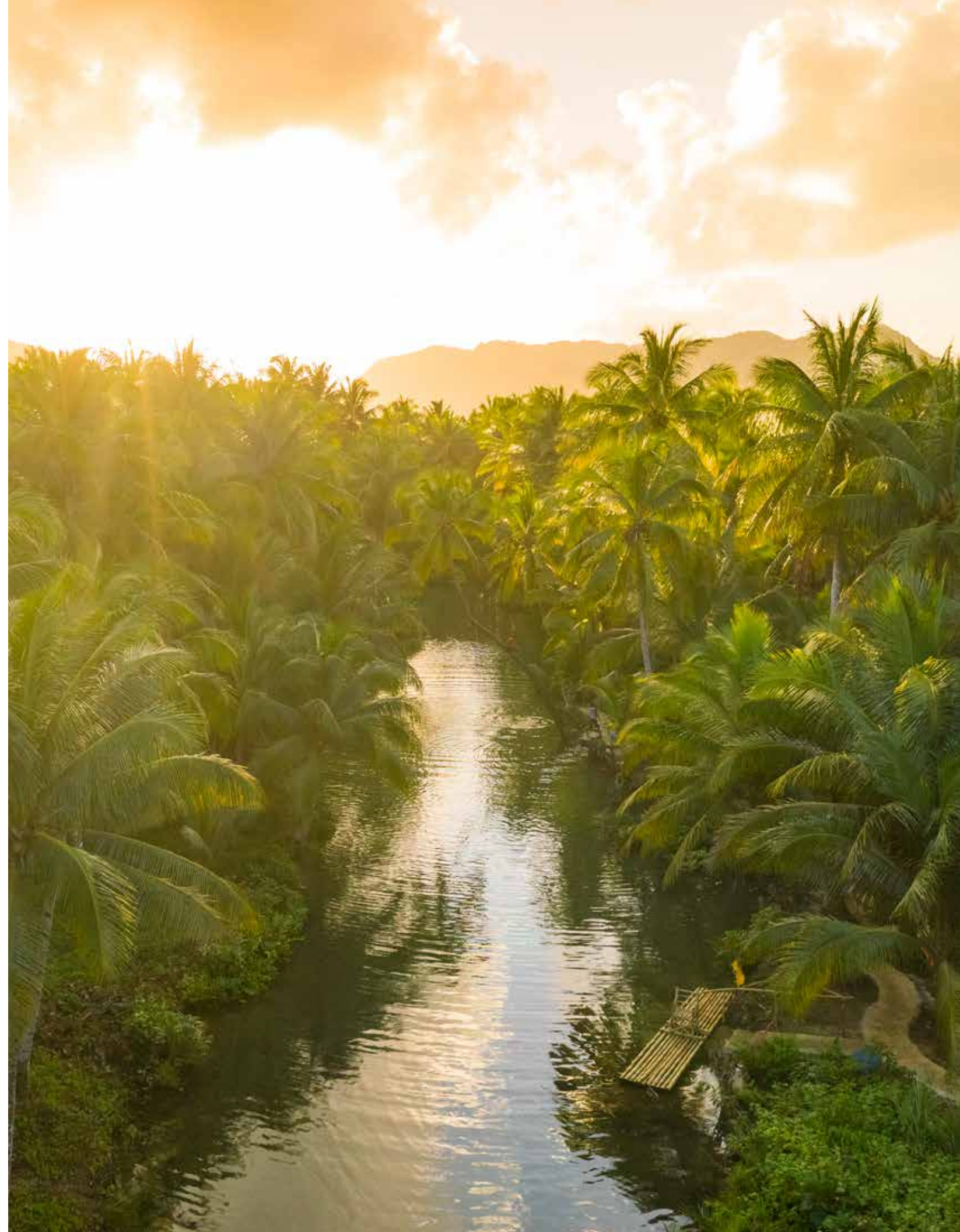
FOUNDATION FOR HARMONY, JUSTICE, AND PEACE

23–25 MARCH 2022 | RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

More than one hundred religious leaders, legal professionals, judges, and scholars from throughout Brazil—along with well-known experts from elsewhere in Latin America, the us, and Europe—met in Rio de Janeiro 23–25 March for the 1st Annual Brazilian Symposium on Religious Freedom. The event was cosponsored by ICLRS and the Brazilian Center of Studies in Law and Religion at Federal University of Uberlândia.

This was the first large-scale symposium in Brazil to bring together a diverse group of religious leaders united in the goal of

fostering religious freedom. Participants included members of persecuted communities as well as members of majority faiths. “May we celebrate together in this symposium our equality before God and the strength that comes from it in order to further strengthen coexistence, peace, and respect for all,” said Elder Ulisses Soares of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in his remarks.





21ST ANNUAL COLLOQUIUM OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CONSORTIUM FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

“Freedom of Expression and Religious Freedom”

22–24 SEPTEMBER 2022 | CÓRDOBA, SPAIN

The Latin American Consortium met in Córdoba, Spain, on 22–24 September, immediately following the International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies Conference. The location and dates were chosen specifically so that members could participate in both conferences. Sessions were held at multiple law schools in Córdoba, providing an opportunity for the Consortium to connect with various university officials.

Consortium members presented national reports on the colloquium theme—the interaction between freedom of speech and

freedom of religion—for Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, France, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, the United States, and Uruguay. Other presentations concerned developments regarding these freedoms at the United Nations, the European Court of Human Rights, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Five brief summaries of new books authored by Consortium members were also given.

2ND INTERRELIGIOUS FORUM OF THE AMERICAS

6–8 JUNE | LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, USA

The 2nd Interreligious Forum of the Americas (FIDELA, from *Foro Interreligioso de las Americas*) was held 6–8 June to coincide with the 9th Summit of the Americas, which took place in Los Angeles 6–10 June 2022. The event was cosponsored by the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University; the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20); the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at BYU (ICLRS); the Interreligious Council of Southern California; and Religions for Peace. The forum was attended by more than one hundred religious leaders, representatives of faith-based organizations, and policy experts from throughout North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean, and was made available to a larger online audience.

Sessions addressed a range of priority issues highlighted by the Summit of the Americas. Important connections were made between the Organization of American States (OAS), and there was crossover participation between the two events. Maria Celina Ramos-Conte, director of the Summit of the Americas Secretariat at the OAS, spoke at the FIDELA opening reception, and Nestor Mendez, assistant secretary general at the OAS, provided remarks to be read at the closing. Cynthia Juárez Lange, ICLRS senior

fellow, participated on a panel at the summit. Notes were kept of all FIDELA sessions and recommendations were made to the Summit of the Americas.

Of the conference, Marisa Limón Garza, senior director for advocacy and programming at Hope Border Institute, El Paso, Texas, said, “This conference has been an amazing contribution to the dialogue to build relationships with people across the Americas, specifically from a background of faith. I would advocate that the Summit really take a look at what’s happening from a faith-based and religious perspective because so much of the work that states can do is incomplete without an analysis and contribution from religious leaders from across the hemisphere.”

WEB EXTRA

Scan to learn more about FIDELA.





UAE INTERFAITH FORUM

Engaging Faith Communities

G20 AGENDAS AND BEYOND

12–13 DECEMBER 2022 | ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) was founded in 2014 to provide a platform for religious leaders, faith-based organizations, public officials, academics, and cultural organizations from all sectors to make meaningful contributions to global policy formation. IF20's annual meeting is usually held in the country hosting the G20, and IF20 leaders submit recommendations each year to the G20 leadership.

This year's meeting was originally scheduled to be held in Indonesia and was slated as the Center's Asia Regional Conference. Later, the location was changed to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. In partnership with the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities and under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, president of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Abu Dhabi, IF20 gathered 120 delegates to

discuss current and ongoing G20 concerns such as climate change and energy transition, refugees, child dignity, COVID-19 recovery, healthcare reforms, the food crisis, and other United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The conference's aim was to set a working agenda for ongoing activities in 2023 and to develop well-researched, substantive, and concrete policy recommendations for this year's G20 process.

The dominant themes that emerged from the Abu Dhabi event were the four c's: coexistence, climate, COVID, and children, with a central focus on children. Participants argued that both G20 leaders and religious communities should prioritize the well-being of children across the world by forming a task force to protect them against all types of violence and by implementing education reforms as part of COVID-19 recovery.





Muslim World

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

UZBEKISTAN CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM ON RELIGION AND THE RULE OF LAW

Dialogue of Declarations Conference

16–20 MAY 2022 | TASHKENT, SAMARKAND, AND BUKHARA, UZBEKISTAN

In partnership with the Institute for Global Engagement and the Institute of Strategic and Regional Studies Under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Center hosted events in Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara, Uzbekistan.

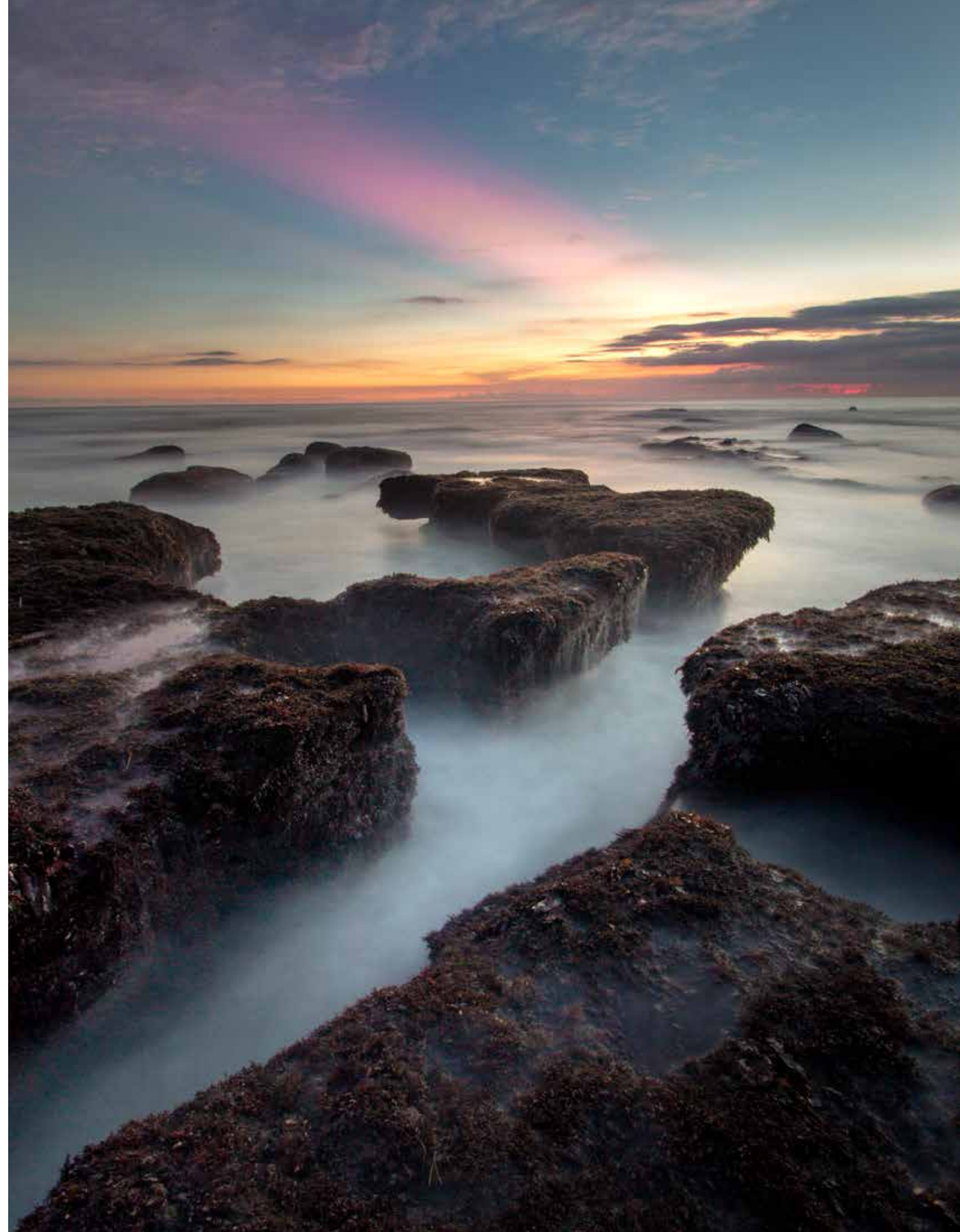
Multi-Faith Neighbors Network, the University of World Economy and Diplomacy, and the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan partnered to present three certificate training programs in religion and rule of law, cross-cultural religious literacy, and multifaith clerical relationship building. Local religious affairs officials and religious leaders from the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities attended, along with law enforcement personnel and academics.

These separate tracks led to a joint conference, the Dialogue of Declarations, which was held in Bukhara. The location was specifically chosen for its historical importance in Muslim thought and culture. The Dialogue of Declarations featured leaders who played key roles in drafting recent major declarations on religious freedom and pluralism, including the Makkah Declaration (2019),

Marrakesh Declaration (2016), Jakarta Declaration on Violent Extremism and Religious Education (2018), Potomac Declaration (2018), UN resolution on Enlightenment and Religious Tolerance (2018), and Punta del Este Declaration on Human Dignity for Everyone Everywhere (2018). The Dialogue culminated in the official adoption of the Bukhara Declaration, which commits to “protect, without reservation, everyone’s right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, which includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.”

WEB EXTRA

Scan to learn more about the Bukhara Declaration.





9TH CONFERENCE ON LAW AND RELIGION IN AFRICA

Law, Religion, Health, and Healing in Africa

15–18 MAY 2022 | NAIROBI, KENYA

The 2022 African Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ACLARS) conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya. A group of Christian and Muslim participants, state and traditional leaders, and scholars from across the African continent met together in Nairobi to discuss health issues in Africa. They focused on the impact that religious communities have had on healthcare, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

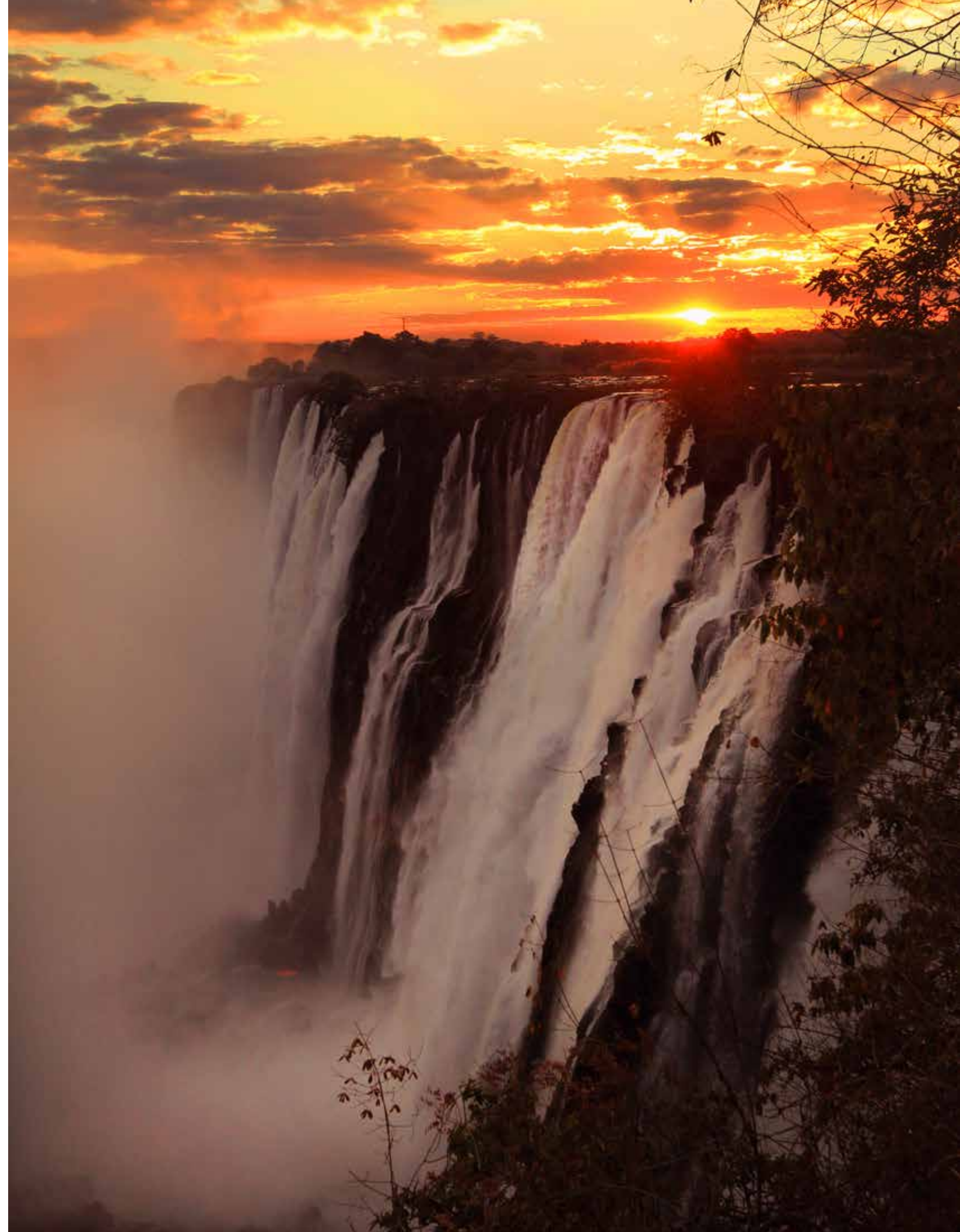
As stated in the concept paper for the conference, found on aclrs.org/a-call-for-papers-2022:

The COVID-19 pandemic has demanded responses from the legal and religious sectors, sometimes creating conflict around issues of religious freedom and the proper scope of legal regulation to mitigate the pandemic. In other cases, it has prompted new collaborations between government and religion in the interest of public health. Institutions of medicine, education, family, and local communities bore the burden of the pandemic. Women experienced increased heightened vulnerability

in their families and in their essential economic and business roles. Essentially, no sector of African societies has been immune from the effects of COVID-19, prompting opportunities for legal and religious innovation and agency in response.

Speakers and panelists sought to rethink the concepts of health and healing by looking at physical, spiritual, socioeconomic, cultural, and other metrics. They discussed lessons learned from previous pandemics as well as the COVID-19 pandemic and explored topics such as the roles of the media, African traditional medicine, curtailment of religious practices during COVID-19, and legal regulations.

Sixteen African countries were represented at the conference, and African scholars from Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States also participated. This was the first in-person conference for ACLARS since 2019. In addition, many of the sessions were offered as a live stream to online viewers.





Eastern Europe

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

RELIGION AND THE RULE OF LAW SEMINAR AND CONFERENCE

Prospects for a New Central Asia

RELIGION'S ROLE IN FORMING A STABLE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

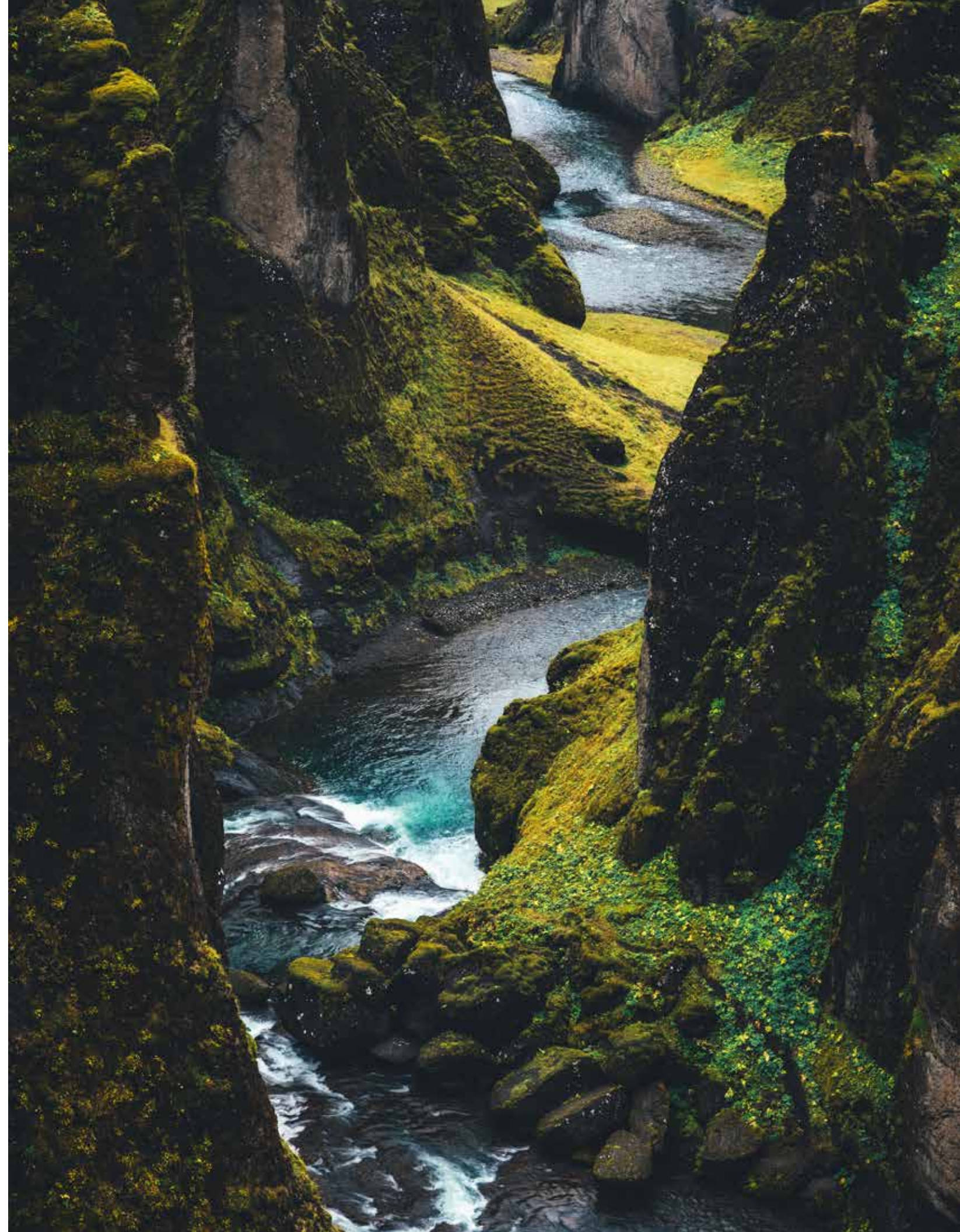
7-8 SEPTEMBER 2022 | ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN

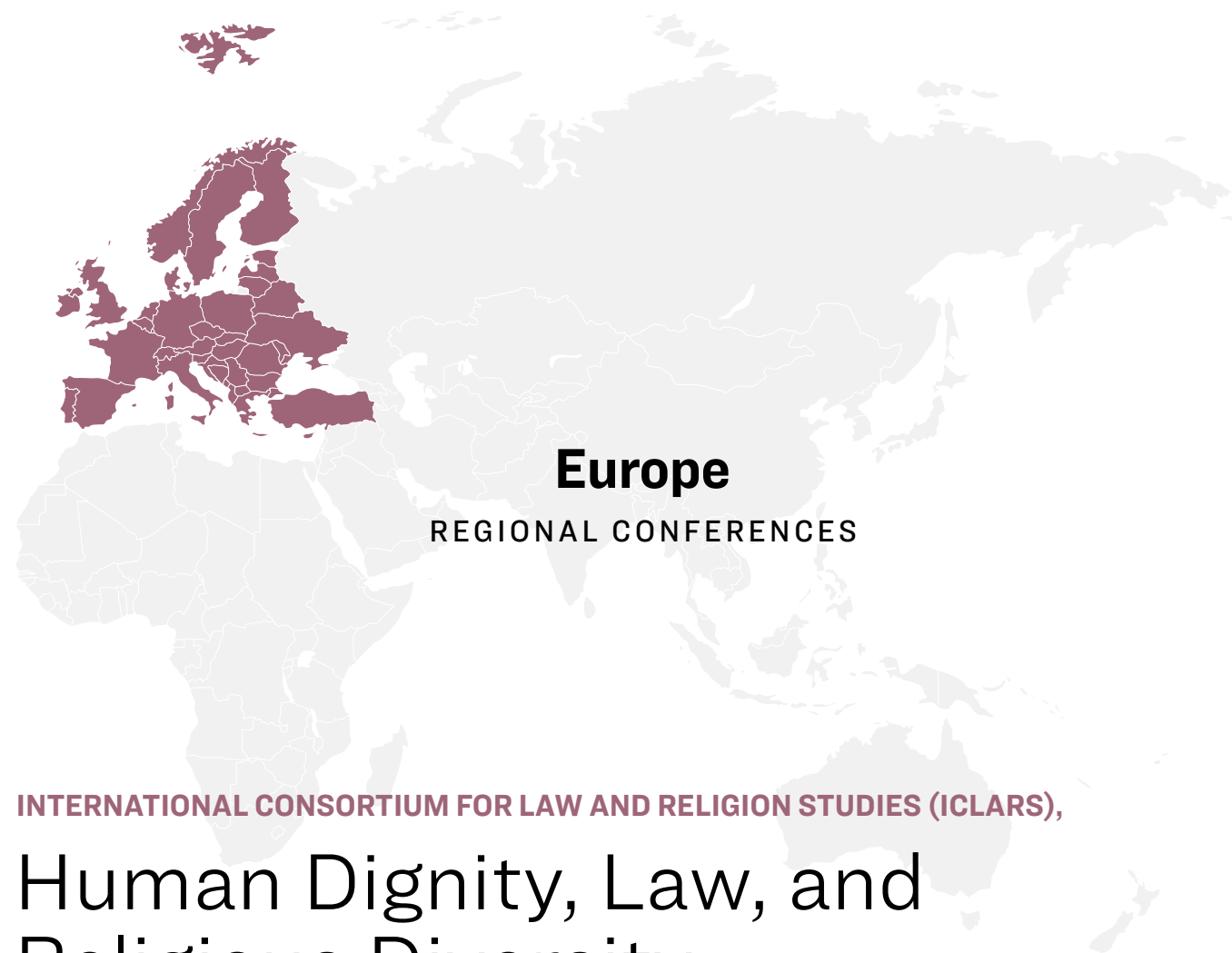
The Center and other sponsors hosted a two-day religion and rule of law training in Almaty, Kazakhstan, along with a regional conference focused on Central Asia. This event was the Center's first engagement in Kazakhstan; it provided an important opportunity to partner with the Kazakh government and created opportunities for future events in the region.

Participants gathered from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and six other countries. Topics included the role of religious actors in the promotion of a culture of peace, national security and freedom of religion, and the role of religion in civil society.

The event was sponsored by the Center, the Committee on Religious Affairs from the Ministry of Information and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Public Law Research Institute of Caspian University, the Association of Religious Organizations of Kazakhstan, and Love Your Neighbor Community.

Following the conference, Elizabeth Clark traveled to Astana to meet with the head of the Committee on Religious Affairs. Clark serves on a Kazakh-US religious freedom committee with representatives of both governments.





Europe

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM FOR LAW AND RELIGION STUDIES (ICLARS),

Human Dignity, Law, and Religious Diversity

DESIGNING THE FUTURE OF INTERCULTURAL SOCIETIES

19–21 SEPTEMBER 2022 | CÓRDOBA, SPAIN

More than 400 law and religion scholars, judges, rapporteurs, and other significant freedom of religion or belief actors from more than 50 countries and five continents attended the annual ICLARS conference in Córdoba, Spain.

The aim of the conference was to analyze how the notion of human dignity—the guiding principle of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948—can create common ground between competing interpretations of human rights. Originally conceived as an instrument to achieve social cohesion and harmony, human rights can sometimes become a battlefield for conflicting ethical and political positions. Human dignity for everyone everywhere, when placed at the forefront, can help generate agreement and build bridges.

In both the plenary and breakout sessions of the conference, participants discussed the contributions of various branches of government as well as the contributions of civil society and international institutions in promoting a culture of respect for freedom and pluralism.

Other events were organized around the ICLARS event. An international moot court competition, the International Association of Religious Journalists' conference, and the Annual Colloquium of the Latin American Consortium of Religious Liberty were held in Córdoba in the days before and after the conference.





YOUNG SCHOLARS FELLOWSHIP ON RELIGION AND THE RULE OF LAW

18 JULY–5 AUGUST 2022 | OXFORD, UNITED KINGDOM

In the summer of 2018 the International Center for Law and Religion Studies launched the Young Scholars Fellowship on Religion and the Rule of Law, hosted at Christ Church, Oxford. This fellowship was established to develop and educate a network of leaders who are sensitive to the importance of religious freedom.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the scholars selected in 2020 had to wait until 2022 to attend. Due to visa issues and COVID-19, a smaller class met at Christ Church from 18 July to 5 August for three weeks of intensive coursework led by world-renowned religion and law writers, academics, and scholars, including Nazila Ghanea, the newly appointed United Nations special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief. One participant, Dorjana Bojanovska Popovska of Macedonia, said of her time in Oxford, “Many of the professors are people I have read and cited and [to meet them] has been a great experience.”

Scholars were able to network not only with instructors but also with each other. “The biggest value of a program like this is the interaction with and learning about law and religion from other jurisdictions and how it relates to your own jurisdiction,” said Brian Bird of Canada. “Thankfully, through this experience

I now have a network of friends that I can reach out to and say, ‘How does this work in Brazil or Nigeria or Azerbaijan?’”

Scholars had the opportunity to spend a day in London where they met with Fiona Bruce, Member of Parliament and the UK prime minister’s special envoy for freedom of religion or belief; toured Westminster Abbey; met with Mark Hill, Queen’s Counsel; and enjoyed dinner at the Inner Temple with Lord Patrick Hodge, deputy president of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom.

Fellows also had the opportunity to attend three side events at Christ Church: a workshop on the Human Dignity in Religious Traditions Project, a workshop on religion and comprehensive security, and a workshop on law and human flourishing. In the final days of the certificate training, scholars presented the research that they are developing for publication.

“It’s been absolutely marvelous to have this kind of academic activity in a setting like Christ Church,” said Fearghas O’Beara of Ireland. “It’s really conducive to getting the intellectual juices flowing and in building nice contacts and friendships with people from around the world. One senses the history and the intricacy of church-state relations in a place like this.”





AMAR FOUNDATION WINDSOR DIALOGUE CONFERENCE, PARTS I AND II

20–21 APRIL 2022 | SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, USA
7–8 JULY 2022 | LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

In 2022 the Center cosponsored two conferences as part of the AMAR International Charitable Foundation’s Windsor Dialogue series.

Baroness Emma Nicholson of Winterbourne, a member of the UK House of Lords, founded AMAR in the early 1990s in response to persecution of Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq. As conflict in the Middle East resulted in greater numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP), AMAR expanded its charitable efforts to encompass the development of primary healthcare, mental healthcare, education, and other resources in Iraq and elsewhere.

The Windsor Dialogue series of conferences began in 2016 with the primary objectives of (1) investigating triggers leading to the persecution of religious minorities and (2) helping individuals live dignified lives in IDP and refugee camps so that they can flourish when they leave the camps. The Center has cosponsored the last three conferences in the Windsor Dialogue series.

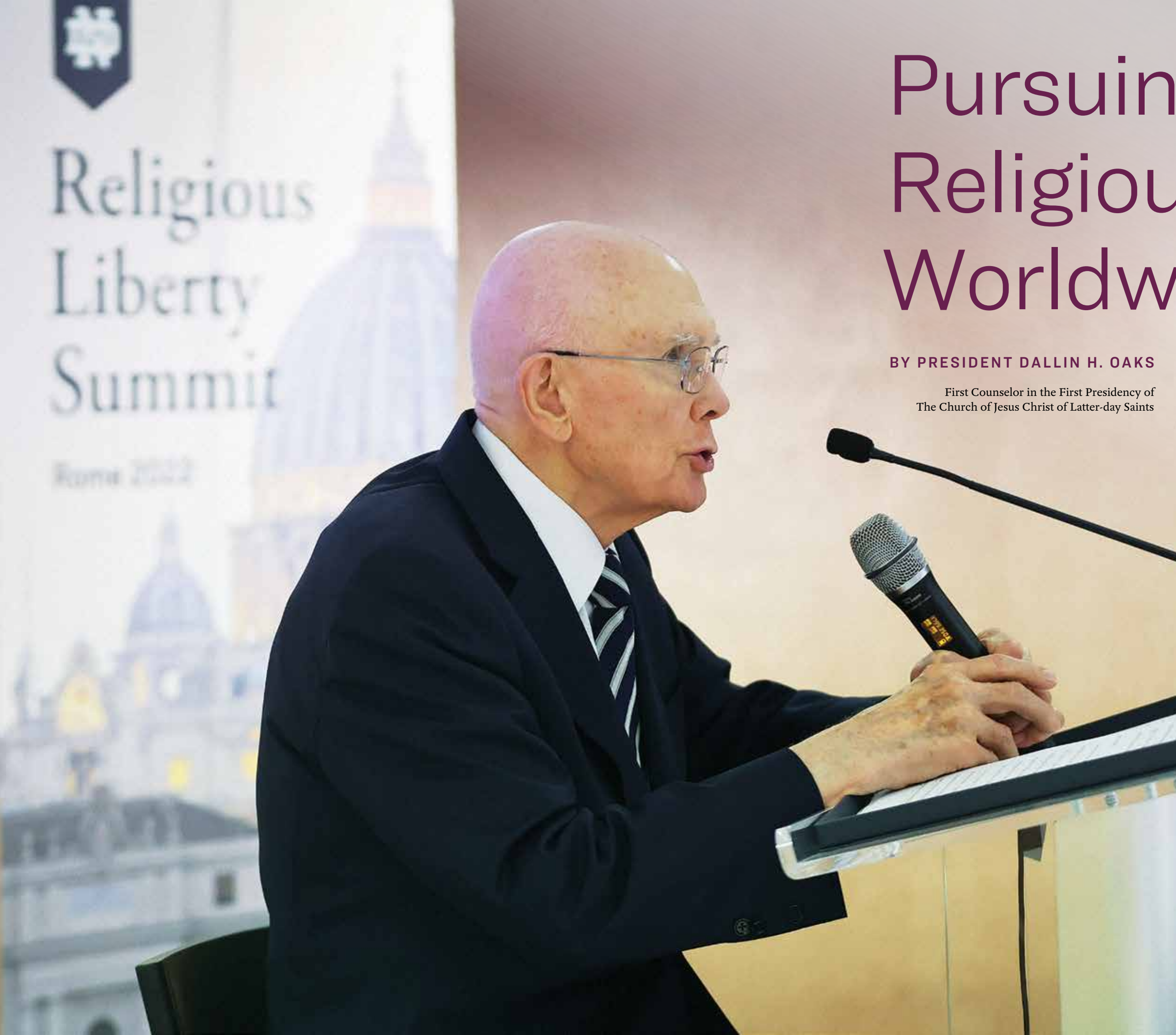
A principal focus of the April and July 2022 conferences was to create a strategy to draft and propose protocols to the United Nations and other governing bodies that will provide needed mental health interventions in refugee and IDP camps—including programs incorporating the religious music of persecuted minorities.

Conference participants included religious leaders, academics, and practitioners in the fields of mental health, music education, Islamic studies, refugee camp management, faith-sensitive humanitarian approaches, UN advocacy, and other related specialties.

The first 2022 conference took place in Salt Lake City, Utah, 20–21 April and focused on the theme “From Persecution to Healing, Hope, Resilience, and Community: Building the Framework to Promote Mental Health Through Music Therapy in Refugee Camps.” The second conference, which took place at Cheyneygates, Westminster Abbey, London, on 7–8 July, focused on “Life Beyond the Camps: Freedom and Flourishing.”

Both conferences included hymn-singing sessions where presenters introduced hymns related to healing, hope, and resilience that come from the traditions of both the Anglican Church and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Salt Lake City musical session was held in the historic Salt Lake Tabernacle; the London session was held at St. Clement Danes church and featured the chamber vocal ensemble Voces Episcopi. Both events featured accompaniment by Richard Elliott, principal organist of the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square.





Pursuing Religious Liberty Worldwide

This address was delivered 20 July 2022 at the Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit in Rome, Italy.

BY PRESIDENT DALLIN H. OAKS

First Counselor in the First Presidency of
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

I. Introduction

Why would a leader of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints be invited to speak about religious liberty at a Notre Dame symposium in Rome? From its beginning in the United States in 1830, our church and its members have experienced religious persecution. Catholics and other minorities in the United States have suffered persecution as well.

For me personally, religious liberty is not academic. In 1838, my third-great-grandmother Oaks and her family lost most of their property when the Missouri state militia drove our members, then mockingly known as “Mormons,” out of that state. A few years later, Illinois state authorities stood by while a lawless element burned homes and drove Church members from that state as well. In 1844, my wife Kristen’s second-great-grandfather Hyrum Smith was murdered by a mob who opposed his religion. In 1893, my great-grandfather Harris was sent to prison in the Utah Territory for his religious practices. My great-aunt was the first woman imprisoned for hers.¹ I am one of many Latter-day Saints whose DNA includes a desire for religious freedom, felt as fundamental as the marrow in our bones.

In 1843, our first prophet, Joseph Smith, expressed our feeling about this:

I am bold to declare before heaven that I am . . . ready to die in defending the rights of a Presbyterian, a Baptist or a good man of any other denomination; for the same principle which would trample upon the rights of the Latter-day Saints would trample upon the rights of the Roman Catholics or of any other denomination.”²



Almost two centuries later, a large audience at Brigham Young University welcomed Cardinal Francis E. George, then president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. He began his landmark address by declaring his personal gratitude that

*after 180 years of living mostly apart from one another, Catholics and Latter-day Saints have begun to see one another as trustworthy partners in the defense of shared moral principles and in the promotion of the common good of our beloved country.*³

Later, he concluded:

*Catholics and Mormons stand with one another and with other defenders of conscience and . . . we can and should stand as one in the defense of religious liberty. In the coming years, interreligious coalitions formed to defend the rights of conscience for individuals and for religious institutions should become a vital bulwark against the tide of forces at work in our government and society to reduce religion to a purely private reality.*⁴

I am here in furtherance of our enthusiastic support for such “interreligious coalitions” to defend religious freedom for all people. During the earlier persecution of our Church, we have learned that the best remedy for religious persecution that affects us is to join in efforts to reduce religious persecution that affects others. I will return to that theme later, but for now—from Rome, this great cradle of the Christian faith—I call for a global effort to defend and advance the religious freedom of all the children of God in every nation of the world.

II. Religious Liberty Faces Serious Challenges Worldwide

Organized religion and personal freedom of religion currently face serious challenges. Religious liberty is declining in popularity with governments and their citizens. Religion is under siege by secularism, authoritarianism, and political correctness, all

of which seek to replace or weaken the influence of its teachings. Globally, there are many *government* restrictions on religious liberty.

More significant in the long run may be the deteriorating attitudes of *individuals* toward religion. For example, a 2021 Pew Center global survey of individuals in 17 economically advanced nations found that only 2 percent mentioned religion or God as a source of meaning in their lives.⁵

Doubtless there are many causes of this deterioration. Whether cause or effect, the education of the rising generation has surely played a role. In the United States we have observed a diminishing coverage of religion in school textbooks and curricula. More than two decades ago, a report of the American Textbook Council observed that “the strength of religion in shaping human thought and action is not often explained, and its role as a motivating agent of culture, politics, and ethics often remains underexamined.”⁶

One observer wrote that school textbooks “creat[e] the impression that religion

and faith have little to do with the development of U.S. history.”⁷

What are the religious freedoms or liberties that concern us? For faith communities, the United States Constitution guarantees freedom of association and the right to assemble; the right to determine new members; the right to select leaders and important employees, including in related organizations; and the right to function as an organization. For individual believers, essential rights include religious expression and exercise and freedom from religious discrimination.

In defense of these rights, we should be united. At this symposium last year, Elder Quentin L. Cook gave this apostolic challenge: “Catholics, Evangelicals, Jews, Muslims, Latter-day Saints, and [people of] other faiths must be part of a coalition of faiths that succor, act as a sanctuary, and promulgate religious freedom across the world.”⁸

When leaders join forces to confront religious liberty challenges, they do not need to examine doctrinal differences or identify their many common elements of belief. All that is necessary for unity is our shared conviction that God has commanded us to love one another and has granted us freedom in matters of faith.

III. The Background of Religious Liberty

Religious liberty has a long and troubled background, from the time it did not exist anywhere in the world to current circumstances, in which most countries recognize the principle but still contest how it should be applied.

Over 400 years ago, religious liberty became an issue in various American colonies established by refugees from religious persecution. For example, Catholics gathered and settled in Maryland when the British Empire was officially hostile to Catholicism. As religious refugees, Puritans established the Massachusetts Bay Colony. However, Puritans soon disclosed the limits of their concept of religious liberty: it did

not apply to those who disagreed with their doctrine. Baptists and Quakers were banished from their colony, and a few Quakers who returned were hanged.⁹

From this American perspective, I see three key events in the modern development of religious liberty. The first was the 1787 United States Constitution, adopted after American independence from Britain. Its First Amendment, added four years later, prohibited government sponsorship or domination of religion and assured the freedoms of religious exercise, speech, press, and the right to assemble and petition for the redress of grievances. Appropriately, all these basic civil liberties have been included in the constitutions of all states in the United States.

Despite original and ongoing controversies about the application of these liberties, most Americans consider them icons of freedom based on divine inspiration. In a recent nationwide survey, 55 percent of

respondents said they believed the United States Constitution was inspired of God, and 62 percent believed in the inspired origin of the First Amendment.¹⁰

For the members of my church, the divine inspiration of the basic principles of the United States Constitution is a matter of religious faith.¹¹ In modern revelation God declared that He “established” the Constitution of the United States “for the rights and protection of all flesh.”¹² Whether or how its inspired principles should be applied in other nations is for them to decide.

Unfortunately, the ideas of free exercise and government neutrality toward different religions grew slowly in the United States. Before the 20th century, when the US Constitution’s *national* guarantees were finally held to protect citizens from *state* action, state governments frequently violated religious freedom. For example, in 1838 the governor of the state of Missouri ordered that the members of my faith





“must be treated as enemies and must be exterminated or driven from the state.”¹³ Succeeding decades witnessed other state repression or favoritism among religions. In the 1870s, after Catholic parochial schools were established in partial response to the predominantly Protestant teachings and practices of tax-supported public schools, many states adopted so-called Blaine Amendments. These amendments prohibited the use of any public funds to support private religious schools, which, of course, were predominantly Catholic.¹⁴ Vestiges of these controversial laws continue in some states.

From the American perspective, a second key event in the development of religious liberty was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Most significantly, Article 18 declares:

*Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.*¹⁵

Importantly, this declaration opens with an affirmation that resonates with the doctrine of many religions: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”¹⁶

This declaration has paved the way for 27 multilateral human rights treaties,¹⁷ important regional human rights instruments,¹⁸ and numerous other human rights treaties.

My third key event in the development of religious liberty was the 1965 Vatican II Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*). This declared the root principle that each person, made in the image and likeness of God, has inherent dignity and is therefore created to be free and to enjoy religious freedom. In addition to stressing the religious freedom of *individuals*, *Dignitatis Humanae* also recognized that individuals practice religion in community with one another.¹⁹ This freedom for *organizations* is vital to Catholics and all other religions that sponsor schools, medical care, and other social service organizations.

The Vatican II Declaration on Religious Freedom has been described as a tipping point for religious freedom internationally.

An experienced Catholic observer, my friend Professor Mary Ann Glendon has explained:

*Catholic leaders take their bearings on religious freedom mainly from the teachings of Vatican II as expounded [subsequently] by Saint Pope John Paul II, [who said that] “religious freedom, an essential requirement of the dignity of every person, is a cornerstone of the structure of human rights, and for this reason an irreplaceable factor in the good of individuals and of the whole of society as well as of the personal fulfillment of each individual.”*²⁰

Pope John Paul II committed his heartfelt efforts to the defense of religious freedom, speaking as a religious leader to a worldwide audience. All who are committed to the free exercise of religion are indebted both for *Dignitatis Humanae* and for John Paul II’s vision and advocacy.

IV. The Value of Religious Liberty

Religious teachings and the religiously motivated actions of believers benefit society and deserve legal protection.

For example, there are many needs for humanitarian assistance—hunger, disease, and lack of education to mention only a few. Religious liberty enables believers and faith communities to provide this aid to society’s neediest members. Most religions exhort their believers to give to the poor. Most also teach their believers that they are accountable to God for this duty.

Religions also play a vital role in contributing to social stability. Societies are not held together primarily by law and its enforcement but by those who voluntarily obey the unenforceable because of their sense of accountability to God. In his talk at this symposium last year, my fellow apostle Elder Quentin L. Cook spoke of this. “Accountability to God,” he said, “is a powerful force for good and strongly supports democracy.”²¹ He illustrated that fact with Harvard professor Clayton M. Christensen’s impressive teaching that most Americans “voluntarily choose to follow the law” not just because of its official enforcement but because they believe “they [a]re accountable to God.”²²

Here are a few other examples and recommendations to illustrate the truth that the teachings and practice of religion are

of unique value to a free and prosperous society. Some are drawn from recent writings of my fellow apostles in our worldwide ministry, others from Professor W. Cole Durham, Jr., an expert on international religious freedom.

I begin with Professor Durham’s crucial insight that the freedoms of religion and belief are foundational to other important rights in at least four ways: (1) *Historically*, many other civil rights emerged as expansions of protections originally provided for religious freedom. (2) *Philosophically*, religious freedom protects the belief systems from which other freedoms derive their meaning. (3) *Religious institutions* provide the motivation and moral support that translate religious and moral ideals into the communal practices on which related freedoms depend. (4) Finally, the freedoms of religion and belief are *empirically foundational* to healthy democracies.²³ We now have good evidence that a country’s protection of religious freedom correlates with a functional democracy and with other social goods, such as economic freedom, per capita gross domestic product, higher literacy rates, and better health and education.²⁴

The late Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan

Sacks of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth taught that religion is “the most powerful community builder the world has known. . . . [It is also] the best antidote to the individualism of the consumer age.”²⁵

History teaches that religious freedom holds societies together through a shared assurance that all will be secure in following their own foundational beliefs. As one of our apostles recently taught in Chile:

*For centuries, people fought over religious differences, often with the government suppressing one religion in the name of another. Religious liberty has allowed people of diverse religious traditions to live together in peace and friendship despite profound disagreements. . . . Governments that protect religious freedom have fewer social conflicts and greater levels of social cohesion.*²⁶

When citizens learn to live together with respect—despite important *religious* differences—they are also more likely to live peacefully with others with whom they have important *secular* differences. Critics who condemn religion as the source of great atrocities in the past should remember

that the mass killings of the last century were not done in the name of religion. The unspeakable crimes of the Holocaust, the Stalinist purges, the killing fields of the Khmer Rouge, and the ethnic cleansings in Central Africa were primarily motivated by ethnic, political, or tribal differences, not by religious rivalries.²⁷ Indeed, those regimes were overtly hostile to religion. Similarly, while public attention focuses on religious extremists' current atrocities in a few parts of the world, leaders of the very faiths they invoke have forcefully condemned their violent acts.²⁸ Violent extremism is no part of the religious freedom we advocate.

Speaking from a religious perspective, I maintain that followers of Jesus Christ have a duty to seek harmony and peace. "Blessed are the peacemakers," Jesus taught, "for they shall be called the children of God."²⁹

The Apostle Paul similarly urged Christians to "follow after the things which make for peace,"³⁰ and "if it be possible . . . live peaceably with all men."³¹

Religion and persons of faith bless society with a precious and unique moral conscience. In our recent worldwide conference, another of our apostles declared:

*If religion is not there to help with shaping character and mediating hard times, who will be? Who will teach honesty, gratitude, forgiveness, and patience? Who will exhibit charity, compassion, and kindness for the forgotten and the downtrodden? Who will embrace those who are different yet deserving, as are all of God's children?*³²

Teachings based on faith in God—however He is understood—have always

contributed to moral actions that benefit the entire nation.

V. Pursuing Religious Liberty

Let us now consider ways religious institutions and believers can strengthen religious liberty worldwide. I have four brief suggestions.

1. Our responses to governmental laws and our relations with potential adversaries will be helped if we accept the twin realities (a) that we are all fellow citizens who need each other and (b) that we are all subject to law.

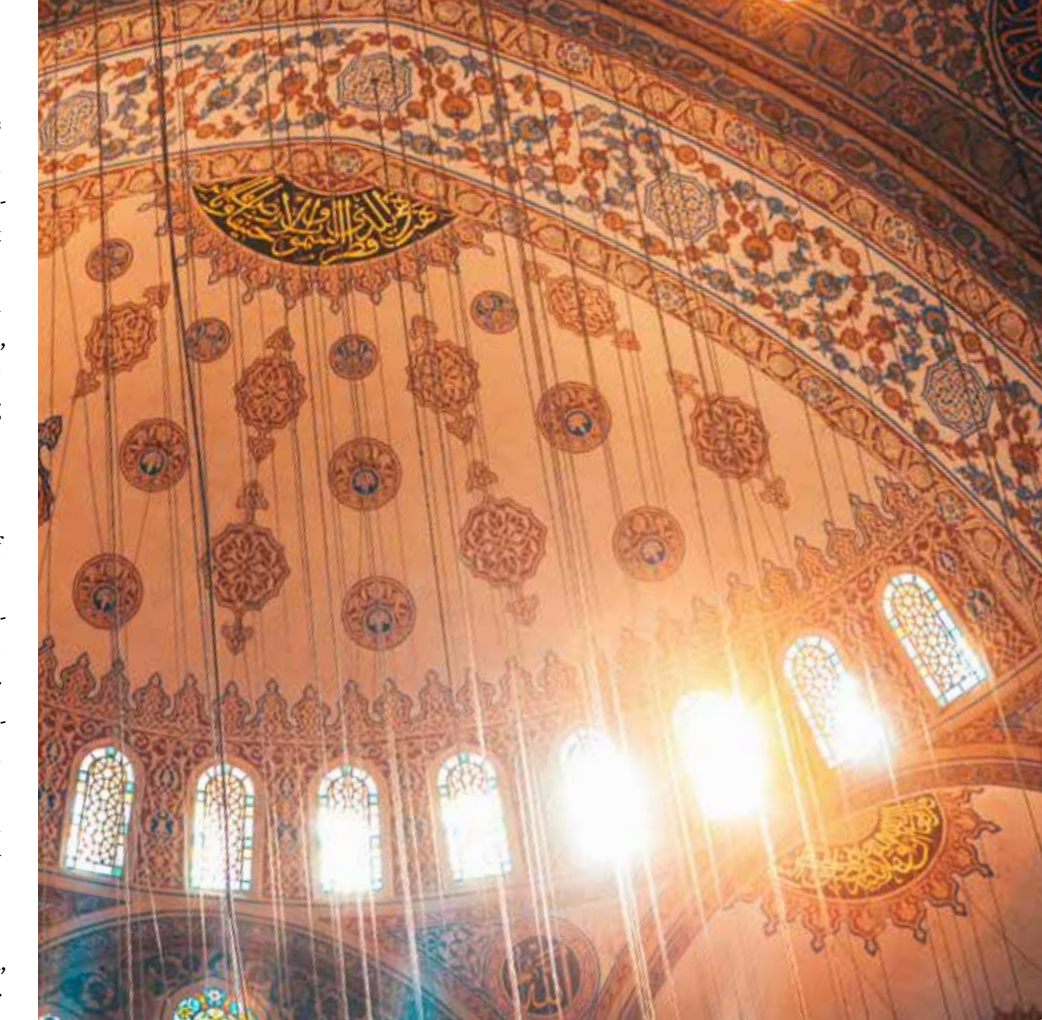
In responses to government, we should remember Jesus's charge to "render [give] . . .

unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's."³³ Even religious rights cannot be absolute. In a nation with citizens of many different religious beliefs or disbeliefs, the government must sometimes limit the rights of some to act upon their religious beliefs when doing so is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all. In addition, some other citizens may even have competing constitutional rights against which some religious liberties must be balanced.

Our efforts to resolve challenges to religious liberty will be strengthened if we do not always seek total dominance for our own positions. Some accommodations may be necessary as we strive to honor legitimate laws and respect other persons' highest ideals and human experiences. Conflicting claims are best resolved by seeking to understand the experiences and concerns of others and by good faith negotiations. None of this requires any compromise of our core religious principles but rather a careful examination of what is *really essential* to our free exercise of religion, in contrast to what other believers consider *really essential* to their beliefs. In this way we learn to live peacefully with some laws we dislike and with some persons whose values differ from our own.³⁴

2. The most serious violations of religious freedom are not merely discrimination but persecution. Much religious persecution in the United States—and probably worldwide—has been one or more religious groups persecuting others. The mob that murdered Joseph Smith, the first prophet and president of my church, was led by a man known as a "sometime" Protestant minister.³⁵ The Blaine Amendments mentioned earlier were promoted by predominantly Protestant lawmakers opposing predominantly Catholic schools. Protestants have suffered their own share of persecutions. Occurrences of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and persecution of Christians are current examples of serious violations of religious freedom.

In human history, religious persecution is so common that it can seem irreversible. However, examining this issue in light of



global statistics identifies something that can be done. A Pew study suggests that where 70 percent or more of the population belongs to a single dominant religion, there tends to be social hostility and high restrictions on religious freedom. Yet no country where *Catholicism* has over 70 percent of the population exhibits this pattern in recent years.³⁶ This surely reflects the impact of *Dignitatis Humanae*, but it also suggests that religious leaders and institutions can play a vital role in averting religious persecution.

In every country, religious leaders can play an important role in discouraging the use of state power to cause or support religious persecution. We hope and pray that the religious duties of religious leaders will incline them to oppose the use of state- or religion-supported coercion on the sacred subjects of religious choice and activity. Further, we who live under laws that promote religious freedom need to use our persuasive powers to encourage religious liberty for those not so favored.

3. The preservation of religious liberty ultimately depends on the understanding and support of the general public. And that, in turn, depends on the value the public attaches to the teachings of churches, synagogues, mosques, and other places of worship and what believers do with those teachings.

If the foundation of religious liberty is weakening, it is likely in part because the benefits conferred on society by religious organizations and religiously motivated people are not sufficiently known and acknowledged. We need to address that deficiency on a wider front than preaching, lobbying, and litigating. Religious institutions and believers must teach and act to make the beneficial public effects of religious teachings and practices more visible to nonbelievers. And we need more believers to practice their religious faith more visibly by serving others.

We should serve others in ways that help them understand that our voluntary service is motivated by our religious beliefs.





As Jesus taught, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”³⁷ As more of our service genuinely benefits society and is clearly motivated by our religious beliefs, this will be recognized by the general public.

Our church is striving to benefit others. Sometimes we act independently, but more commonly in cooperation with others such as Caritas, UNICEF, Red Cross, or Red Crescent. For example, in 2021, our church delivered 80 million pounds of food for hungry people and improved clean water and sanitation sources in 47 countries. In 2021, we helped respond to 199 emergency projects in 61 countries and territories devastated by natural disasters. Often, this aid was more than supplies or funding; it included volunteered time and service by thousands of our members. Such personal efforts are an important public manifestation of the religious motivation that drives humanitarian assistance—a freewill offering born out of love for God and neighbor. Relief following disasters is only one of the multiple efforts that added up to 6.8 million

hours of volunteer service rendered by our members in 2021.³⁸ Also, our church’s highly esteemed family history programs, FamilySearch and RootsTech, are widely used by nonbelievers as well as believers to provide tools for strengthening family ties and social networks.

Religious communities can offer something governments—however well financed—cannot provide: large-scale person-to-person kindness and empathy to accompany material assistance.

The religiously motivated practices of one denomination can benefit society generally. As they do, the value and strength of the religious freedom that makes them possible is more evident and easier to support generally.

4. Finally, as declared by so many religious leaders, we must unite and find common ground for defending and promoting religious liberty. This is not a call for doctrinal compromises but rather a plea for unity and cooperation on strategy and advocacy toward our common goal of religious liberty for all. Speaking to an audience in

his native Brazil, an apostolic colleague described it this way:

Religious freedom is as much a duty toward others as it is a right for oneself. . . . We gain freedom by supporting the freedom of those we deem to be our adversaries. When we see that our interests are tied to the interests of everyone else, then the real work of religious freedom begins.³⁹

With the love and mutual respect taught by divine commandments, we need to find ways to learn from one another and to reinforce the common commitments that hold us together and promote stable pluralistic societies. We should walk shoulder to shoulder along the path of religious freedom for all while still exercising that freedom to pursue our distinctive beliefs.

On behalf of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I testify of the divinity of our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, and as one of His apostles, I invoke His blessings on all who seek to serve God, including those who seek to advance religious freedom. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

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7. Michael H. Romanowski, “Addressing Christianity in American History: Are Textbooks Improving?” *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* 14, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 24.
8. Quentin L. Cook, panel remarks in “2021 Religious Liberty Summit: Keynote by Cardinal Timothy Dolan and Interfaith Dialogue Panel,” Notre Dame Law School, YouTube livestream video, 49:39, 28 June 2021, [youtube.com/watch?v=WGB0Fv3GRUY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WGB0Fv3GRUY); and Cook, quoted in “At Notre Dame Summit, Elder Cook Explains What We Lose When We Are ‘Tone Deaf’ to the Music of Faith,” Newsroom of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 28 June 2021, newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/elder-cook-notre-dame-religious-freedom.
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16. United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 1.
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 30. Romans 14:19.
 31. Romans 12:18.
 32. Ronald A. Rasband, “To Heal the World,” *Liahona*, May 2022.
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 37. Matthew 5:16.
 38. See *Caring for Those in Need: 2021 Annual Report of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2022), 7, 32–33, 40–42, 44–45.
 39. Ulisses Soares, “The Architecture of a Pluralistic Society,” translation of an address delivered in Portuguese at the First Brazilian Law and Religion Symposium, 23 March 2022, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Newsroom of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/article/elder-ulisses-soares-religious-freedom-brazil; emphasis added.

STUDENTS





2022 SUMMER RESEARCH FELLOWS

Students who had completed their first year of law school were selected to participate in an international externship at the Office of General Counsel at either the headquarters of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City or one of the eight area legal counsel offices of the Church in countries around the world. For the first time in two years, Summer Research Fellows traveled internationally for their summer externships.

After completing their training with the Church’s legal counsel offices, fellows spent the rest of the summer doing research projects with the Center and assisting with conferences and other projects. They gained practical experience as well as significant research and writing experience that will be important for launching and sustaining their careers—all while working directly with global leaders in the field of religious freedom. At the same time, the fellows offered a vital service to the work of the Center and to the cause of religious freedom worldwide.

Camille Anjewierden
Salt Lake City, Utah

Brooklyn Bird
Frankfurt, Germany

Phillip Bustos
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Andrew Fellows
Johannesburg, South Africa

Juliette Green
Nairobi, Kenya

Shannon Howard
Manila, Philippines

Anna Hubbard
Hong Kong, People’s Republic of China

Sarah Johns
Salt Lake City, Utah

Ben Johnston
Moscow, Russia

Allie King
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dailyah Rudek
Auckland, New Zealand

Elyse Slabaugh
Lima, Peru

Jorden Truman
Tokyo, Japan

Clayton Varvel
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic



I got to study laws from a lot of different countries—comparing them, doing research on them—not just in a hypothetical class setting but assisting a legal supervisor who was going to use them to inform decisions later. That was impactful.

—Clayton Varvel



2021-22 STUDENT MANAGEMENT BOARD

The members of the Student Management Board were chosen based on their interest in law and religion and their skills in writing, research, editing, and languages. Throughout the school year, board members participated in research, writing, and editing projects; conferences; and other assignments with the Center.

Eyad Ayed Alsamhan
Alea Beeston
Leah Blake
Kekai Cram
Kimberly Farnsworth
Morgan Farnsworth
Tanner Hafen
Anastasia Jespersen
Rachel Johnson

Nicholas Loosle
Brock Mason
Hannah Moffat
Alec Monson
Dillan Passmore
Nathan Phair
Marianna Richardson
Madison Wilson



Being at BYU is a dream come true. Every person here is so enthusiastic, so happy. Honestly, I feel I belong here. This is home as well! It is not fair to say a person only has one home.”

—Eyad Ayed Alsamhan (LLM)



2022 SYMPOSIUM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

With the return to an in-person symposium came the return of the Symposium Executive Committee. Under the direction of Elizabeth Clark, this team of BYU Law students spent weeks planning for and coordinating the logistical aspects of the conference. During the symposium, students assisted delegates and kept things running smoothly.

The Student Executive Committee is divided into six subcommittees:

Master Schedule

Camille Anjewierden
Madison Wilson

Concierge

Jenneka Austin
Oswald Buhendwa
Elyse Slabaugh
Alcenir de Souza
Jorden Truman

Documents, Interpretation, and Media

Anna Bryner
Juliette Green
Jacob Hibbard
Fábio Nascimento
Mason Stringer

Hosting

Anastasia Jespersen
Christine Oduor
Paige Skousen

Recruiting/Supervising Volunteers

Erin Cranor
Lucas Guerreiro
Rachel Howden
Jehicob Torres

Transportation

Aaron Anderson
Ryan Cheney
Maren Cline
Anna Hubbard



2022 ICLRS MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARDS

At the conclusion of each academic school year, the International Center for Law and Religion Studies recognizes graduating BYU Law students who have contributed service to the Center throughout law school.

- Leah Blake
- Kimberly Farnsworth
- Morgan Farnsworth
- Tanner Hafen
- Rachel Johnson
- Brock Mason
- Hannah Moffat
- Marianna Richardson



I've learned how resilient I can be because it's very hard being here without my family and learning a lot in English. I've learned I can do difficult things if I just do my best and trust in the Lord.

—Amanda Castro de Oliveira (LLM)



MASTER OF LAWS (LLM) STUDENTS

Each fall, BYU Law welcomes a group of international LLM students. These students are usually lawyers and judges in their own countries who come to BYU to gain experience in us law, enabling them to broaden their skills and to further their influence at home.

Sponsored by the Stirling Foundation or the Sorenson Legacy Foundation, LLM students volunteer with the Center on various projects.

Stirling Fellows

- Babu Manuel Abel
India
- Frederick Daniel Amara
Sierra Leone
- Amanda Castro de Oliveira
Brazil

Francisco Hidal Martins
Rodrigues
Brazil

Sorenson Fellows

- Felipe Brino
Brazil
- Aladar Molnar II
Brazil
- Vitor Emanuel Kittler Munhoz
Brazil

Other

- Eyad Ayed Alsamhan
Jordan
- Osama Radi Abdel-hadi
Altarawneh
Jordan



6TH INTERNATIONAL MOOT COURT COMPETITION IN LAW AND RELIGION

A team of Brigham Young University Law students earned Best Team honors at the 2022 International Moot Court Competition in Law and Religion in Córdoba, Spain, 16-17 September 2022. Oswald Buhendwa, Ryan Cheney, Sarah Johns, and Elyse Slabaugh tied for top honors with a team from Notre Dame University in the us law division.

Two other BYU teams also participated in the competition, which was sponsored by the International Center for Law and Religion Studies: Camille Anjewierden, Juliette Green, Anna Hubbard, and Allie King; and Andrew Fellows, Ben Johnston, Dailayah Rudek, and Jorden Truman.

Teams were required to draft two 16-page briefs—one for the petitioner and one for the respondent—in a hypothetical case that focused on issues of security, artificial intelligence, discrimination, and freedom of religion or belief. Based on the content and quality of their briefs, teams were selected to argue orally for either the petitioner or the respondent.

For Green, researching, writing, and arguing the brief was an invaluable experience. “In the process, I learned a lot about public accommodation, discrimination based on religion, and the First Amendment [of the us Constitution],” she said. “The experience encouraged me to take advantage of more opportunities to write and argue in different contexts.”

The competition was not without its challenges for BYU: COVID-19 necessitated that Green serve as a last-minute substitute oralist for her team. And eleventh-hour flight cancellations and customs issues left Green, Johns, Slabaugh, and ICLRS associate director Amy Lynn Andrus, who accompanied the students to Spain, stranded in Paris. They wended their way through airports in Paris, Zurich, and Amsterdam before landing in Madrid and traveling 250 miles to Córdoba in a rental car—arriving at the competition site mere moments before Slabaugh and Green were scheduled to present oral arguments. Their tenacity paid off when Green performed admirably under tough questioning by the judges and Slabaugh and Johns’s team earned top honors.

In addition to the teams from BYU Law, teams from Notre Dame, Bocconi University (Italy), University of Milan (Italy), University of Macerata (Italy), and Complutense University of Madrid (Spain) participated in the competition.



INTERNATIONAL LAW AND RELIGION MOOT COURT

The Brazilian Center of Studies in Law and Religion hosted an international moot court tournament in Uberlândia, Brazil, on 9 November 2022. The Center sponsored two teams of BYU Law students who competed with teams from Notre Dame Law School and teams from across Brazil.

The hypothetical case discussed at the tournament was *N.E. v. Republic of Seculana of the Amerigos*, which pertains to arguments within the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, a multilateral treaty that commits nations to protect the civil and political rights of individuals. Specifically, the teams focused on Article 18, which guarantees freedom of religion. Teams were encouraged to discuss and debate the relations between human rights, religion, and human dignity.

In spite of having to compete over Zoom, BYU Law student and Center Summer Fellow Sarah Johns was awarded Best Oral-ist. “Having the opportunity to compete in this moot court was incredible, even over zoom,” said Johns. “I greatly admire our competition judge, Mark Hill, who is an incredible advocate for religious freedom globally. Having him judge my efforts was incredibly meaningful—and admittedly a bit intimidating.”

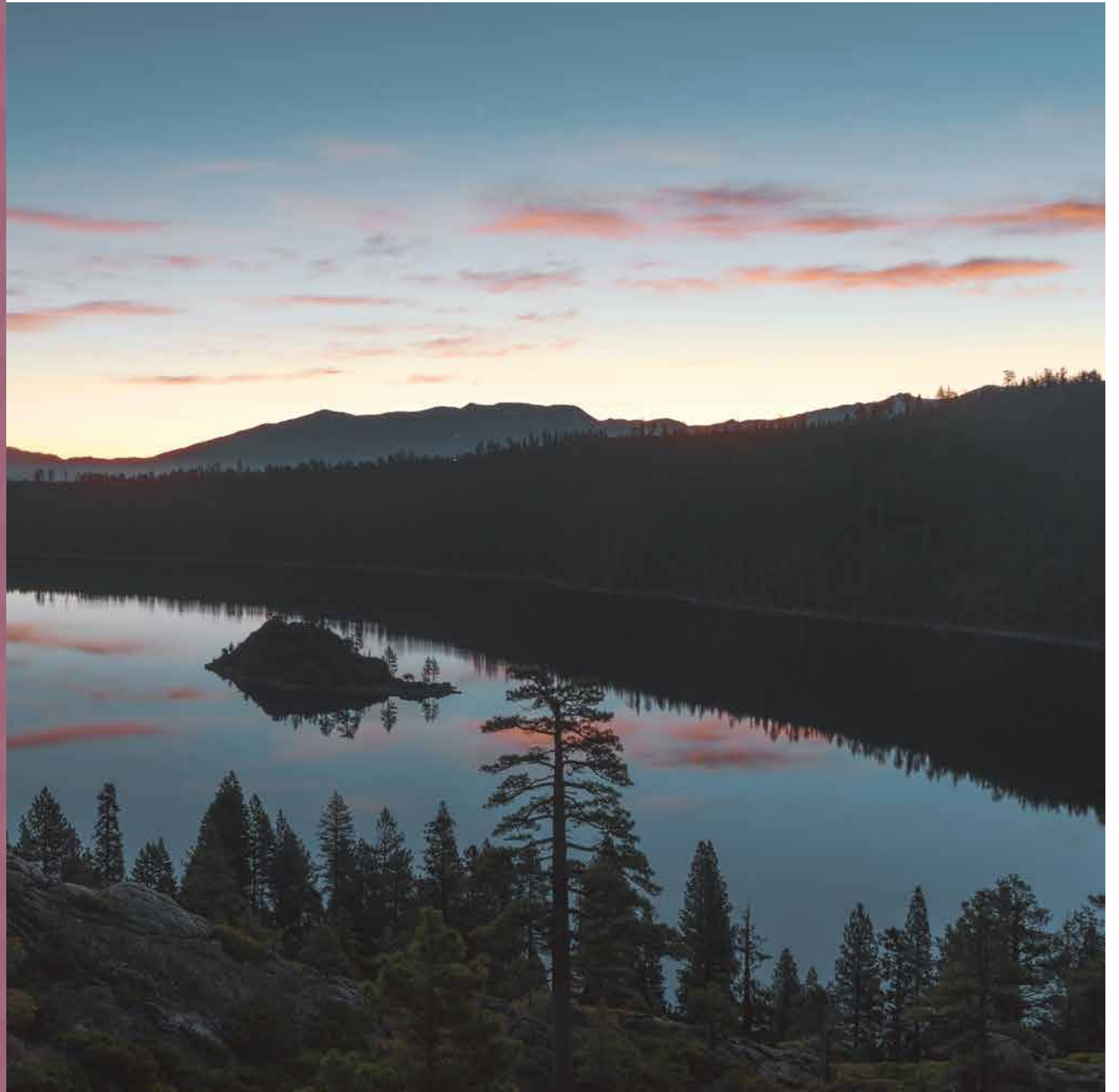
The BYU Law teams were Ryan Cheney, Tagg Francis, Rachel Howden, and Gianna Patchett and Juliette Green, Anna Hubbard, Sarah Johns, and Elyse Slabaugh.



Moot court initially felt daunting, but the experience taught me a lot about myself and my capabilities. I learned so much while preparing for oral arguments but also while listening to the other teams’ arguments and the judges’ questions.

—Elyse Slabaugh

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL





IAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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David Christensen, *immediate past chair*

Lynn Fechser Anderson

Bill Benac

Craig A. Cardon

Jim Cook

Sandy Cook

Allyson Egbert

Martin Egbert
- David Harden

Jennifer Harden

David Nearon

Linda Nearon

Heidi Shipp

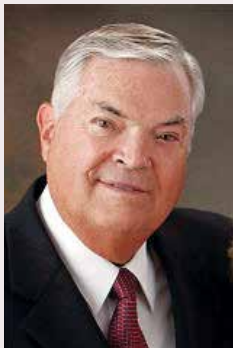
Milt Shipp

Bryce Wade

Athelia Woolley

Ken Woolley

We are grateful for the support of the members of the International Advisory Council (IAC). Their contributions of time, talents, and other resources are critical to the success of the Center in promoting freedom of religion or belief worldwide.



IN MEMORIAM

The Center mourns the passing of three IAC members in 2022: **David L. Gillette**, **Senator Orrin G. Hatch**, and **Catherine B. Pedersen**. All were avid supporters of the Center and its work, with Senator Hatch acting as a senior fellow of the Center during the last few years. We are grateful for their service.

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

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Gary and Marilyn Baughman

Brent and Bonnie Jean Beesley

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Ken and Athelia Woolley

Tim and Teresa Wright

Koo and Patricia Yuen

2022 IAC Trip

Members of the IAC participated in a study tour of Peru and the Galápagos Islands from 26 April to 8 May 2022.





ENDOWMENTS

Endowments—together with generous support from Brigham Young University, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and individual members of the International Advisory Committee—provide the financial means for the Center to accomplish its work. Unlike other methods of funding, endowments are long-term financial tools that assist the Center in planning for the future. The individuals who create endowments for the Center establish a family legacy supporting religious freedom, and they can direct the focus of the Center’s work to global areas that are of particular interest to them.

Many of the endowments were created as a base for others to contribute to areas of special interest, and the Center hopes to establish endowments in more areas. Please contact Sandy Stephenson if you would like to discuss personal options.

CURRENT ENDOWMENTS

The **International Advisory Council Cornerstone Endowment** (2000) was the first endowment to fund the Center and its ongoing work.

Founding Contributors:

David S. and Mary L. Christensen
Richard P. and Christena H. Durham
Duane L. and Erlyn G. Madsen
David A. and Linda C. Nearon

The **Sterling and Eleanor Colton Chair in Law and Religion** (2008) provides support for a wide range of the Center’s work, including supplemental support for BYU Law faculty. The chair is currently held by David H. Moore, associate director of the Center and professor at BYU Law.

The **S. David and Julie Colton Endowed Fund for International Law and Religion Studies** (2013) supports the work of the Center in Europe.

The **David S. and Mary L. Christensen Endowed Fund for International Law and Religion Studies** (2014) provides for the work of the Center in the UK, with a focus on growing the connections between the Center and Oxford.

The **W. George and Helen Lowe Johnson Research Fellowship** (2014) focuses on legal scholarship, with an emphasis on freedom of religion and belief.

The **Edward Joseph Leon and Helen Hall Leon Endowed Fund for Law and Religion Studies** (2014) supports the work of the Center in the Middle East.

The **Jean and Frank, Barbara and Wayne Friendship FORB** (2016) supports the work of the Center in Europe.

The **Gregory P. and Julie L. Cook Endowed Fund for International Law and Religion Studies** (2017) supports the critical work of the Center in China.

The **Andrus African Endowed Fund for International Law and Religion Studies** (2018) provides for the critical work of the Center in Africa, including support of the growing number of religious liberty scholars in the region.

Founding Contributors:

Brent and Cheri Andrus

The **Gary Stephen Anderson Endowed Fund** (2018) provides learning opportunities to enhance BYU Law students’ experiences as they work with the Center.

The **Southeast Asia Endowed Fund** (2018)

Founding Contributors:

Milton and Heidi Shipp

The **Latin American Religious Freedom Endowed Fund** (2020)

Founding Contributors:

James F. and Allyson L. Larkins

The **H. Brent and Bonnie Jean Beesley Oxford Young Scholars Endowed Fund** (2020) provides support and funding for Oxford programs and participants.

The **William and Barbara Benac us Alliance for Religious Freedom Endowed Fund** (2021) offers funding and support for the establishment and operation of US religious freedom alliances.

The **Mark and Christi Jensen us Alliance for Religious Freedom Endowed Fund** (2021) offers funding and support for the establishment and operation of US religious freedom alliances.

The **Neil and Denise Lindberg LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund** (2021) helps to pay expenses of international students to earn a master of law degree at BYU in comparative and US law.

The **David A. and Linda C. Nearon LLM Center Student Fellows Endowed Fund** (2021) helps to pay expenses of international students to earn a master of law degree at BYU in comparative and US law.

The **Gene and Martha Schaerr Endowed Fund** (2022) is used for purposes relating to religious freedom advocacy of the Center.

ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD, FELLOWS, & STAFF



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CENTER STAFF APPOINTMENTS



ELIZABETH CLARK APPOINTED TO ODIHR
PANEL OF EXPERTS ON FREEDOM OF
RELIGION OR BELIEF

Every three years, the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Europe’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) appoints a new panel of experts on freedom of religion or belief. On 1 June 2022, Elizabeth Clark was appointed to the 2022-2025 panel along with Dmytro Vovk, one of the coeditors for the Center’s blog. Clark is honored by the appointment. “This enables me to contribute to the protection of this important right throughout all 57 participating countries from Europe, Central Asia, and North America. Since its inception in 1975, the OSCE has been a key player in putting human rights at the forefront of international security” she said.

Clark’s three-year term on the ODIHR Panel of Experts on Freedom of Religion or Belief will give her a voice in the OSCE’s policy documents, legislative analysis, and trainings and will allow her to have an impact on freedom of religion or belief across the region. “It’s a privilege to work with eminent peers to help ensure that individuals across Europe, Central Asia, and North America can freely worship and express their beliefs,” added Clark.

Panel members serve in their personal capacities as experts on the topic of freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief and not as representatives of their state, academic institution, religious or belief community, or any other type of organization. ODIHR makes the panel’s expertise available to participating states, OSCE field operations, and nongovernmental organizations.



LUTFORAHMAN SAEED, VISITING SCHOLAR

Dr. Lutforahman Saeed joined the Center in 2022 as a visiting scholar. A member of the Sharia (Islamic) Law faculty at Kabul University for more than 27 years, he earned his BA in Islamic studies from Kabul University in 1991 and his LLM from the University of Washington School of Law in 2010. He completed his PhD summa cum laude in the field of Islamic law and human rights at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg in December 2019, where his PhD thesis received the STAEDTLER Foundation’s award for outstanding dissertation in 2020. Saeed specializes in Islamic law and Islamic studies and has published in local and international journals. His book, *Islam, Custom and Human Rights: A Legal and Empirical Study of Criminal Cases in Afghanistan After the 2004 Constitution*, was published in January 2022. Saeed has served as the country director of Legal Educators Support Program-Afghanistan (LESPA) for nearly eight years, and in 2019 he cofounded Afghanistan Legal Research and Development Organization (ALRDO). While at the Center, he will play a key role in upcoming projects, including Islamic perspectives on human dignity and freedom of religion in Islam.



Associate Director Jane Wise Retires from the Center and BYU Law School

After more than two decades as a member of the legal writing faculty at Brigham Young University's J. Reuben Clark Law School and five years with the Center as an associate director, Jane Wise retired in January 2022.

Professor Wise has been a key contributor in the Center's efforts and publications, particularly in establishing and leading the Young Scholars Fellowship on Religion and the Rule of Law held at Oxford. She has been deeply affected by her time working with international scholars and other students on their legal writing.

Wise began law school at the University of Utah at a time when women made up only a small percentage of law school students. As 1 of 25 women in her class, she didn't anticipate the challenges she would face as she embarked on her career as an attorney.

"It took until 1976 for the Utah Bar to admit 100 women," Wise said. "And just because of the luck of the alphabet, I was number 100. . . . We didn't think of ourselves as pioneers or suffragettes until we got out and were practicing law and found out that . . . the networks were very male, were very patriarchal, and were very settled." Immediately out of law school, Wise worked in litigation and clerked for the Utah Supreme Court.

Though Wise believes she could have worked in many fields, she found that "law opened [her] mind" and helped her "to think, to analyze." She found her true calling in teaching as she transitioned into the role of professor. She has taught courses on legal writing, lawyering skills, and law and literature to generations of students at J. Reuben Clark Law School, teaching and supporting them both inside and outside the classroom.

"The steady stream of students that have come to my office looking for help and letting me help them has been sacred," Wise said.

Wise's retirement days still include plenty of writing, editing, and teaching. She returned to assist with the 2022 Young Scholars Fellowship in Oxford in July and August. "I have a lot of hope for the future," she said. "And the reason I do is because of the individuals that I have met here at BYU, especially the students—the students who are idealistic, the students who are willing to work hard, the students who are willing to make their dreams as well as other people's dreams a reality."

The Center is very grateful for the dedication and service of Professor Wise.

BYU Law and the United Nations

CREATING TOOLS TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

BY RACHEL EDWARDS

Excerpted from an article published in the fall 2022 Clark Memorandum.

During winter semester 2022, ICLRS associate director David H. Moore and students enrolled in BYU Law’s International Human Rights Clinic—a clinic established by Moore to help students experience actual human rights work—partnered with the United Nations (UN) to advance the Faith for Rights (F4R) initiative.

In 2017, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the leading UN entity on human rights, introduced the Faith for Rights framework, which seeks to promote the mutually beneficial relationship between faith and human rights. Three years later, the OHCHR launched the F4R toolkit, which translates the framework into 18 modules on key human rights commitments. Each module provides a variety of peer-to-peer learning activities that are led by a facilitator. “The purpose of the F4R toolkit is to bring interfaith actors together in dialogue that will lead to action in support of human rights at the community level,” Moore explains. “We partnered with the OHCHR to create a website that includes a guide for facilitators of F4R sessions as well as four of the key modules. The goal was to make F4R accessible to facilitators all over the world, which required expertise in both human rights and instructional design theory.”

Although testing and refinement continued beyond the semester’s end, the students in the clinic were able to create a functioning F4R website, faith4rights.iclrs.org, which launched in August 2022.

“Our UN colleagues have been very impressed with the work the students at BYU Law have done and the speed at which they were able to do it,” Moore says.

Hillari Bollard, a graduate student in the Instructional Psychology and Technology Department at BYU, was project manager and lead instructional designer for the F4R website. As a result of the project, the UN has hired Bollard as a consultant to another university that is incorporating the F4R initiative into a conference series. “Being able to work with stakeholders from Europe, the Middle East, and South America was amazing,” Bollard says. “I had never worked in this field, but religious freedom is one of my core beliefs. I really loved leading this team.”

Daniela Linge, a 3L student who developed the facilitator guide, says of the experience, “Interacting with and presenting our ideas to UN stakeholders who often had differing viewpoints and seeing them come together around a larger common goal was amazing. It was definitely not a typical law school externship experience.”

For Linge, working on the F4R website was more than a project. “Participating in Professor Moore’s clinic allowed me to use skills I have developed at BYU Law to help others by building bridges,” she says. “‘Enter to learn; go forth to serve’ was truly happening in our clinic. That’s the spirit in which we tried to interpret the UN’s work. We hope that it will allow people to come together and make positive changes.”



tsakha / istock / getty images plus

2022 Center Publications

ARTICLES AND BOOKS

Clark, Elizabeth. “Analysis of the 1993 Mongolian Law on Relationship between the State and Religious Organizations and 2018 Draft Law on Religious Freedom.” In *Mongolian Journal of Law*, August 2022.

Clark, Elizabeth and **Dmytro Vovk**, eds. “Symposium: Gender Equality and Freedom of Religion or Belief Across the OSCE.” In *Review of Faith & International Affairs* 20 (2022), no. 3.

Doxey, Gary B. Foreward in Juan F. Puello Herra, *La Libertad Religiosa: Perspectiva Comparada y Ámbito en la República Dominicana*. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: Librería Jurídica Internacional, 2022.

Durham, W. Cole, Jr., William W. Bassett, Mark A. Goldfeder, Robert T. Smith, eds. *Religious Organizations and the Law*. 2nd edition. Eagan: Minnesota: Thomas Reuters, 2022 update.

Scharffs, Brett G., Mohammad Hashim Kamali, Lena Larsen, Syamsul Arifin, Nafik Muthohirin, Ahmad Nur Fuad, Tore Lindholm, Cekli S. Pratiwi, Susan Waltz, Khaled Abou El Fadl, Zainal Abidin Bagir, Jeroen Temperman, Heiner Bielefeldt. Haidar Bagir. *Ham & Syariat (Shari’a and Human Rights: A Coursebook)*. Dhaka, Indonesia: Mizan, 2022.

Scharffs, Brett G. “Teaching Religion and Teaching ‘About’ Religion: International Law and the US Approach in Public Schools, Private Schools, and Universities.” *Proceedings of the Institute for the Study of Religion 2022 International Symposium*. Seoul: Sogang University Press, 2022.

Scharffs, Brett G. “The Pandemic That Has United and Divided Us: A US and Latter-day Saint Perspective on Creating Interconnection and Harmony in Our New Normal Age,” *Proceedings of the International Hanmaum Science Conference 2022* (Anyang, Republic of Korea: Hanmaum Seonwon, 2022): 61–69.

Scharffs, Brett G. “How the First Paragraph of Violence and the Word Killed the Law as Literature Movement.” In *Touro Law Review* 37, no. 4 (2022): article 11.

Scharffs, Brett G. “The Journey from Persecution to Inclusion: A Case Study of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in America.” In *Notre Dame Law Review Reflection* 97, no. 3 (2022): 264–289.

Scharffs, Brett G. “Professor Scharffs in Bukhara, Uzbekistan: Human Dignity—From the Punta del Este Declaration to the Bukhara Declaration,” Talk About: Law and Religion (blog). International Center for Law and Religion Studies, 23 May 2022. talkabout.iclrs.org/2022/05/23/punta-del-este-declaration-respect.

MEDIA

Brett G. Scharffs was interviewed by **Dmytro Vovk** on 11 April 2022 for Talk About: Law and Religion. They spoke about teaching law and religion globally. The interview is available at talkabout.iclrs.org/2022/04/11/interview-brett-g-scharffs.

Elizabeth Clark and **Brett Scharffs** were interviewed on Uzbek television while in Uzbekistan for the Dialogue of Declarations conference 16–20 May.

Elizabeth Clark was a guest on the JustLove radio program on 11 June. Moderated by Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, the program featured Clark, along with Michael La Civita of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association; they discussed religious freedom as essential to civic harmony. The episode is available at justloveblog.org/2022/06/11/religious-freedom-in-civic-society.

Brett Scharffs spoke with Peggy Fletcher Stack on the Mormon Land podcast on 21 September. They discussed the work of the Center and Scharffs’s work on human dignity. The episode is available at soundcloud.com/mormonland/a-special-dispatch-from-spain-how-religious-freedom-is-at-risk-around-the-world-episode-252.

LAW REFORM IN 2022

Chile: **Gary B. Doxey** and **Scott E. Isaacson** contributed advice, technical commentary, and educational briefing materials as part of a multid denominational effort to aid the drafters of a new constitution in Chile.

Democratic Republic of Congo: **W. Cole Durham, Jr.** is advising on a constitutional draft.

Dominican Republic: **Gary B. Doxey** and **Scott E. Isaacson** prepared technical commentary and advised several members of the Congress of the Dominican Republic as they considered a new law that would govern religious organizations.

Inter-American Court of Human Rights: In April the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which is the judicial body of the Organization of American States (OAS), announced its decision in the case of Pavez v. Chile. The Center, led by **Gary B. Doxey, W. Cole Durham, Jr.**, and **Scott E. Isaacson**, helped orchestrate a multiyear effort that resulted in six amicus briefs and two expert witnesses in the case.

Kazakhstan: **Elizabeth Clark** reviewed recent amendments to Kazakh religion law at the request of US government organizations.

Mongolia: **Elizabeth Clark** prepared an analysis of existing Mongolian law on religious associations and the most recent attempt to amend the law. The analysis was translated into Mongolian and served as the basis for a series of lectures to academic, government, and religious institutions in Mongolia in September 2022.

Peru: **Gary B. Doxey** and **Scott E. Isaacson** participated with a coalition of several faith denominations and scholars to advise members of the Congress of the Republic of Peru regarding the Inter-American Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance.

Philippines: **Elizabeth Clark** reviewed pending anti-discrimination bills to assist Philippine NGOs with hearing testimony related to the bills. **W. Cole Durham, Jr.** met with legislators on law reform issues in the country.

Sudan: **W. Cole Durham, Jr.** consulted on religion law and religion training.

TALK ABOUT: LAW AND RELIGION

Blog of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies

Talk About: Law and Religion, the blog of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies (ICLRS), offers an online space for conversations on critical issues related to religion, law, ethics, and world affairs. With articles written by academics, lawyers, and religious leaders, this nonpartisan platform aims to promote freedom of religion or belief for everyone, to stimulate academic discussions, and to explore laws and practices of regulating religion on national and international levels.

The coeditors of the blog are **Dmytro Vovk**, director of the Center for the Rule of Law and Religion Studies at Yaroslav the Wise National Law University (Ukraine), and **Amy Andrus**, associate director of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies.

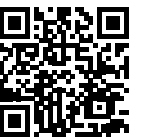
In 2022 the blog published 64 articles written by experts in human rights and freedom of religion or belief from 17 countries. This included five blog series, six videos, and four interviews on current topics. Blog posts are often organized into conversation series around topics to present a variety of viewpoints on an issue.

HEADLINES

For many years the Center has compiled daily lists of headlines related to law and religion that are searchable by country and by topic. A digest of top headlines is sent via email to headlines subscribers, of which there are currently more than 12,000. Daily views of headlines average more than 6,000. To subscribe to headlines emails or to see daily headlines, visit religlaw.org/headlines.

WEB EXTRA

Scan to subscribe to headlines emails or to see daily headlines.



JANUARY

13 “Exercising and Protecting Freedom of Religion or Belief: Planting Flags or Seeds?” presentation to BYU Freedom of Religion or Belief Club, Provo, Utah, USA

24 “Re-Thinking the Law to Ensure the Protection of Religious Minorities,” *Notre Dame Law Review* symposium, Notre Dame, Indiana, USA

FEBRUARY

22 “The Role of Religion in Public Life at a Time of Crisis and Opportunity,” Wheatley Institute Amos A. Jordan Lecture with Rabbi David Saperstein, Provo, Utah, USA

24 “Religious Freedom and the Common Good,” webinar on promoting awareness and preservation of religious freedom in the Philippines and Southeast Asia

MARCH

3 Visit of Tiguhan Tagay Tadele Asnake, Ethiopian secretary general of the Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia; and Abuna Nathaniel, archbishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Denver, BYU Law School, Provo, Utah, USA

6–7 “Unlikely Allies Building Flourishing Communities,” Global Faith Forum, Dallas, Texas, USA

10–11 “Latter-day Saints and Religious Liberty: Historical and Global Perspectives,” 2022 Church History Symposium, cosponsored by the Department of Church History and Doctrine at BYU and the Church History Department, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

16 “Religious Freedom and Academic Freedom” webinar sponsored by the Latin American Consortium

18 Bolch Prize Ceremony Honoring Judge J. Clifford Wallace, Bolch Judicial Institute, Duke Law, San Diego, California, USA

23–25 Latin America Regional Conference I: “Religious Liberty: Foundation for Harmony, Justice, and Peace,” First Brazilian Symposium on Religious Freedom, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

24–25 “Beyond ‘Defensive Crouch’ Religious Freedom” conference, George Mason University, Antonin Scalia Law School, Arlington, Virginia, USA

28 “Religious Liberty in Diverse Communities,” hosted by the Institute for Humane Studies (IHS), Arlington, Virginia, USA

APRIL

13 “What Is the Current State of Religious Freedom in Uzbekistan?” webinar on religious freedom in Uzbekistan, sponsored by the Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA

20–21 Europe Regional Conference: “From Persecution to Healing, Hope, Resilience, and

Community: Building the Framework to Promote Mental Health Through Music Therapy in Refugee Camps,” AMAR Foundation Windsor Dialogue conference, Part I, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

26 April–8 May IAC Study Tour, Machu Picchu, Peru, and the Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

28 Inter-American Forum of Collaboration and Interfaith Dialogue, co-organized by Conciencia Nacional por la Libertad Religiosa and ICLRS, Mexico City, Mexico

MAY

15–18 Africa Regional Conference: “Law, Religion, Health, and Healing in Africa,” African Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ACLARS) conference, Nairobi, Kenya

16–20 Muslim World Regional Conference: Uzbekistan certificate training program in religion and the rule of law and Dialogue of Declarations Conference, Tashkent, Samrkand, and Bukhara, Uzbekistan

19 “Multicultural Perspectives on the Forefront of Global Issues,” sponsored by the G20 Interfaith Forum, the Stirling Foundation, and the Baku International Multiculturalism Centre, Baku, Azerbaijan

23–25 “Religions, Human Solidarity, and Global Peace: Building a Better Future,” sponsored by the Peres Academic Center, the International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA), and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Rehovot and Jerusalem, Israel

24–25 “Religions and Hate Speech: Between Scripture and Practice,” 14th Doha International Conference for Interfaith Dialogue, Doha, Qatar. A memorandum of understanding was signed between BYU and the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue.

JUNE

6–8 Latin America Regional Conference II: The 2nd Interreligious Forum of the Americas (FIDELA), sponsored by the Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University; the G20 Interfaith Forum; the ICLRS; the Interreligious Council of Southern California; and Religions for Peace, Los Angeles, California, USA

6–10 9th Summit of the Americas, Los Angeles, California, USA

9–10 “For Such a Time as This,” J. Reuben Clark Law Society Annual Conference, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

14 Visit of Mohammed Marzuq Abubakari, personal assistant to the national chief imam of Ghana and executive director of the Islamic Peace and Security Council, Provo, Utah, USA

16 “Living Peaceably: Religious Freedom as a Foundation for Civic Harmony,” Religious Freedom Annual Review, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

17 Breakfast Meeting for Religious Freedom Alliance Working Group, Provo, Utah, USA

20–23 European Academy of Religion Annual Conference, Bologna, Italy

24 G20 Interfaith Forum Pre-Meeting, Pontifical University Antonianum, Rome, Italy

28–30 “Religious Freedom for Everyone, Everywhere, All the Time,” panel at International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit 2022, Washington, DC, USA

29 “In Defense of Fundamental Civil Liberties,” Brazil International Congress on Fundamental Civil Liberties, held at the Superior Tribunal de Justiça, sponsored by Brazil’s National Association of Evangelical Jurists (ANAJURE), Brasília, Brazil

JULY

1–4 “Statesmanship and Religious Freedom,” seminar organized by Religious Freedom Institute, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, United Kingdom

4 Book Launch, *No Escape* by Nury Turkel, Notre Dame Law School Religious Liberty Initiative, London, United Kingdom

4–9 International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief, sponsored by All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Prevention of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity on 5 July; fringe conference on Preventing Violence, Promoting Freedom of Religion or Belief on 6 July, London, United Kingdom

7–8 Europe Regional Conference I: “Life Beyond the Camps: Freedom and Flourishing,” AMAR Foundation Windsor Dialogue Conference, Part II, Cheyneygates, Westminster Abbey, and St. Clements Danes church, London, United Kingdom

12 “Religious Freedom in the Case of *Pavez v. Chile*: Lessons and Challenges,” webinar sponsored by the Latin American Consortium for Religious Liberty

16 Book Launch, *Sharia and Human Rights: A Coursebook*, University of Muhammadiyah-Malang, Malang, Indonesia

18–20 Book Launch and Conference on *Sharia and Human Rights*, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

18 July–5 August Young Scholars Fellowship on Religion and the Rule of Law, Christ Church, Oxford University, United Kingdom

20–22 Notre Dame Religious Liberty Summit, organized by Notre Dame Law School Religious Liberty Initiative, Rome, Italy

23 Oxford Visit of Cambridge University’s Woolf Institute Interfaith Pilot Program with BYU Undergraduates, Christ Church, Oxford University, United Kingdom

23–24 “Human Dignity in Religious Traditions,” working conference, Christ Church, Oxford University, United Kingdom

27–28 “Religion and Comprehensive Security,” workshop for special issue of *Review of Faith and International Affairs*, Christ Church, Oxford University, United Kingdom

29–30 “A Good Life: Law and Human Flourishing,”

planning workshop on human flourishing and political polarization, Christ Church, Oxford University, United Kingdom

30 “The History and Legacy of the Reconstruction Amendments,” Conference on 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the United States Constitution, Rothermere American Institute, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

AUGUST

3 “Religious Liberty and Other Aspects of the Proposed New Constitution,” webinar, Citizen Dialogue Series, Santiago, Chile

25 International Human Rights and Institutions Training for Church International Public Affairs employees and missionaries

SEPTEMBER

5–6 Religion and the Rule of Law Training, Kazakhstan

7–8 Eastern Europe Regional Conference: “Prospects for a New Central Asia: Religion’s Role in Forming a Stable and Democratic Society,” Religion and the Rule of Law Seminar and Conference, Kazakhstan

13 Religious Alliance Meeting, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

14 Constitutional Workshop, Mongolian National University School of Law, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

13–15 “Religious Freedom, Rule of Law, and Cross-Cultural Religious Literacy,” virtual event sponsored by Leimena Institute and the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia

16–17 6th International Moot Court Competition in Law and Religion, Córdoba, Spain

19 “A Constitutional Symposium: Religious Liberty and LGBTQ+ Rights,” Center for Engaged Religious Pluralism, Saint Mary’s College of California, Moraga, California, USA

19–21 Europe Regional Conference II: “Human Dignity, Law, and Religious Diversity: Designing the Future of Intercultural Societies,” International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ICLARS), Córdoba, Spain

21–23 International Association of Religion Journalists, Córdoba, Spain

22–24 Latin America Regional Conference III: “Freedom of Expression and Religious Freedom,” 21st Annual Colloquium of the Latin American Consortium for Religious Liberty, Córdoba, Spain

23–25 “Interconnected Existence in a New Normal Age: Mind, Science, and Religion,” International Hanmaum Science Conference 2022, Hanmaum Seonwon, Anyang, Republic of Korea

25 Stake Communications Directors Training, Anyang, Republic of Korea

26–28 22nd Meeting of Experts, International Religious Liberty Association (IRLA), Lisbon, Portugal

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27 Book Launch, *Religious Liberty in the Dominican Republic: A Comparative and Historical Perspective* by Juan F. Puello Herrera, forward by Gary B. Doxey, Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

27 “The Coalition on Human Dignity and Religious Freedom,” Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law, Phoenix, Arizona, USA

OCTOBER

2–4 “Religion’s Roles in Peacebuilding,” 29th International Law and Religion Symposium, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

4 FIDELA Reception and Award Presentation, Lima, Peru

5–7 Organization of American States General Assembly, Lima, Peru

5–7 Faith for Rights training, Collonges, France, and Geneva Academy, Geneva, Switzerland

19 “Religion on Fire: Through the Broken Stained Glass,” webinar hosted by Workshop for the Academic Study of Religion

19–21 Afghanistan Legal Research Network Conference, sponsored by Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law, Heidelberg, Germany

24 “Unconstitutional Conditions and Religious Liberty,” symposium hosted by the *Notre Dame Law Review* and the Notre Dame Religious Liberty Initiative, South Bend, Indiana, USA

26 “Interfaith Harmony for Global Peace and Security,” cosponsored by Azerbaijan Embassy, Baku International Multiculturalism Centre, and Catholic University of America, and ICLRS, Washington, DC, USA

26–28 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) advisory panel for freedom of religion or belief annual meetings, Warsaw, Poland

27 5th Annual DFW Summit for Religious Freedom, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, USA

31 October–3 November “Faith and Partnerships in Addressing the Climate Crisis,” Annual Forum on Religion and Sustainable Development 2022, sponsored by International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PARSD), Bali, Indonesia

31 October–1 November “Law and Religion: The Role of the State,” continuous legal education event, cosponsored by ICLRS, African Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ACLARS), and West African Regional Center for Law and Religion Studies (WARCLARS), Lagos, Nigeria

NOVEMBER

1–4 Academic and Experience Exchange on Religion and Rule of Law, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

2–3 “Revealing and Nurturing Religion as a Source of Global Solutions,” R20 (Religion 20) Indonesia Religion Forum, Bali, Indonesia

3–4 “East and West for Human Coexistence,” Bahrain Dialogue Forum, Manama, Bahrain

4–6 Human Dignity in Religious Traditions book conference, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia

6 “Building Bridges: The Role Religion and Religious Freedom Play in Building Harmony in Our Communities,” multifaith fireside, Lake Oswego, Oregon, USA

7–9 8th Annual Southeast Asia Freedom of Religion or Belief (SEAFORB) Conference , Bali, Indonesia

9 International Moot Court Competition in Law and Religion–Brazil 2022, Brazilian Center of Studies in Law and Religion, Uberlândia, Brazil

10–11 IAC Fall Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA

11–12 BYU Undergraduate Students visit Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum and Meadows Museum, Dallas, Texas, USA

15 “Advancing Religious Freedom in a Divided America,” cosponsored with the Sutherland Institute, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA

16 Utah Delegation Visit, sponsored by Stirling Foundation, Baku, Azerbaijan

17 “Teaching Religion and Teaching ‘About’ Religion: The US Approach in Public Schools, Private Schools, and Universities,” Seoul, Republic of Korea

18 “Multiculturalism and Interfaith Contributions in a Globalizing World,” lecture at ADA University, Baku, Azerbaijan

22 Unveiling of Joseph Smith Statue at MIT-World Peace University, Pune, India

24–26 Conference on Islamic Law and Human Rights, hosted by Christian Michelsen Institute, Bergen, Norway.

DECEMBER

5 “Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan Under the Taliban,” roundtable discussion with Richard Bennett, special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, along with other experts, sponsored by Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Oslo, Norway

9–10 “Religious Freedom and Human Rights in the Light of Human Dignity,” cosponsored by Nadácia Tunegu, Púčka a Tesára (NTPT) and Universal Peace Federation (UPF), Bratislava, Slovakia

12 “Freedom of Religion or Belief Trends: Looking Back over 2022 and Forward into 2023,” webinar sponsored by OSCE.

12–13 “Engaging Faith Communities: G20 Agendas and Beyond,” 2022 G20 Interfaith Forum, cosponsored by the G20 Interfaith Forum and the Interfaith Alliance for Safer Communities, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

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