
Please join us for a panel discussion on WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2019 from 10.00 am – 1.00 pm

Church Center of the United Nations, 2nd Fl. Conference Room
777 United Nations Plaza, (44th Street, off First Avenue)

This year marks a critical moment for the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Adopted 30 years ago, the CRC is a human rights treaty and a legally-binding international agreement recognizing the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all children.

Arigatou International is an NGO which brings together diverse religious groups and civil society organizations to promote interfaith collaboration for children’s rights. The work of Arigatou is guided by the CRC in its efforts to end violence against children, promote ethics education for children and to end child poverty. Arigatou has initiated a Study on the CRC, since its adoption, from a multi-religious perspective which highlights the contributions by faith communities towards its implementation, as well as some of the questions and controversies that have surfaced around child rights within faith communities. The study will include a series of recommendations based on consultations and panel discussions held in different parts of the world with a wide range of faith leaders, religious and legal scholars, and decision makers, United Nations organizations, faith-based organizations, children and youth. In collaboration with the Office of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children, the Study is expected to be presented in July 2019.

To that end, a discussion amongst representatives from the above sectors, will be held in New York on April 10, 2019 from 10.00 am -1.00 pm in the Church Center of the United Nations. The panel will discuss the role of religious NGOs in implementing the CRC, and their collaboration with other religious groups as well as secular groups and international agencies. The panelists will be asked to address some questions listed in the attached questionnaire.

Welcome and introduction: Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations
Keynote Speaker: Dr. William Vendley, Secretary General, Religions for Peace International
Moderator and Panelist: Dr. Azza Karam, Senior Advisor, UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and Coordinator, UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Development
Panelists:
* Akila Aggoune, former senior staff member with UNICEF and former Chairperson, CRC Committee, former Minister of Social Action and Family in Burkina Faso.
* Antonia Antonopoulos, Head, Civil Society Partnerships, UNICEF
* Andrew Claypole, Senior Advisor, Office of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children
* Bani Dugal, Principal Representative, Baha’i International Community's UN Office
* Rabbi Diana S. Gerson, Associate Executive Vice President, New York Board of Rabbis
* Rebeca Rios-Kohn, Director, Arigatou International - Prayer and Action for Children
* Member of the Arigatou CRC Study Team

This event is co-sponsored by Arigatou International; the Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations (CRNGO); Religions for Peace International; the Chair of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Development; and, UNICEF. A question and answer period will follow.

RSVP to CRNGO here by April 8, 2019 A light lunch will be served.

In addition to attending the panel, a representative of your organization is invited to complete the questionnaire below and return it as per the details on the questionnaire. Your organization’s answers will be submitted to the members of CRC Study team for their consideration.
Multi-Religious Perspectives
A Study Prepared for the 30th Anniversary of CRC Adoption by the UN General Assembly

Questionnaire for Contributions by Religious NGOs to the CRC Study

Your organization is cordially invited to submit a contribution to the ongoing work of the CRC Study. Your answers to the following questions will be gratefully received and will be carefully considered by members of the CRC Study team as they continue to work on the CRC Study.

Please only submit one set of answers per organization.

Please send your response to Arigatou International: e.oconnor.russo@arigatouinternational.org

DUE: April 3, 2019

A. Shared Values between Religion and Children’s Rights

1. How have religious values taught and practiced in your faith tradition informed the development of human rights and children’s rights?

2. The rights of the child: the principle that every child is subject of rights. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognizes the child as an individual with rights, and not merely a passive object of actions or charity. In what ways do religious communities in your faith tradition recognize children as subjects with rights?

3. The principles of love, security, peace and dignity (preamble of the CRC). Human dignity, security, love and related concepts are expressed in the Preamble to the CRC. How do religious communities intentionally recognize and support these foundational values of the CRC?

4. The status of the child in the family and parental duties and responsibilities. The CRC mentions the role of parents and families in 19 provisions and in the Preamble. Article 5 recognizes parents’ rights, duties and responsibilities. What do religious communities in your faith tradition teach about the role of family, parents’ rights and duties, and similar issues according to the scriptures and teachings you follow?

B. The Foundation Principles of the CRC and Religious Values and Teachings

1. The principle of non-discrimination (article 2 of the CRC). The CRC assures rights to all children without discrimination of any kind. How do religious communities in your faith tradition understand and support this idea of non-discrimination and equality?

2. The best interests of the child (article 3 of the CRC). The CRC recognizes that “in all actions concerning children” the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. In what ways do religion communities in your faith tradition support this principle in matters concerning children?

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3. The right of the child to survival and development (article 6 of the CRC). How do religious faith communities in your tradition support the child’s right to life, survival and development to his or her full potential? In what other ways do religious communities in your faith tradition support child well-being?

4. The views of the child to be heard (article 12 of the CRC). Article 12 states that children who are capable of forming a view have a right to express that view in matters that affect them, and that their views will be given due weight in decision-making in accordance with age and maturity. How do religious communities in your faith tradition support recognition of children’s right to be heard? When must children be listened to? When do children have a right to speak? How do faith communities in your tradition cultivate children’s development so that they are well positioned to express their views in ways that contribute to their communities?

C. Role of Religious NGOs in Protecting the Rights of the Child

1. The role of religious communities to challenge social and cultural norms that condone violence against children and undermine their personal dignity and the realization of their rights.

2. Provide examples of any good practices from faith communities in your tradition and state why these examples could be a model for others.

Name of religious organization:

Your name:

Your title:

Address:

Email address:

Tel. no:

To remind: Please only submit one set of answers per organization.
Please send your response to Arigatou International: e.oconnor.russo@arigatouinternational.org
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Thank you for your submission.