



## Interreligious Youth Forum on Sustainable Development (July 13<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> 2014, Kaub, Germany)

[www.iyf2015.de](http://www.iyf2015.de)

### Context

In times where news regarding interreligious conflicts and wars legitimized in the name of religions are dominating our media, there is a great need for reports about the harmony between religions and the peace and love they bring into the world. An example of a most fruitful and inspiring dialogue between people from many different faith traditions took place in July 2014.

From July 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> 2014, 19 young religious leaders from 19 different countries met in Kaub, Germany, for an Interreligious Youth Forum. They gathered in order to exchange thoughts and experiences from their interfaith grassroots projects from all over the world and thematically contextualized their local projects through the sustainable development goals process. Focusing on different aspects of global needs on a local scale, all the single projects contribute to the betterment of the world. By doing so they are linked to the world leader's initiative to implement a new set of universal development goals (SDG).

An interfaith planning team from Germany with representatives from the Muslim, Jewish, Bahá'í, and Christian faith invited to the youth gathering. The following statement derived from the mutual exchange during the week in Kaub and was written by the forum alumni. It addresses the international political leadership as represented by the G7 summit in Germany 2015.

### Statement

“ On the occasion of the G7 2015 Summit in Germany, we, the delegates of the Interreligious Youth Forum, in Kaub, Germany, wish to take this opportunity to voice our support for the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and to pledge our ongoing commitment to sustainable grassroots development social action within our own religious communities and in close collaboration with other faith groups.

As youth delegates from over 19 different countries and representing six of the world's religions, our mutual concern for the future of our planet and our desire to create a global partnership across religious divides brought us together to consult on the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals and Post 2015 agenda of the United Nations. Within this framework for sustainable development, we explored an important, oft-neglected determinant of the development process: the role of religious communities.

Historically, interfaith activity around the world has aimed at building bridges of respect and tolerance between different religious communities. However, our experiences as young

people of faith exploring each other's beliefs within the framework of the SDG process have enabled us to go beyond an atmosphere of respect to one of profound openness and understanding, allowing enduring bonds of friendship to blossom between us. These ties have inspired us to commit ourselves to a long term process that many of us had little experience of before. We hope to demonstrate and highlight how interfaith action can produce positive and effective outcomes linked to development.

Together we have identified some key areas where we feel we can make a particular contribution from an inter-faith perspective; namely Justice, Peace and Education. Our contributions may be small when viewed on an individual level, but they will contribute to a wider process of collective learning, not only enriching the lives of the participants but also providing a small window for evidence-based input into the SDG process.

In our different religious traditions we share the belief that dignity and justice are gifts from God. We are challenged to end poverty, protect our planets ecosystems and facilitate sustainable development for all. Therefore we strongly welcome the framing of universal Sustainable Development Goals. We pledge ourselves to the achievement of these goals and call on all leaders to agree on ambitious targets and to fully commit themselves and their actions to the achievement of the SDG.

Regarding our highlighted topics we emphasize that preconditions for **justice** are the implementation of human rights to food, health and social security, a transition to efficient and sufficient economic systems that accord with ecological boundaries and the overcoming of structural causes of inequity and all kinds of discrimination. To promote **peace** we demand to curtail human trafficking, arms trade and land grabbing and a commitment to peaceful ways of conflict resolution. As well as justice and peace we see **education** as a key to sustainable development. To ensure quality education for all has to be a priority in political agenda setting.

Furthermore, we wish to address the belief held by some that religion has a limiting or negative effect on development. In the last 15 years maintaining the sustainability of all the pro-development actions and projects has been identified as one of the key challenges. This group believes that there is every possibility that inter-faith action can enhance the sustainability of the development process, both at the level of individual and the community. Harmony in the community is an important contributing factor to sustainable development and we believe interfaith action in today's heterogeneous society will enhance community integration, whilst proper spiritual education enables individuals to understand their responsibility towards the stewardship of the planet and the well-being of all humanity.

It is our hope that the humble insights and experiences of this group may provide useful input for policy, distinct from that of religious organizations or political bodies, presenting a unique comprehensive perspective adding to the sustainability and inclusiveness of developmental processes. We truly believe that interfaith action will bring the peoples of the world closer together and help to make this planet a place we can all enjoy together.

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## Supporting signatures for the IYF2015 shared statement

(generated via Change.org)

	Name	Country
1	Annapaola Carbonatto	Italy
2	Emmanuel Bahinda	Rwanda
3	Amit Mukherjee	India
4	Mohammed Abzan	India
5	Victoria Proffitt	United States
6	Tahil Sharma	United States
7	Onna Buchholt	Germany
8	Maria Belen Felix	Argentina
9	Alex Clark	Argentina
10	Aline Berabose	Rwanda
11	Newbin Santhosh	India
12	Ruhinda Jean Bosco	Rwanda
13	Irakiza fiston	France
14	Kalisa Kenneth	Rwanda
15	Jane Kemunto	Kenya
16	Andreas Indra	Indonesia
17	Stenly Bontinge	Indonesia
18	Johannes Küstner	Germany
19	Joseph Matta	Lebanon
20	Marwan Badwan	Jordan
21	Sara Rahim	United States
22	Suse Hofmann	Germany
23	Kerti Puni	Germany
24	Ronin Barua	Bangladesh
25	Taina Gelsi Arndt-Pump	Germany
26	Angga Yudhi	Indonesia
27	Achmad Zani	Indonesia
28	nur wahid	Indonesia
29	Marlis Afridah	Indonesia
30	Aan Nur Janah	Indonesia
31	Muhammad Awaludin	Indonesia
32	Meike Schuetzek	Germany
33	Tarini Dalal	India
34	Andrea Sal	Canada
35	Рябышенкова Наталья	Russian Federation
36	ארטיום אוקון	Israel
37	patrick Vokouma	Ukraine
38	Sanaa Laabich	Germany
39	Ирина Королева	Russian Federation
40	Gerhard Wiebe	Germany
41	Charles Sebastian Böhm	Germany
42	Jurgita Kozeniauskaite	Lithuania

43	Alexander Kovtun	Ukraine
44	Chris Patricia Hänsel	Germany
45	Евгений Попов	Russian Federation
46	Ahsan Tohar	Indonesia
47	Ирина Кролева	Russian Federation
48	Евгений Серпик	Russian Federation
49	Екатерина Карцева	Russian Federation
50	Василий Заводников	Russian Federation
51	Arkady Shalomov	Russian Federation
52	Анастасия Крю	Russian Federation
53	настя затолокина	Russian Federation
54	Ferdinand Liefert	Germany
55	Gasore Jean	Uganda
56	Потапов Кирилл	Russian Federation
57	Анастасия Дашкевич	Russian Federation
58	Олег Королев	Russian Federation
59	Алина Семеноар	Russian Federation
60	Зинаида Городова	Russian Federation
61	Anatoly Yusufov	United States
62	Оля шарова	Russian Federation
63	Юлия Ципельштейн	Russian Federation
64	Анна Бабкина	Russian Federation
65	Илья Мазиров	Russian Federation
66	Nikita Mirsky	Russian Federation
67	Oleg Zyabrikov	Russian Federation
68	Алексей Зе	Russian Federation
69	Denis Levshin	Russian Federation
70	mbabazi melody	Rwanda
71	Иван Русецкий	Russian Federation
72	Елена Павлова	Russian Federation
73	Владислав Каиров	Russian Federation
74	Arsenty Anikeev	Russian Federation
75	Mery Frolove	Russian Federation
76	Alla Nabedrik	Russian Federation
77	Арина Мозжерина	Russian Federation
78	Елена Максимова	Russian Federation
79	Nikita Kurylenko	Russian Federation
80	Дарья Смольгина	Russian Federation
81	Богдан Король	Russian Federation
82	Александр Ветров	Russian Federation
83	Maria Boltyanskaya	Russian Federation
84	Anita Kanitz	Germany
85	Вероника попова	Russian Federation
86	Boris Starshinin	Russian Federation
87	Lisa Zander	Germany
88	Rosanna Smith	United Kingdom
89	Horst Kraft	Germany
90	Patricia Paredes	Mexico
91	Paul Emanuel Kalle	Germany
92	Sabrina Uwase	Rwanda

93	Mompati Dikunwane	Botswana
94	Alexander Smolianitski	Germany
95	Catharina Covolo	Germany
96	Adriana Florea	Romania
97	Eva Ungvari	Germany
98	Sarah Banhardt	Germany
99	Angelita Tomaselli	Italy
100	Kyra Waldhöfer	Germany