

G20 Interfaith Forum Continues in Brasilia with Powerful Calls for Action on Global Issues

The second day of the G20 Interfaith Forum 2024 saw continued engagement from religious leaders, policymakers, and civil society on pressing global challenges.

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The second day of the G20 Interfaith Forum 2024 saw continued engagement from religious leaders, policymakers, and civil society representatives on pressing global challenges. The day was marked by large plenary sessions and concurrent panel discussions focusing on various IF20 priority topics, with influential speakers delivering powerful messages on environmental stewardship, human trafficking, and the role of faith in addressing societal issues.



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Elder Ulisses Soares, Apostle of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, emphasized the crucial role of faith communities in society:

“I believe that each one of us has an essential role in our communities as people of faith and religious institutions, to be a transforming force for good in societies. We need extraordinary men and women that promote the 'moral mangroves' of society that are so necessary for global wellbeing. As the collective moral mangrove, we can protect the new generation against the forces of hate, moral relativism, narcissism, and isolation that are consuming our countries.”

Bishop Alistair Redfern, former member of the UK House of Lords, delivered a stark message on human trafficking:

"Trafficking is the litmus test of whether or not religious faith has any value in the modern world. If we keep walking by and ignore our millions of brothers and sisters on the side of the road, our faith is worth very little."

Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon connected environmental issues with social justice, stating:

"When the environment suffers, it is always the most vulnerable individuals of our global society—often those who have the least responsibility for these issues—who are disproportionately and most severely harmed. Our Christian ethical perspective drives us to react to this great discrepancy with compassion and haste. Matthew 25:40 reminds us that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters, we do for Christ Himself. This spiritual guidance is a resounding cry for us to relentlessly push for laws that not only correct environmental injustices but also guarantee that underprivileged populations are heard, protected, and given agency."

The day's discussions built upon the momentum generated in the forum's opening sessions, reinforcing the event's theme of "Leave no one behind: The well-being of the planet and its people." In a panel talking about this theme, Sharon Eubank, director of Latter-day Saint Charities, commented: "By instinct, human beings seek their own benefit and compete for resources at the expense of others -- but this path leaves us dominated by our passions and cheated by our fears.... The G-20 Interfaith Forum directs practical energy into a second path – that of every person seeking the interest of their neighbor."

On the evening prior to the second day, the G20 Interfaith Forum, in conjunction with PaRD and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, hosted a special dinner event focused on practical ways to positively impact climate change and support women in crisis. The dinner featured food from Sitio Raiz, a local farm practicing agroforestry. Sofia Carvalho, who runs the farm, discussed the importance of agroforestry in reclaiming land affected by climate change and human mismanagement. In a gesture of environmental stewardship, Carvalho offered to plant a tree for each dinner attendee.

Romanna Remor, the event organizer, commented, "The interfaith dinner provided the opportunity to express the common objectives and shared values nurtured in the Interfaith Forum through a shared frugal meal. From the diversity of people, beliefs and diet habits; the food ingredients, its tastes, textures, origin and preparation - to the messages and music, everything was meant to make tangible our aspirations."

The dinner also highlighted the work of Sister Marly Quernes, a Catholic nun who coordinates projects for vulnerable communities. Sister Quernes shared insights about her work supporting abused women through the Mulheres do Sol Nascente project, which provides opportunities for women to achieve independence and restore positive self-esteem by creating and selling

products.

The G20 Interfaith Forum continues to provide a platform for faith leaders to contribute their perspectives to the G20 process and broader global policy discussions. As the forum progresses, participants are working towards developing concrete recommendations for the upcoming G20 Summit.

The event remains open to global participation through online registration for live sessions at www.g20interfaith.org

About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum seeks global solutions by collaborating with religious thought leaders and political representatives to help shape the overall G20 agenda. It draws on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting a rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values. Through its extensive network of networks, it helps prioritize key global policy goals and point toward practical means of implementation at every level of society.

For more information, please visit www.g20interfaith.org

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