



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:** Debra Ballinger Bernstein  
415.561.2300  
[dbernstein@uri.org](mailto:dbernstein@uri.org)

**LECTURE BY URI FOUNDER AIRING ON KQED RADIO'S *IT'S YOUR WORLD*  
Bishop William E. Swing talks about "Somalia – Harnessing Religious Tensions for Peaceful Purposes"**

San Francisco, CA July 2, 2010 – KQED Radio will air a lecture by United Religions Initiative (URI) President and Founder, The Rt. Rev. William E. Swing on Monday, July 19<sup>th</sup> at 8pm (PDT). The broadcast of *It's Your World* on 88.5 FM will feature Bishop Swing's June 15<sup>th</sup> lecture at the World Affairs Council, entitled "Somalia – Harnessing Religious Tensions for Peaceful Purposes."

Best known for the downing of a Black Hawk helicopter during a failed U.S. military operation in 1993, Somalia has been without a functioning central government since civil war broke out in 1991. Reports of pirate attacks and battles between Islamist militias, local warlords and a "transitional" government dominate headlines, and the country is commonly referred to as a "failed state."

"December 3, 2009, at the first medical graduation in Somalia in two decades," Bishop Swing relates, "a suicide bomber killed 24 people and demolished one tiny flame of future light. This savage act epitomizes the depth of despair."

Yet, in spite of the violence and chaos, there are signs of hope scattered throughout this nation on the Horn of Africa. Four new URI Cooperation Circles (CCs), the first ever from Somalia, are among those working to rebuild civil society in the face of these daunting obstacles.

Bishop Swing's lecture focuses on the current state of Somalia and the role of these CCs and others like them in creating islands of stability around the country that will form the foundation for long-term peace. These groups represent the majority, he argues, people "who just want to raise their families, be responsible citizens, and be free from the chaos."

Tune in to hear his vision of Somalia's future, what it might hold and how URI Cooperation Circles are helping to shape it. The lecture will also be available for listening online anytime through the World Affairs Council's archive (<http://wacsf.vportal.net/?fileid=6137>) or during the broadcast on the KQED website (<http://www.kqed.org/radio/listen/>).

###

For more information, or to schedule an interview with Bishop Swing, please contact Sam Ruben or Barbara Hartford at 415-561-2300 or by e-mail at [sruben@uri.org](mailto:sruben@uri.org) and [bhartford@uri.org](mailto:bhartford@uri.org).



***About URI:***

URI is global network of more than 485 grassroots organizations dedicated to peace and justice through interfaith and cross-cultural cooperation. Its nearly half a million members are overcoming distrust and hostility every day for the good of their communities—mediating religiously motivated conflict; building schools, orphanages and health clinics; campaigning for citizenship rights and more in 75 countries. They touch the lives of an estimated 2.5 million people each year. The network is led by Executive Director Charles Gibbs, President William Swing, Chair Yoland Trevino, and an elected 26-member Global Council of Trustees from 19 countries.

**Visit [www.uri.org](http://www.uri.org) for Further Information on URI's Projects in:**

Africa

Asia

Europe

Latin America & the Caribbean

Middle East

North Africa

Southeast Asia and the Pacific

Australia and New Zealand

North America