



United Religions Initiative | *eUpdate*

## URI eUpdate for June 2005

### Our Periodic Electronic Newsletter

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#### 1. Executive Director's Letter, June 2005

Dear Friends of the URI,

Greetings of love and peace.

. . . On June 26, at the Lazarus Retreat Center and Dongguk University in Seoul, Korea, members of URI's outgoing and incoming Global Councils, URI's global staff, and special guests will gather to celebrate the Fifth Anniversary of the signing of URI's Charter, which is also the 60th Anniversary of the signing of the United Nations' Charter. . . . We will visit the Demilitarized Zone, which divides one Korea into two parts in an uneasy ceasefire to a war that began 55 years ago on June 25 and has never officially ended. At the DMZ and throughout our week in Seoul, we will stand in solidarity with our Korean brothers and sisters and pray for the day when this uneasy ceasefire yields one Korea at peace within its borders and a source of peace and understanding in the world.



That would be a miracle. Something great to celebrate.

We aren't there yet. But we will be if we have the boldness and conviction to imagine a world of peace, justice and healing, and to work for it with our sisters and brothers of all faiths; if we remain committed to sharing the sacred and serving the world as global spiritual citizens.

And if we remember to celebrate our victories.

Whoever you are and wherever you are, I invite you to join in this celebration of what we have accomplished together and in this commitment to the accomplishments yet to come.

Love,  
Charles Gibbs

Read Charles' whole letter

**<http://www.uri.org/blogsection/Features.html>**

## **2. Lahore, Pakistan International Peace Conference is a great success**

We were Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Zoroastrians and Baha'i, all united under the banner of URI. What a unity in diversity! The April 2005 International Peace Conference was blessed with representatives of 15 URI Cooperation Circles, Pakistan government dignitaries, Islamic scholars and Chief Guest Madam Masami Saionji, the chairperson of Goi Peace Foundation of Japan..



Addressing the participants, Madam Saionji said that a change in religious leaders' way of thinking was required in order to have religions promote peace. She highly admired the peace and interfaith harmony efforts of the URI members in Pakistan.

Presiding over the opening ceremony, former Chief Justice of the High Court, Dr. Javed Iqbal said that collective action is required for the promotion of a sense of neighborhood among

religions to ensure peace in the world.

After concentrating on many aspects of peace for three days, the diverse participants took on the challenge of making real their dream of promoting and maintaining peace in our society.

Read the whole report.

[http://www.uri.org/CC\\_News/Asia/PAKPC.html](http://www.uri.org/CC_News/Asia/PAKPC.html)

### 3. Help us raise \$2 million for peace, justice and healing.

In the five years since its founding, URI has enjoyed phenomenal success. Our global network now includes more than 280 cooperation circles in 59 countries. A million people will participate in URI activities this year.

By supporting URI, you have helped make this happen.

But there is so much more to be done. We are working for the day when religiously motivated violence has ceased to be a global threat and a billion people are engaged in URI.

This, too, can happen—with your support.

URI is working to raise \$2 million in 2005 to support its core programs. Across the U.S. and beyond, individuals and organizations are coming together to help URI meet this goal. We invite you to join this effort by making a contribution. URI accepts cash, stock, property and service. You may give online by clicking the icon below, or you may mail your gift to United Religions Initiative, P.O. Box 29242, San Francisco, CA, 94129.

Thank you. Every gift you give, whatever the form or size, carries with it the power of your commitment to a world beyond religious violence—a world of peace, justice and healing.



### 4. Newest Cooperation Circles to join URI

Please welcome to the growing URI family new Cooperation Circles from four regions:

#### **From Asia:**

Gujarat CC – Conflict & Peace Resolution, India  
Habel Foundation CC, India

Interfaith Religious Forum Trivandium – CC, India  
Ayur Inter-Religious Center CC, South India  
Paippadu Interfaith Council CC, South India  
Forum for Interfaith Dialogue, Mar Thoma College, Tiruvalla,  
CC, India

**From Europe:**

Steering Committee URI NL, The Netherlands  
Interfaith Dialogue Utrecht CC, The Netherlands  
URI Deutschland CC, Germany  
Religious Forum in Helsinki, Finland

**From Southeast Asia, Indonesia and the Pacific:**

Pakigdait of Mindanao, CC, The Philippines

**And from the Middle East and North Africa:**

Planet-E CC Egypt

## **5 . Upcoming URI Regional Assemblies**

### **European URI conference in Brussels, Belgium, September 22-24, 2005**

“Overcoming irritations and prejudices between people of different cultures, religions and convictions in the EU enlargement process” is the challenging theme chosen by members of URI Europe for their Regional Assembly. The venue for this 3-day gathering will be the Franciscan conference centre "Maison ND du Chant d'Oiseau", Avenue des Franciscains, 3 A, 1150 Bruxelles, Belgium.

The programme will include work sessions in different formats (plenary, group work, individual work) as well as a visit at the European Parliament and a meeting with an expert of the European Union. Tools and best practices for overcoming irritations and prejudices will be created and collected from the experiences of the participants, to be shared later with the wider URI network.

Sixty people are expected from existing URI Cooperation Circles as well as a number of people who are new to the URI. Places are limited. A good balance among participants regarding religion, age, gender, country of residence will be ensured. Conference fee, including accommodation, lodging and coffee breaks, is EUR 120 per person.

For all the details, go to

**[http://www.uri.org/CC\\_News/Europe/EUREG.html](http://www.uri.org/CC_News/Europe/EUREG.html)** or  
email **[kstauch@uri.org](mailto:kstauch@uri.org)**

## North American URI /NAIN Regional Assembly, Las Vegas, August 12-16, 2005

Hospitality, Gratitude and Sharing: Interfaith Action in our World—is the title of the first joint gathering of the North America Interfaith Network ([www.nain.org](http://www.nain.org)) and the United Religions Initiative ([www.uri.org](http://www.uri.org)), together with The Interfaith Council of Southern Nevada ([www.lasvegasinterfaith.org](http://www.lasvegasinterfaith.org)) All are welcome.



### URI North America Support Team

This groundbreaking meeting promises to be a watershed event in interfaith visioning and action. It will take place August 12-16 2005, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Five hundred participants are expected from the USA and Canada, for resource sharing, networking and bridge building. Please join us in this wonderful gathering.

Featured Speakers Include: Cheikh Hamza Yussuf Hanson, Sister Jose Hobday, Dirk Ficca, Sister Veronica, Charles Gibbs, and Kay Lindahl. Student scholarships are available.

For program details and to register, go to <http://www.regonline.com/Checkin.asp?EventId=21528>

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***The purpose** of the United Religions Initiative is to promote enduring, daily interfaith cooperation, to end religiously motivated violence and to create cultures of peace, justice and healing for the Earth and all living beings.*