FUTURE

2011-2012 ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEW
Dear Friends,

We write to you in troubling times, when violent extremists are burning places of worship and religious minorities are being persecuted. The failure of our economies, the damage done to our environment and the inability of our leaders to work together has caused many to lose hope.

With your support, URI builds hope around the world.

URI began with a vision of the future: one in which Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Jains, believers and nonbelievers could come together as a community to create a better life for everyone. URI’s charter and principles, its interfaith Cooperation Circles and leadership training programs have become the foundation of that dream for a vast and growing network of dedicated volunteers throughout the world.

During the last year, URI’s framework for achieving world peace — equal parts pragmatic and inspirational — has drawn hundreds of young people to join URI’s youth programs, including newly-established networks in Africa and Pakistan. URI members have been sought out by policy makers and asked to participate in international forums on the environment, conflict resolution and the role of interfaith cooperation in building more inclusive civil societies.

URI’s growing network of Cooperation Circles have continued to improve their communities, mediate conflicts and demonstrate that our model of interfaith collaboration to address contemporary social, economic, political and environmental concerns works.

Interfaith collaboration is working in Nazareth, where the Jewish, Muslim, Christian and Druze leaders of the Abrahamic Reunion Cooperation Circle are challenging an atmosphere of increasing intolerance through their united efforts to educate young people, empower women and respond to religiously-motivated violence. It is working in Seoul, where 40 young people from nine nations and six faith traditions are celebrating “unity in diversity” at the URI Korea Youth Camp. And it is working in the Basque country of France, where the Quested Peace Cooperation Circle — together with thirteen other not-for-profit youth organizations throughout Europe and the Middle East — is using sports and games to bring young people into the process of building inclusive civil societies.

No one can predict the future. Yet we have shown that by bringing people together through collaborative actions, we can achieve the kind of impacts that lead to lasting change, transform despair into hope — and make the future we envision a reality.

Thank you for being part of this transformative work.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Canon Charles P. Gibbs, Executive Director
The Right Rev. William E. Swing, President and Founder
Kiran Bali, Global Council Chair
This year, URI developed a “Theory of Change” to measure and increase our impact around the world.

URI believes that as more people at the grassroots learn to work cooperatively across faith, cultural, economic and other boundaries, and are provided resources and knowledge through the URI regional and global network, they build more inclusive civil societies.

— from URI’s Theory of Change

**MEMBERSHIP & NETWORKING**

Individuals and communities working with URI inspire the creation of new groups and attract established organizations to form “Cooperation Circles.” More people learn about URI through education and outreach by the growing URI network.

**CAPACITY BUILDING**

Through URI, many Cooperation Circle members develop skills in interfaith/intercultural dialogue and literacy, as well as leadership and community building. More groups have increased capacity to organize and sustain effective community action.

**COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE**

Cooperation Circles identify core community concerns, developing and implementing strong action plans. Members also collaborate on cross-regional issues, share best practices and improve media exposure. The network grows and civic engagement increases.

**SYSTEMS OF INFLUENCE**

As Cooperation Circles grow in expertise and strength, URI expands its reach and impact, which inspires even more people and organizations to join. Partnerships with like-minded groups form, cross-collaboration efforts increase, and URI strengthens its reputation as a key player in diversity and peacebuilding training, as well as planning and policy-making.
Believing that religious and cultural differences aren’t a problem, but something to be celebrated, the founders of Argentina’s Bridge Builders launched a youth program that has since become a model of diversity training for teachers and police officers in Buenos Aires.

**BRIDGE BUILDERS | ARGENTINA**

In a nation torn by political polarization, Maria Crespo de Mafia earned a reputation as a teacher of tolerance with URI’s Escuela de Amor Cooperation Circle. When the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires asked her to develop a youth program, she joined forces with Nancy Falcon of the Argentine-Turkish Friendship Foundation and Marisa Bergman of the city’s Jewish Museum, believing their collaboration would make the program stronger. Together, the three Bridge Builders encouraged young people to understand and appreciate religious differences—a revolutionary approach in Roman Catholic Argentina.

**PEOPLE**

Through a series of weekly interfaith discussions and visits to places of worship, the Bridge Builders helped university students overcome their prejudices and become leaders. The students developed projects based on academic, artistic, social or educational interests, such as organizing a conference on Islamic culture and interfaith dialogue with students at the National Foreign Service Institute. After working together to bring their projects to fruition, the students began teaching what they had learned to a new group of participants—becoming “Bridge Builders” themselves.

**ACTION**

Thanks to a second U.S. Embassy grant, the Bridge Builders are expanding their diversity training program to include educators and more than 550 police officers. The group recently published a book, *Bridge Builders: An Interfaith Experience*, and hosted a training session for URI’s Young Leaders Program. Meanwhile, its young participants have led trips to the Middle East, served as directors of an Islamic intercultural center and taken to the airwaves to champion the cause of interfaith work.

**IMPACT**

“The [Bridge Builders] coordinators built the project on the fundamental notion that religious acceptance does not require breaking down walls of differences, but rather constructing bridges of understanding and recognizing the richness of our individual identities.”

Vilma Martinez, U.S. Ambassador to Argentina
MEDIATION | UGANDA
To preserve one nation’s fragile peace, and prevent war in others, representatives of URI Africa are working to mediate a regional dispute over land and support those people and groups who stand for social justice.

PEOPLE
For more than 13 years, the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative CC sought an end to northern Uganda’s civil war. The peace of 2010, while welcome, brought a flood of former combatants and other displaced persons back to the country – and one out of every four is now locked in a battle over land claimed by someone else. To prevent these disputes from re-igniting a wider conflict, the Acholi leaders and URI’s Great Lakes staff are using a pilot peacebuilding program to help former enemies reach an understanding.

“A cross-section of mediation sessions highlighted the deep hate that still exists between the conflicting clans and villages. Women and orphaned children are those hardest hit.”
Despina Namwembe, Coordinator for URI’s Great Lakes sub-region

ACTION
In June, URI and the Acholi CC launched an extended mediation session in the districts of Lamwo, Gulu, Kitgum, Amuru and Nwoya. What was to have been a two-month program grew to nine months after the German Institute for Foreign Relationships — at the urging of volunteers from URI Europe — agreed to provide financial support. The project has already brought several formerly fractious factions to the negotiating table, and helped URI Great Lakes staff in its ongoing effort to build relationships of trust within the region.

IMPACT
As a result of URI’s intervention, at least three groups involved in land disputes have begun meeting face-to-face, and several others have agreed to a land demarcation. Through an upcoming meeting with members of local land area committees, regional religious leaders, security forces and Uganda’s Parliament, URI and the Acholi leaders CC hope to use their experiences in northern Uganda to help craft national policy.

Members of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative Cooperation Circle have worked closely with URI Great Lakes staff for more than two years to mediate land disputes in northern Uganda.

Ambassador Mussie Hailu presents an award for exemplary work in fulfillment of URI’s Preamble, Purpose and Principles to Sister Mary Tarcissa Lakot of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative CC. Mr. Hailu’s continuing mission to recognize champions of peace is providing the world with a more positive perspective on what is possible in Africa.

During the first half of 2012, Mussie Hailu, URI’s Africa Continent Coordinator, visited Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda and Tanzania, elevating those people and organizations whose actions promote peace and justice.

At least 65 organizations Mr. Hailu has visited during his years of travel have become URI Cooperation Circles – most recently the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies in Tanzania.
INTERFAITH INTERACTION | SRI LANKA
By bringing together religious leaders from throughout Sri Lanka, Sarvodaya Shanti Sena is helping to heal a nation torn apart by war.

PEOPLE
Active as a youth movement since 1978, the members of the Sarvodaya Shanti Sena Cooperation Circle have worked tirelessly before, during and after Sri Lanka’s 26-year civil war to end violence and promote understanding. With the help of a grant from USAID — distributed through the Karuna Foundation — the group has recently turned its attention toward the eastern region of Sri Lanka, where two languages, three ethnic groups and four major religions have divided neighbors and heightened tensions remaining from the war.

“Ain the workshop, many of the participants admitted that they have never shared a discussion with members or leaders from other faith groups.”
Ravindra Kandage, Executive Director of the Sarvodaya Shanti Sena Movement and Assistant Treasurer of URI’s Global Council

ACTION
To restore trust and avoid future conflicts, Shanti Sena members brought together 80 Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslim leaders this spring for a series of interfaith encounters in the Galle and Batticaloa districts. Each day-and-a-half training session focused on intrafaith issues, recognizing how teachings within each faith demonstrated tolerance toward “the other.” Following the model of “responsible cooperative action” expressed in URI’s Preamble, the leaders are now working side-by-side on 47 different community projects, from classes on mushroom growing for women to the shared repair of religious cemeteries.

IMPACT
The religious leaders who met as a result of Shanti Sena’s campaign are hosting a series of awareness programs throughout Sri Lanka from July 2012 through May 2013. Those meetings — which serve, for many, as an introduction to the interfaith work done by URI and other organizations throughout Sri Lanka — will culminate in a National Inter-Religious Summit in Colombo on May 11, 2013 and the creation of a network of religious leaders dedicated to national reconciliation.

“I am here to show that each of us is a slave of God.”
Ravi, living in a camp for internally displaced people

A local Scout troop joined members of Sarvodaya Shanti Sena in relief distribution efforts throughout southern Sri Lanka.

Muslim and Buddhist leaders meet with a Sarvodaya Shanti Sena Coordinator as part of the Cooperation Circle’s interfaith efforts.
With a track record of helping young people achieve their potential as interfaith leaders, URI’s Young Leaders Program is now providing a California city’s young Muslims and Sikhs with the tools to fight religious prejudice.

**PEOPLE**

With more than 150 languages and cultures represented — including the nation’s largest population of Afghan Muslims and second-largest population of Sikhs — Fremont, California is one of the more diverse cities in the United States. For young people, those differences can sometimes lead to isolation and discrimination. Thanks in part to a grant from the San Francisco Foundation’s One Nation Bay Area project, the Young Leaders Program is providing youth with skills that will let them take charge of their lives.

**ACTION**

Through a series of monthly workshops on topics such as collaborative dialogue, public speaking and cultural literacy, young residents of Fremont and other East Bay cities are learning positive ways to address discrimination. They are also taking part in interfaith encounters, panel discussions, visits to centers of worship, a community peace picnic and a monthly service project.

**IMPACT**

An interfaith speakers’ panel of four to five youth from a variety of religious backgrounds will take on the problems of bullying and discrimination by sharing their experiences at schools throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, serving as a model for leadership programs in other diverse communities.

“To hear someone called ‘anti-American’ because of their religion — that’s something you hear about on the news. It made it a lot more personal to talk with someone who experiences that on a daily basis.”

Amanda Crego-Emley, Young Leaders Program trainee

Students from five Bay Area high schools joined members of the Jewish congregation at Temple Emanu-El for voluntary service at The Free Farm, an urban farm and garden, as part of a Young Leaders Program training session.

Young Leaders Rachel Finn and Atsuko Kajita sort medical supplies at San Leandro’s MedShare, which distributes the supplies to hospitals in the developing world.

High school students Anna Shepherd, Jessica Lane, Amanda Crego-Emley, Aabida Mohammed and Daniel Monsour discuss the qualities of leadership with Sergio Vazquez, Chaplain at Stuart Hall High School.
YOUR SUPPORT HELPS THE PEOPLE OF URI TAKE ACTION, IMPACT LIVES AND CHANGE OUR FUTURE FOR THE BETTER.

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$500,000+
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- RUPERT AND MARYELIE JOHNSON

$200,000–$499,999
- STEPHEN BECHTEL FUND
- ARCHIBALD AND ANNE MCCUIN

$100,000–$199,999
- WILLIAM AND BARBARA EDWARDS / THE EDWARDS FOUNDATION
- JOHN AND MARIA WEISER

$50,000–$99,999
- KALLIOPEIA FOUNDATION
- ROBERT AND CONNIE LURIE
- MIKE AND ABBY SMERKLO
- KAT TAYLOR AND TOM STEYER

$20,000–$49,999
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- KORET FOUNDATION
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- THE HON. AND MRS. GEORGE P. SHULTZ

$10,000–$19,999
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- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
- BARNABY LAY
- GARY R. MOORE
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- RITA R. SISSEL
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- NICHOLAS V. TITUS

$2,500–$4,999
- STEPHEN AND MARGARET GILL / THE STEPHEN AND MARGARET GILL FAMILY FOUNDATION
- ROSELINE C. SMITH
- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
- BARNABY LAY
- GARY R. MOORE
- MRS. BARBARA NARDI AND MR. INVEED SHEHRANI / OPEN DOOR LIGHT
- RITA R. SISSEL
- THE SULLIVAN FAMILY FOUNDATION
- NICHOLAS V. TITUS

$1,000–$2,499
- MICHAEL AND ROBERTA ARMACOST
- MICHAEL BAILEY AND NEVENA ALEXANDROVA-BAILEY
- JACK AND JOANN VERTIES
- CAROLINE B. BOOTH
- CAMP TRAVIJA FOUNDATION
- STACEY BLACK CASE
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- JOHN AND KAREN MCMARREN
- ALAN MCMILLER
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- REGAN MURPHY AND HELEN BORGSTROM
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- ANSHEZH AND CRIS SULLIVAN
- ELIZABETH AND JONATHAN TRAUBMAN
- MARKET AND ISRAEL
- ALA AND JAYESH VYAS
- ROBERT AND LINDA WATSON

82 countries
550 Cooperation Circles
530,000 members
2.6 million people reached
URI is sincerely grateful for our trustees, individuals around the world who donate their limited time and boundless energy to the work of URI at the local, regional and global level. The URI community thanks you for your leadership, your vision, your commitment and your everyday hard work.

Our deepest thanks, too, goes to the President’s Council, whose members have given so generously of their time, energy and capital to support URI’s growth in the last 18 months and helped us to develop a financial base that will allow URI to continue to fulfill its promise.

KEY REVENUE & EXPENSE INFORMATION
For the year ended December 31, 2011*

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