



Programme

Religion, foreign policy and development: making better policy to make a bigger difference

Wednesday 5 – Friday 7 February 2014 | WP1311

In 2006 the former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright published 'The Mighty and the Almighty' in which she argued "As Secretary of State you have all kinds of advisers — economic advisers and arms control advisers and climate change advisers... it would be good to have some religious advisers too". Recently the US State Department created an office focused on engagement with faith-based communities. This came less than a year after the publication of DFID's 'Faith Partnership Principles', and is indicative of a felt need to strengthen policy-making processes by engaging with religious actors and institutions across the full range of functional and regional domains. As a result this conference aims to:

- Draw academics, policy makers, diplomats/international practitioners and religious actors into dialogue about the best interface between religion, policy and development.
- Survey current and emerging institutional arrangements for engagement with religion at international level in order to identify current and emerging good practice.
- Strengthen policy machinery within government and NGOs by improved information sharing and co-ordination about engagement with religion in support of societal transformation.
- Assess the relationship between domestic and international policy in particular where religion impacts on development.

Wednesday 5 February

1600 Participants arrive, tea and coffee available

1630 Conference photograph

1700 **1. Welcome and introduction**

Why is religion an important topic in the contemporary international arena? Do we ignore religion and religious identity to the detriment of making better policy and a bigger difference in development or transitional contexts?

Gary Wilton

Canon Emeritus of Pro-Cathedral of Holy Trinity, Brussels; Vicar of All Saints, Ecclesall and Visiting Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

Mike Battcock

Governance Co-ordinator, Civil Society Team, Department for International Development, London

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CITY UNIVERSITY
LONDON

1730-1900

Peter Mandaville

Professor, Government and Politics, George Mason University and Non-resident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution, Washington DC

2. Overcoming institutional incapacity for religious engagement: governmental and intergovernmental perspectives

What are the key inhibitors to developing coherent and robust institutional capacity for engagement with religion, religious actors and Faith Based Organisations (FBO's) in a globalised world? How do we overcome them? Where is good practice starting to emerge? What are the risks, challenges and benefits for policymaking?

Merete Bilde

Policy Adviser, European External Action Service, Brussels

Lauren Baer

Policy Planning Staff; Office of the Secretary of State, US Department of State, Washington DC

Sue Breeze

Head, Equality and Non-Discrimination Team, Human Rights and Democracy Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

Azza Karam

Senior Adviser, Socio-Cultural Development, United Nations Population Fund, New York

1930

Drinks reception followed by dinner

2200

An optional short service of night prayer (Compline)

Held in St Mary's Church (on the site of Wilton Park), part of the Church of England's Diocese of Chichester. The service will reflect the Christian tradition. Conference participants of all faith traditions and none are welcome to attend.

Thursday 6 February

0800-0915

Breakfast

0915-1045

3. Challenging the barriers, minimising the risks and maximising the benefits of engagement with religion and religious actors within development or transitional contexts

What are the barriers and risks of public engagement with religion, religious actors and FBOs in different development and transitional contexts? How can these be challenged, removed or worked with? What are the opportunities and challenges of building local public capacity to work with FBOs in support of development processes?

Beth Wambui Mugo

Senator and Vice Chair of the Parliamentary Service Commission, Nairobi

Scott Thomas

Senior Lecturer in Politics of Developing Countries and International Relations, University of Bath

Janette O'Neil

Chief Executive Officer and General Secretary, United Society (Us), London

Bonfas Owinga

Researching the role of Civil Society in post-authoritarian transition in Kenya and Tanzania, City University London

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1300

4. Engaging with religion and religious actors in situations of tension and conflict in support of social cohesion, conflict resolution and peace building

What are the specific challenges associated with situations of tension and conflict where religion is one of the factors? How can FBOs contribute to conflict resolution or peace building? What are the risks, challenges and opportunities of involving religious actors or FBOs in conflict mediation?

Mike Battcock

Governance Coordinator, Civil Society Team, Department for International Development, London

Claudio Mario Betti

Assistant to the President, Community of Sant'Edigio, Rome

Itonde Kakoma

Assistant Director, Conflict Resolution Programme, The Carter Center, Atlanta

1300-1430

Lunch

1500-1630

5. Assessing the challenges and risks for FBOs when they engage with public policy-making processes? How can they contribute more fully in support of making a bigger difference in transitional contexts?

What are the risks and challenges for FBO in engagement with government and international organisations? What inhibits their making a full and effective contribution to public development processes? How do they build the capacity and confidence contribute to policy development? How can FBOs work with government without compromising their confessional position? Or compromising the 'neutrality' of public administration?

Johan Ketelers

Secretary General, International Catholic Migration Commission, Geneva

Samuel Mwenda

General Secretary, Christian Health Association, Kenya

Atallah Fitzgibbon

Policy and Strategy Manager, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Birmingham

1630-1700

Tea/coffee

1700-1900

6. Confronting the contextual issues that inhibit religion, religious actors or FBO's from being active contributors to development policy processes?

How do different secular or theocratic approaches to the public space impact on transitional societies? How do faith based perspectives on gender and sexuality influence FBO contributions to policy development? How helpful or not are international initiatives related to Freedom of Religion or Belief?

Tina Beattie

Professor of Catholic Studies, Director, Digby Stuart Research Centre for Religion, Society and Human Flourishing, University of Roehampton, London

Judd Birdsall

Researcher, University of Cambridge, former US diplomat

1930

Reception followed by Conference dinner

Friday 7 February

0800-0915

Breakfast

0915-1045

7. Engaging with political actors who bring overt religious identity to development processes: what are the challenges and prospects?

What are the specific challenges of working with political groups who have an ideological or normative basis drawn from a particular religion? What have been the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches adopted by government and NGOs? How does religion-political identity impact on policy development?

Romain Grandjean

Senior Programme Manager, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Geneva

Peter Mandaville

Professor, Government and Politics, George Mason University and Non-resident Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution, Washington DC

Heba Raouf Ezzat

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Economics, Cairo University

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

1115-1230

8. Looking ahead – What creative linkages can be made between domestic and international policy? What does mainstreaming of engagement with religion look like? How do we make better policy to make a bigger difference?

Should governments make distinctive provision for policy engagement with FBOs? What are the downsides to such proposals? What might mainstreaming look like? How might relationships between government and religious actors develop in the next decade?

Sara Silvestri

Senior Lecturer, Religion and International Politics, City University London

Warwick Hawkins

Head of Faith Communities Engagement Team, Department of Communities and Local Government, London

Sue Breeze

Head, Equality and Non-Discrimination Team, Human Rights and Democracy Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

Jean Nicolas Bitter

Senior Adviser, Religion, Politics and Conflict, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Berne

1230

Lunch

1400

Participants depart