



## Programme

# Combating intolerance and promoting freedom of religion or belief for all: working on UN Human Rights Council Resolution 16/18

Monday 3 – Wednesday 5 December 2012 | WP1187

There is increased awareness that across the globe individuals are unable to exercise their right to the freedom of religion or belief and are discriminated against or persecuted because of their religion or belief. Indeed entire communities are facing this challenge. Yet this is a fundamental human right which is of profound significance to religious and non religious believers alike. It includes the freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief, and the freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest a religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching. These elements of the freedom are interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing and all must be present if there is to be true Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB). Following on from the 2011 Wilton Park Conference WP1180 on Freedom of Religion this conference aims to support the implementation of UN Human Rights Council Resolution 16/18.

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**To be held at Canada House, London**

**In association with:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Canadian High Commission

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## Monday 3 December

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**1500** Participants arrive, tea and coffee available

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**1545** Conference Photograph

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**1600-1615** **Welcome and introduction**

**Richard Burge**

Chief Executive, Wilton Park, Steyning

**Gordon Campbell**

High Commissioner, High Commission of Canada, London

**Gary Wilton**

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the EU, Brussels

Visiting Programme Director, Wilton Park

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**In association with:**

**Canada**

1615-1745

## 1. Combating intolerance and promoting freedom of religion or belief; supporting the inclusion and participation of all. The significance of UN Human Rights Council Resolution 16/18.

Keynote address:

**Bob Dechert**

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Parliament of Canada, Ottawa

**Panel**

**Ibrahim Salama**

Director, Human Rights Treaties Division, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Geneva

**Véronique Arnault**

Director, Human Rights and Democracy Directorate, European Commission, Brussels

**Ömür Orhun**

Adviser and Special Envoy of the Secretary General, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Istanbul

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1800-1930

Drinks Reception at Canada House

Welcome: **Richard Burge**, Chief Executive, Wilton Park, Steyning

**Bob Dechert**

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Parliament of Canada, Ottawa

**Vijay Rangarajan**

Director, Multilateral Policy, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London

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### Tuesday 4 December

0930-1045

## 2. Sharing best practice: protecting individuals from persecution or discrimination on grounds of religion or belief within domestic policy including tackling constitutional, legislative and administrative dimensions of discrimination.

What laws and policies demonstrate best practice? How can existing laws be enhanced? How do constitutions, statutes, regulations and/or court decisions at all levels protect religious freedom? What is best practice in the implementation of these laws? What measures are in place to guarantee equal and effective protection of all groups? How should we protect against incitement to imminent violence based on religion or belief?

**Felice Gaer**

Director, Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, New York

**Malcolm Evans**

Professor of International Law, University of Bristol, Bristol

**Nazila Ghanea**

Lecturer in International Human Rights Law, University of Oxford, Oxford

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1045-1115

Tea/coffee

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1115-1245

## 3. Sharing best practice: promoting full respect for and protection of holy sites, existing and new places of worship

How do we promote full respect for the places of worship, religious sites, cemeteries and shrines? How do we protect sites that are vulnerable to vandalism and destruction? Where are there examples of best practice in respect of existing holy sites? How is such best practice organised and developed? How have tensions between different communities

been overcome? Where is there best practice in relation to the building of new places of worship for minority religions? How can it be developed and extended – including model laws?

**i Protection of holy sites**

**Peter Petkoff**

Law Lecturer, Brunel Law School, London; Director of Religion, Law and International Relations Programme, Regent's Park College, Oxford

**ii Building new places of worship**

**Bill Schwartz**

Senior Anglican Chaplain, Anglican Church in Qatar (Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf), Doha

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**1300-1430**

Lunch

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**1430-1600**

**4. Ensuring FoRB by combating societal and cultural obstacles to inclusion and freedom of religion**

How do we promote open and public debate as a protection against religious intolerance as a means of strengthening democracy? What can be done to guarantee the right to freedom of expression? How do we guarantee an individual's freedom to seek, receive and impart information including on matters of religion and belief? What role should governments play in addressing potential areas of tension between different religious communities assisting with conflict prevention and mediation?

**Presentations to plenary (30 minutes) followed by break out groups (1 hour)**

The task of the break-out groups will be to identify and propose additional practical approaches or projects which foster pluralism and overcome obstacles to the equal participation of all in society, including through education.

The groups will feedback in session 5.

**i Fostering pluralism and overcoming obstacles to the open and equal participation of all groups in society, promoting the ability of all communities to manifest their religion**

**John McNee**

Secretary General, Global Centre for Pluralism, Ottawa

**Rizwan Saeed Sheikh**

Secretary General's Spokesman, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Jeddah

**ii Promoting inclusion and combating intolerance through education to ensure that faith schools make a positive contribution to society through positive messages on inclusion, non-discrimination and the valuable contribution faith groups play in society**

**Matthew Francis**

Programme Manager and Research Associate, Religious Literacy Leadership Programme, Faiths and Civil Society Unit, Goldsmiths, University of London, London

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**1600-1630**

Tea/coffee

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**1630-1800**

**5. Feedback from session 4 break out groups – sharing of best practice**

**i Fostering pluralism and overcoming obstacles to the equal participation of all groups in society**

**ii Promoting inclusion through education**

**Concluding Comments**

**Tom Phillips**

Former British Ambassador to Tel Aviv and Saudi Arabia, London

## Wednesday 5 December

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0930-1045

### 6. Sharing best practice: equipping policy makers to promote inclusive plural societies, including through the development of guidelines and toolkits

What tools do policy makers need to foster an environment of religious tolerance, peace and respect? What measures need to be in place to guard against discrimination against individuals on the basis of religion or belief? What does best practice look like in relation to toolkits and guidelines? How can existing approaches be developed, extended and harmonised at local, national, regional and international levels? How can best practice be promoted through training, education and awareness building?

**Katherine Cash**

Advocacy Officer, Freedom of Religion or Belief, Swedish Mission Council, Bromma

**Elizabeta Kitanović**

Executive Secretary for Human Rights and Communication, Church and Society Commission of Conference of European Churches, Brussels

**Sofia Lemmetyinen**

Senior Advocate – EU, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Brussels

1045-1115

Tea/coffee

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1115-1230

### 7. Engaging with civil society, developing partnerships, building networks to protect against intolerance and discrimination and to promote FoRB

How do we ensure that religious groups make a full contribution through dialogue towards improved awareness and understanding of the common values shared by humankind? How can policy makers better engage with civil society through the creation of collaborative networks to build mutual understanding and to promote dialogue? How do we encourage the efforts of faith leaders to discuss with their communities the causes of discrimination and to evolve strategies to counter them? How do we combat religious hatred and incitement to violence through open constructive and respectful debate of ideas? Where are the best examples of cross-sector partnerships?

**Suzan Johnson Cook**

Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, US State Department, Bureau of Democracy, Human rights and Labour, Washington DC

**Oliver McTernan**

Director, Forward Thinking, London

**Tan Sri Razali Ismail**

Chairman, Global Movement of Moderates Foundation, Kuala Lumpur

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1230-1300

### 8. Concluding comments

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1300

Participants depart