



## UPCOMING DATES

### Through September 2016

*Persepolis: Images of an Empire.*  
[Oriental Institute – Univ of Chicago](#)

### March 9, 2016

*Nowruz program at Oriental Institute, Chicago.* Sponsored in part by FEZANA and ZAC-CHI.  
[oi.com](#)

### March 12, 2016

*Children's Nowruz program at Oriental Institute, Chicago.* Sponsored in part by FEZANA and ZAC-CHI. [oi.com](#)



### March 14-24, 2016

*CSW60 (Commission on the Status of Women) Conference.* United Nations, NYC. [CSW60](#)

### March 14, 2016

FEZANA panel event at CSW60. New York City. (see page 4) [afreed.mistry \(@\) gmail.com](mailto:afreed.mistry@gmail.com).

### March 19-May 29, 2016

*International Everlasting Flame Programme MoMA India; Parzor: UNESCO.*

### April 29-May 1, 2016

FEZANA AGM. Novi, Michigan (see page 3 for details) [admin@fezana.org](mailto:admin@fezana.org)

### June 30-July 4, 2016

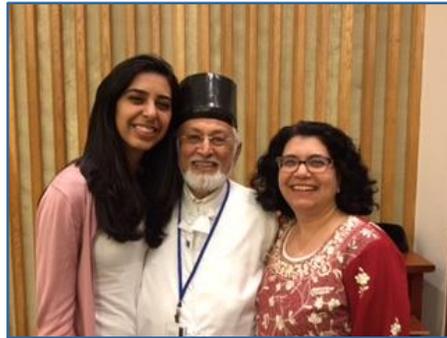
*15th Zoroastrian Games.* Elmhurst, Illinois (Chicago) <http://www.zgames2016.com>

### December 2018

*11th World Zoroastrian Congress, Perth, Australia* <http://11wzcpertth.com.au/>

## World Interfaith Harmony Week at the United Nations

by Nawaz Merchant



*FEZANA was represented at World Interfaith Harmony Week by Homi Gandhi, Nawaz Merchant and Shayda Sales*

On February 3, 2016 the United Nations welcomed representatives of different religious groups and interfaith organizations to a progress report on the transformative agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals. Homi Gandhi, distinguished in dagli and pagri, represented the Zarathushti faith in the procession, while Shayda Sales of George Washington University was one of the youth presenters. FEZANA was represented by Homi Gandhi, Nawaz Merchant and Shayda Sales.

The United Nations has hosted this event since 2010 when World Interfaith

Harmony Week was first proposed by H. M. King Abdullah of Jordan. It is based on the common theological ground of "Love of the Good and love of the neighbor"- and includes all people of goodwill, all faiths and those of no faith.

The event began with an address by His Excellency Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nassir (Alliance of Civilizations), followed by two panel discussions. The first 'Interfaith Harmony as a Key to Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals' provided an overview of the work that faith based and Interfaith organizations are doing, and the measurable results accomplished through their efforts. Dr. Azza Karam of the UN Population Fund shared the long association of the United Nations and faith based organizations, eschewing the notion that the UN has always had a secular focus which ignores the efforts of faith based volunteers.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are 17 objectives that range from the elimination of poverty to developing sustainable energy for all people. Interfaith organizations such as Bharat Sevashram Sangha, IFA Heritage Institute, Sisters of Mercy and a host of others shared tangible metrics their activities and of their progress toward education, healthcare, nutrition and reduction of poverty.

The second panel discussion titled 'the future of Cooperation between Religious communities and the United Nations' highlighted work by the World Bank group, UNESCO and groups such as the World Peace Prayer society founded in Japan. This panel focused on how NGOs interact with governments and strive to guide their strategy toward the UN SDG. Kinaz Azmeh and Sri Chinmoy (a capella group) delivered inspiring performances for the audience of about four hundred delegates and attendees.

These days it is easy to be discouraged that the world is moving toward 'frashokereti' and that the future is unfolding as it should. The media is full of the difficulties and tragedies in our midst. Crime and political bombast vie for our attention, while war and aggression, fear and terrorism are always focal issues on the national stage. Global unrest, unemployment, markets crashing, companies



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NGO in consultative status  
(Roster) with the Economic  
and Social Council of the  
United Nations



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FEZANA INFO

folding and Wall Street greed get full time attention in the media and even on social media.

It is therefore a heartwarming affirmation and validation to see the evidence of thousands of determined volunteers and religious people focused every day on healing and helping their own AND other communities. There is no competition here, only devotion, only care, only unwavering focus on those who the media leaves behind, the children struggling for the next meal, the parents eager to find a way to educate their young and so on. No one community, no one religion owns this space, since all religions have a component of service to humanity and are acting on this imperative in material ways, as demonstrated in this event.



At the close of the event, Homi and I scanned the hundreds of attendees to locate the sole Zarathushti youth representative- Shayda Sales. We were delighted to meet her! That evening, three generations of Zarathushtis were represented at the United Nations, demonstrating that though small, our community stands strong on the world stage. □

## Global Working Group Convenes in Udvada



The GWG (Global Working Group,) culmination of a long and tortuous journey of bringing our worldwide community together to discourse and work together, has been held annually since the world Zoroastrian Congress in Dubai. The Udvada GWG was one such meeting held in conjunction with the Udvada Utsav on December 25 and 26, 2015 hosted by Homai Engineer of Udvada, at her luxurious residence and organized by Dasturji Khurshed Dastoor, his

wife Havovi and Dinshaw Tamboli who we owe our grateful thanks.

Six Regions, India, Iran, North America, United Kingdom, Australia and Dubai out of eleven where Zarathushtis reside were represented. Following a benediction by Dasturji Sahib, representatives of Regions present gave a brief account of the state of their Regions and their collaboration with others. The first order of business was the consideration of a proposal to hold the next world Congress in Australia by the Australian representative Firoz Pestonji and his wife Mahrukh. Since this was debated for several months prior, on the Internet, it was simply a matter of formally endorsing the decision to award the next congress to Australia which will be held in 2018.

Several other items were discussed: setting up of committees, Youth exchange programs, Mobeds upliftment and adopt an Agiyari.

The GWG offers a valuable opportunity for the representatives of our worldwide community to exchange ideas and keep in touch with each other. □



## BOOK AWARENESS



This month we bring to you two titles that have been added to our FIRES collection. We hope you will buy a copy and gift it to your friends for NouRuz.



**My Mother Used to Say** compiled by Roshan Rivetna and Dinaz Kutar Rogers is a much awaited book! You will be delighted at reading the vignettes and memories of growing up in a Parsi baugs (colonies). In their foreword the authors share "often nostalgic and most times hilarious, these stories speak of our inimitable language and culture, and the idiosyncrasies' of day-to-day life in the baugs". Contact [admin@fezana.org](mailto:admin@fezana.org) to order



**Let's Celebrate Zoroastrian Festivals** is a book for children written by the children of Zoroastrian Association of North Texas. The essays and illustrations are based on what they learned at the ZANT Religious class and range from *NouRuz* to *Chahar Shanbeh Suri* and more. Contact [ppbalsara@gmail.com](mailto:ppbalsara@gmail.com) to order

Visit our website at <http://www.fires-fezana.org/>

Member Associations and Corresponding Groups:  
Please circulate Z-games information to your members.

Early Bird Registration for Z Games 2016 Ends March 6!



Visit [www.zgames2016.com](http://www.zgames2016.com) or email [chicago.zgames@gmail.com](mailto:chicago.zgames@gmail.com)

## FEZANA Interfaith Activities Committee Continues Its Efforts

Maneck Bhujwala, co-chair of the FEZANA Interfaith Activities committee, is a board member of the North American Interfaith Network. In this capacity, Maneck has recently written and submitted an educational article for the newsletter of the Interfaith Leadership Council of Metropolitan Detroit; you can read this piece on their website, ( [detroitinterfaithcouncil.com](http://detroitinterfaithcouncil.com) )

In addition, Maneck has just completed courses on Interfaith Work from Claremont University in Southern California where he has equipped himself with the language, processes, and connections to increase cultural and religious awareness, with particular attention to the Zoroastrian religion. He is writing to several interfaith organizations so they may include articles such as that which appears in the Interfaith Leadership Council's website. We applaud Maneck's efforts to illuminate the world about our strong existence in the interfaith movement. □

## FEZANA AGM and WZCC Meeting in April

The Zoroastrian Association of Michigan is excited to host opportunities to network, meet new people, and understand better what the World Zarathushti Chamber of Commerce (WZCC) and FEZANA do for our communities at the Holiday Inn Farmington Hills/Novi in Michigan from Friday, April 29 through Sunday, May 1. Bring your festive, traditional wear and dancing shoes for the ZAOM Gala on Saturday night – festivities begin at 7 p.m.

Call for Hotel reservations at (248) 477-7800 with group name **FEZANA** and code **FRB**. RSVP for the WZCC forum and FEZANA AGM with Zenobia Damania at [admin@fezana.org](mailto:admin@fezana.org)

RSVP for the ZAOM Gala by sending a check made out to ZAOM to Despina Mehta, 1759 Chase Drive, Rochester MI 48307 (\$35/adult; \$25/child 3-10).

For further information about events and tourist attractions, please contact Shernaz Minwalla at [siminwalla@gmail.com](mailto:siminwalla@gmail.com).

Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America  
presents

# THE ROLE OF WOMEN

IN CULTURE, GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY and the ECONOMIC MARKET  
IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A panel event at the Commission on the Status of Women Conference at the United Nations



Monday, March 14th, 2016 at 10:30 am

The Graduate Centre, City University New York (CUNY), Room 2  
365 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016



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