



FEZANA Panel for the 2015 Parliament of The World's Religions

A Petition for the establishment of a Religious Arm of the United Nations – A Panel discussion

SUNDAY OCTOBER 18, 10:00-11:30 A.M. ROOM 255 D

The Mission of the United Nations (UN) is to generate world peace yet the world is in travail. The UN is a secular body while a majority of the conflicts around the world have a religious undertone. There are many who feel that the UN Charter ought to be modified to permit a permanent Council of Religious Leaders who may speak out with one voice. After all, no religion promotes violence. To that end this presentation will invite people of faith to speak in favor and or against this proposition. A petition signed by delegates attending the Parliament in favor of this proposition will be presented to the Secretary General of the UN with a draft Charter for consideration following the Parliament, courtesy of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America and any other body that wishes to join.

Panelists: Jehan Bagli, Homi Gandhi, Dr. Harbans Lal, Dr. Khosro Mehrfar, Rohinton Rivetna, Dr. Satpal Singh, Thomas Walsh

Ervad Jehan Bagli retired as Distinguished Research Fellow of Wyeth/Ayrest Pharmaceutical Research. He was a founding member and President of Zoroastrian Association of Quebec, editor of Gavashni, a North American Zarathushti publication, for 16 years, and founding editor of FEZANA journal. He has published and lectured extensively on various aspects of Zoroastrian religion in North America and abroad. He is the author/ co-author of six books on topics related to Zoroastrian Faith. He is the recipient of the Gold Medal of Indian pharmaceutical association and FEZANA Excellence in Profession/Business Award.

Homi D. Gandhi is currently Vice President of Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA), is on the Executive Council of Religions for Peace-USA, Inc., acts as Honorary Treasurer of RFP-USA., and Honorary President of the World Council of the Religions for Peace International. Homi led FEZANA Teams and facilitated discussions at the annual UN NGO/DPI conferences and the Commission on Status of Women (CSW) meetings. Homi presented papers on Climate Change and Global Health Care outcomes at UN/DPI annual NGO conferences. He presented a paper on Climate Change at the 5th Parliament of World's Religions in Melbourne.

Dr. Harbans Lal, Parliament of World Religions' Ambassador, is Emeritus Professor/Chairman, Pharmacology and Neuroscience at University of North Texas Health Science Center and Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies at the Guru

Nanak Dev University. He is a member of many national and international organizations serving science, religion, media and civil society. Among them, Professor Lal is President of the Academy of Guru Granth Studies, a member of the Interfaith Council of the World Center for Thanksgiving, The Interfaith Center at Fort Worth, and adviser to the American Project on Religion and the News Media, THE SIKH TIMES, the Sikh Foundation, and the Sikh Review.

Dr. Khosro Mehrfar has served as managing partner since the start of the business. Dr. Mehrfar's specific interest is in the application of advanced technology in the clean renewable energy industry. He started his own company, Mehr U S Corp., and his interest in alternative, sustainable clean energy led him to be part of a spin-off company dedicated to solar energy. Dr. Mehrfar is a mentor at University of California, Irvine - Merage School of Business for MBA graduates and has been the board member of the many Professional Environmental Societies.

Rohinton M. Rivetna has devoted a lifetime building infrastructure for Zoroastrians in North America and to bring peace and understanding among faiths through his involvement with Interfaith work. Rohinton was founding president of the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America (FEZANA), spearheaded the founding of the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago and served as its president and trustee. He was founding vice president and trustee of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, and helped found the United Religions Initiative. Rohinton, a Professional Engineer, retired in 1997 as Director of Environmental Engineering at American National Can Corp.

Dr. Satpal Singh is a trustee of the Sikh Council for Interfaith Relations and a past Chairperson of the World Sikh Council - America Region. He frequently speaks on Sikh philosophy and the Sikh way of life in various forums and participates in interfaith dialogues on diversity, religion and peace. He also speaks and writes on the issue of violence against women. He is a professor at the University at Buffalo, N.Y.

Thomas Walsh earned his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University in Religion and Ethics and serves as the President of the Universal Peace Federation, Vice Chair of the International Council of the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations, and on the board of directors of the International Coalition for Religious Freedom and The Washington Times. He serves as Publisher of Dialogue and Alliance and has contributed to and edited books related to interfaith, peace-building and renewal of the United Nations: *Renewing the United Nations and Building a Culture of Peace* and *The Millennium Declaration of the United Nations: A Response from Civil Society*.

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