

HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership's Conference Addressing the Challenges of Our Times

Thomas G. Walsh
April 10, 2024



HJ International

GRADUATE SCHOOL for
PEACE and PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

Building Effectiveness in Ministry and Public Leadership

HJ International
GRADUATE SCHOOL for
PEACE and PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

HJI PRESENTS THE 1ST
**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
PEACE AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP**

APRIL 11-13, 2024

**PEACE AND PUBLIC LEADERSHIP:
ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES**

Thursday, April 11
6:30–6:45 PM EST - Session I - Opening Session
6:45–8:15 PM EST - Session II - Unification Worldview and Conflict Transformation
8:45–10:15 PM EST - Session III - Christology and Women: Relevance for Peace

Friday, April 12
8:00–9:30 AM EST - Session IV - Philosophical Issues in Religion and Peace
10:00–11:30 AM EST - Session V - New Religious Movements and Contemporary Threats to Religious Freedom
2:00–3:30 PM EST - Session VI - Faith and Family at the UN: Challenges and Opportunities
8:00–9:30 PM ET - Session VII - Economic Democracy as an Essential Component of Positive Peace

Saturday, April 13
9:30–11:00 AM EST - Session VIII - The Future of the United Nations: HJI Student Presentations
11:30–1:00 PM EST - Session IX - Prospects for Peace in Israel and Palestine
1:00–1:15 PM EST - Session X - Closing Session

All sessions will be virtual. All times listed are Eastern Standard Time, as in New York, USA.
For More Details and to Register Visit hji.edu/event/International-Conference

HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership is pleased to invite you to the **1st International Conference on *Peace and Public Leadership: Addressing the Challenges of Our Times*** to be held April 11-13, 2024.

Speaker bios for each session may be viewed [HERE](#).

We look forward to seeing you at this insightful and engaging event!

[Click Here to Register](#)

THURSDAY, APRIL 11

6:30-6:45 PM EST - Session I - Opening Session

Dr. Thomas Walsh, President of HJI will give opening remarks for the 1st International Conference on Peace and Public Leadership: *Addressing the Challenges of Our Times*.



MC

Dean Steven Boyd
Dean of Enrollment Management & Student Life, HJI



Speaker

Dr. Thomas Walsh
President, HJI

6:45-8:15 PM EST - Session II - Unification Worldview & Conflict Transformation

Long-term peace issues have been discussed at least since Kant's Perpetual Peace and they are central to the notion of Conflict Transformation. This approach seeks to supplement the short-term resolution of conflicts that leaves in place the seed for future conflict. The presentations in this session will apply the perspective of Unificationism in discussing innovative approaches to understanding the other (comparative narratives on Taiwan), exploring the nature of American foreign interventions past, present, and possible future, and investigating the role of desire satisfaction vs. degrowth in peace processes.



Moderator

Ms. Katarina Connery
Vice-President, Women's Federation for World Peace, USA; Doctoral Student, HJI



China and Taiwan - Competing Narratives

Dr. Thomas Ward
Provost; Professor of Peace and Development, HJI



Pax Americana and the Responsibility to Protect

Mr. Christopher Kenedy
Graduate Student, Peace Studies, HJI



Human Desire as a Counter-Intuitive Source of Peace

Dr. Claude Perrottet
Adjunct Professor, HJI



Respondent

Dr. Basil Ugorji
Founder and CEO, International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation (ICERMediation); Adjunct Associate Professor, HJI

8:45-10:15 PM EST - Session III - Christology and Women: Relevance for Peace

Traditional Christology, which is meant to show God's intention to build the Kingdom of God through His incarnation in Jesus Christ, has lacked the element of divine femininity. The consequence is that Christianity has fostered attitudes that privilege men above women, and societies that discriminate against women and other marginalized people. This deficiency has been identified and addressed by twentieth-century theologians, among them Rosemary Radford Ruether (1936-2022), who elucidated ways that Jesus Christ displayed the love and work of God who is feminine as well as masculine. The authority of God's feminine voice has also been a feature of new religious movements in Korea, which draw upon shamanistic folk religion where female mudangs have privileged access to Heaven. The fullest expression of gender balance in Christology is Unificationism, which proclaims the advent of the Only-begotten Daughter standing side-by-side with the Lord of the Second Advent.



Moderator

Dr. Theodore Shimmyo
Professor of Theology Emeritus, HJI



Rosemary Radford Ruether's Christology

Ms. Bruna Allen
Graduate Student, HJI



The Religious Feminine in Korean New Religions

Dr. Alexa Blonner
Australian Association for the Study of Religion



From the Feminine in Christology to the Feminine in Ontology: Opening to a Gender-Balanced Understanding of God

Dr. Andrew Wilson
Professor of Scriptural Studies, HJI

FRIDAY, APRIL 12

8:00-9:30 AM EST - Session IV - Philosophical Issues in Religion and Peace

The session delves into the intricate dynamics of religion, war, and peace in the Third Millennium, emphasizing historical ties and contemporary challenges. One explores the resurgence of religiously-fueled warfare amidst modern complexities, warning of existential threats. The other addresses philosophical hurdles in Unificationism hindering integration into social and political spheres, emphasizing the need for conceptual frameworks. Both underscore the urgency of critically examining and evolving philosophical underpinnings to navigate contemporary global challenges.



Moderator

Ms. Angelika Buczynski

Executive Assistant to the President and Director of Special Projects, HJI



Religion, Peace and War in the Third Millennium

Dr. Ronald Brown

Professor of History and Political Science, Touro University



Moderator

Ms. Miyoung Eaton

Secretary General, Research Institute for the Integration of Word Thought; Doctoral Student, HJI



Philosophical Issues for the Advancement of Unificationism to the Sociopolitical Sphere

Dr. Keisuke Noda

Professor of Philosophy, HJI

10:00-11:30 AM EST - Session V - New Religious Movements and Contemporary Threats to Religious Freedom

New Religious Movements (NRMs) have tested the limits and helped define the boundaries of religious freedom. They have functioned as "canaries in the coal mine," often being the first to feel the brunt of religious repression. At the same time, NRMs have provoked public reactions. More broadly, religious freedom faces a global crisis. The Pew Foundation has documented increased levels of restrictions on religion and social hostility worldwide. Other research confirms connections between restrictions on religious freedom and cycles of violence, poverty, instability, extremism, other human rights violations, and full-scale civil war. This session will consider contemporary threats to religious freedom, appropriate responses and future prospects.



Moderator

Dr. Michael Mickler

Distinguished Professor of Historical Studies, HJI



Moderator

Dr. Franco Famularo

Board Chair, HJI; President, FFWPU Canada



The Global Forecast for Religious Freedom-Stormy Skies Ahead

Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett

President, Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice; former Chair, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)



How Can Scholars of New Religious Movements Best Contribute to the Religious Freedom Debate?

Dr. Eileen Barker

Emeritus Professor, London School of Economics; Chairperson and Founder, Information Network Focus on Religious Movements (INFORM)



The Religious Liberty Crisis in Japan After the Assassination of Shinzo Abe, 2022-2024

Dr. Massimo Introvigne

Founder CESNUR; Editor, Bitter Winter

2:00-3:30 PM EST - Session VI - Faith and Family at the UN: Challenges and Opportunities

While human dignity, the family, and the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion are affirmed in the UN charter and the UDHR, the UN has been impacted by the culture wars, resulting in a challenging environment for religious freedom and advocacy of the "natural" or "traditional" family. Member states at the UN are divided on the issues of the faith and family. The USA and Western European countries tend to promote progressive values, while often the more traditional or authoritarian countries, including many Islamic states, affirm a more traditional family. The right to freedom of thought and religion however, is generally decreasing in more widespread areas. The annual UN Commission on the Status of Women event, which just concluded a few weeks ago, has become less appreciative of more traditional views on family.

In this session, panelists will discuss the challenges faced and opportunities taken by faith and family affirming NGOs at the UN.



Moderator

Ms. Lynn Walsh

Adjunct Instructor, Title IX Coordinator, HJI



Speaker

Dr. Ján Figel

Former European Commissioner; Former Deputy Prime Minister of Slovakia; First European Commission Special Envoy for the Promotion of Freedom of Religion Outside the EU



Speaker

Ms. Sharon Slater

President, Family Watch International, Chair, UN Family Rights Caucus



Speaker

Ms. Carolyn Handschin

International Vice President, Director, Offices for UN Relations, Women's Federation for World Peace Int'l



Speaker

Mr. Tom Sarrouf

Senior Academic Programs Manager at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute; Co-host of ISI's Podcast, "Conservative Conversations with ISI"; Teacher for the World Youth Alliance

8:00-9:30 PM EST - Session VII - Economic Democracy as an Essential Component of Positive Peace

This session will advocate for "economic democracy" (shared economic power) as an essential counterpart to a stable and lasting political democracy (shared political power). Wealth generated by the continuous flourishing of the U.S. economy has resulted in a massive and unprecedented concentration of economic power. With the advent of AI, the consensus of economists is that wealth concentration in the U.S. will continue to increase.

Is it possible for our free market economic system to generate a broader distribution of wealth gains without resorting to political redistribution schemes and with less reliance on government deficit spending? This panel will introduce a rigorous proposal for broader distribution of capital ownership based on Louis Kelso's theories of "binary economics."



Moderator

Mr. James B. Edgerly

Director, Higher Purpose Forum; Doctoral Student, HJI



Background on Louis Kelso and His New Paradigm

Mr. Alan Jessen

Director, International Association for Peace and Economic Development, U.S.



More Inclusive Capitalism by Democratizing Capital Acquisition

Dr. Robert Ashford

Professor of Law, Syracuse University



Comments on the Money System

Norman G. Kurland, J.D.

President, Center for Economic and Social Justice



Louis Kelso's "Just Third Way" to Economic Democracy

Ms. Dawn Brohawn

Communications Director, Center for Economic and Social Justice

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

9:30-11:00 AM EST - Session VIII - The Future of the United Nations: HJI Student Presentations

The UN will celebrate its 80th anniversary in 2025, at a time when assessment of the UN's effectiveness is at a low point. The wars in Ukraine and Israel/Palestine remind us of the limitations of the Security Council system, and the current Peacekeeping capacities. There are also discouraging reports, at this midway point between 2015 and 2030, on results in achieving the SDGs. Geopolitical polarization manifests itself in the functioning of the UN. Can the weaknesses of the UN System be overcome? What reforms might help assure a more effective system? What is the role of NGOs, and faith-based organizations? This session will address these concerns. The panelists will consist of HJI students.



Moderator

Dr. Thomas Walsh
President, HJI



Recommendations for the Reform of the UN Security Council

Mr. Avo Martinson
Graduate Student, Peace Studies, HJI



Progress and Challenges with the Implementation of the SDGs: The Case of Nepal

Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal
Member of Parliament, Nepal; Graduate Student, Peace Studies, HJI



The Role of Faith-Based NGOs at the UN: A Case Study of World Vision International

Ms. Marlies Ladstaetter
Graduate Student, Peace Studies, HJI



Empowering NGOs at the UN: Strategic Insights to Attain Relevance

Mr. John Koester
Graduate Student, Peace Studies, HJI

11:30-1:00 PM EST - Session IX - Prospects for Peace in Israel and Palestine

The recent Hamas's attack on Israel has raised growing regional and international concerns regarding a possible peaceful solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The conflict has also brought new discussions to restarting the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, which has been passive for years. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict dates back to the end of the nineteenth century when the United Nations adopted the Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states. On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was created, triggering the first Arab Israeli War. The following day, on May 15, 1948, the first day of Israel independence, Arab armies invaded Israel. Since that time, all attempts to end the conflict result in failure. America's diplomatic approach to the conflict has been perceived by many as partial. Some people believe that Palestinians are not willing to make peace with Israel and others blame Israel for being the cause of the endless conflict.



Moderator

Dr. Drissa Kone
Associate Professor of Conflict Resolution and Ministry, HJI



Speaker

Bishop Munib Younan
Palestinian Bishop Emeritus of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land



Speaker

Imam Shamshi Ali
Queens Islamic Center of New York; Imam & Director of Jamaica Muslim Center, NY; President of Nusantara Foundation



Speaker

Mr. Rony Smolar
Founder of "CORE" Society to Promote Dialogue and Cooperation Between Various Religions and Cultures in Finland; Lecturer of the Middle East Conflict, Jewish Issues, Antisemitism and History

1:00-1:15PM EST - Session X -Closing Session





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SPEAKER BIOS BY SESSIONS

THURSDAY, APRIL 11

6:30-6:45 PM EST - Session I - Opening Session



Dr. Thomas Walsh

Thomas Walsh is the President of HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership, based in New York City, and where he also serves as Professor of Religion and Peace. He is the recent past Chairman of the Universal Peace Federation, and currently serves as Chairman of the Sunhak Peace Prize Foundation, and as Co-Chair of the Coalition of Faith-Based Organizations. He earned his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University. He is Executive Editor of Dialogue and Alliance, a scholarly interfaith journal.



Dean Steven Boyd

Steven Boyd is Dean of Enrollment Management & Student Life at HJI. For over 20 years he has specialized in strategic marketing and international student recruitment. He is Past-President of the Association of International Enrollment Management (AIRC) and is a member of the Advisory Boards for Keystone Education Group and the Pearson Test of English. He holds an MBA in Marketing from the University of Bridgeport and received a Certificate in Unification Leadership from HJI.



Ms. Katarina Connery

Katarina Connery holds a bachelor's degree in International Political Economy and Diplomacy from the University of Bridgeport and a master's degree in International Development, with a focus on Human Security, from the University of Pittsburgh. During her graduate studies, she earned a Graduate Certificate in Advanced Asian Studies from the University of Pittsburgh's Asian Studies Center. She is currently Vice President of Women's Federation for World Peace USA, where she has organized numerous conferences, seminars, and educational curricula on women's role in building peace.



Dr. Thomas Ward

Thomas J. Ward is Provost and Professor of Peace and Development at HJI Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership. A 1981 HJI graduate, he served as its sixth President from 2019 to 2022. Recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship, Ward's books and articles have been published by Paragon House, E-International Relations, the Washington Times, the International Journal of World Peace, East Asia, The Asia Pacific Journal:Japan Focus, Journal of Living Together, and Journal of Unification Studies.

See also: hji.edu/ward-thomas-j



Mr. Christopher Kenedy

Christopher Kenedy, a cybersecurity-certified professional, holds a Masters of Science in Chemistry from George Mason University. Currently a student at the HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership (HJI), he specializes in data science and emerging AI technologies. As an editor for the Settlement Project, he advocates for just societies, aiming to replace destructive ideologies with principles fostering enduring freedom and peace.



Dr. Claude Perrottet

Christopher Kenedy, a cybersecurity-certified professional, holds a Masters of Science in Chemistry from George Mason University. Currently a student at the HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership (HJI), he specializes in data science and emerging AI technologies. As an editor for the Settlement Project, he advocates for just societies, aiming to replace destructive ideologies with principles fostering enduring freedom and peace.



Dr. Basil Ugorji

Basil Ugorji, Ph.D., serves as Adjunct Professor at HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership, instructing in the Peace Studies MA program. He is Founder and CEO of the International Center for Ethno-Religious Mediation (ICERMediation), New York, and Editor of the peer-reviewed academic journal, Journal of Living Together. Holding a Ph.D. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from Nova Southeastern University, his expertise lies in peace and conflict resolution.

See also: hji.edu/ugorji-basil



Dr. Theodore Shimmyo

Dr. Theodore Shimmyo is President Emeritus of HJI. He served as HJI President from 1994-2000. He has taught theology at HJI since 1985, and still teaches as Professor Emeritus. He obtained a Ph.D. in Christian theology from Drew University (1984); a Religious Ed. Diploma from HJI (1977); and a B.S. in nuclear engineering from the University of Tokyo (1971). He published books such as *Explorations in Unificationism* (1997) and numerous scholarly papers.

See also: hji.edu/shimmyo-theodore



Ms. Bruna Allen

Ms. Bruna Allen is a graduate student at HJI. She belongs to the Theta Alpha Kappa Honor Society. She has volunteered for the Women's Federation for World Peace for 27 years and recently as Chairwoman of its Indiana chapter. She taught ESL, Basic Computer and Algebra I with an Adult Education Certification for ten years. She earned a B.A. in Liberal Studies with a minor in Human Development from California State University (2007).



Dr. Alexa Blonner

Dr. Alexa Blonner received her Ph.D. in Studies in Religion from the University of Sydney, Australia in 2017. Since then she has been an independent researcher specializing in new religious movements and spiritual trends. A book based on her thesis concerning new religious trends, *Reimagining God and Resacralisation*, was published by Routledge in 2019. She also has several journal and book chapter publications.



Dr. Andrew Wilson

Dr. Andrew Wilson is Professor of Scriptural Studies at HJI, where he has been teaching for over 30 years. His book *World Scripture: A Comparative Anthology of Sacred Texts* (1991) has become a standard in the field of interfaith studies. His current research interests include *Wolli Wonbon*, an unpublished writing of Sun Myung Moon, and the theology of God as Heavenly Mother. Dr. Wilson received his Ph.D. from Harvard University.

See also: hji.edu/wilson-andrew



Ms. Angelika Buczynski

Ms. Angelika Buczynski is Executive Assistant to the President and Director of Special Projects at HJI. She earned her B.A. in International Studies with a minor in Political Science from the University of California, Irvine and her M.A. in International Peace and Security from King's College London. Prior to HJI, Angelika held positions at Universal Peace Federation, Formosa Plastics Corporation, Women's Federation for World Peace USA, and Family Federation for World Peace USA.



Dr. Ronald Brown

Ronald Brown is a tenured professor of History and Political Science at Touro University in New York City. He specializes in contemporary global issues in religion and politics and has lectured extensively on this topic both in the New York area as well as internationally. He earned his doctorate from the University of Geneva in international affairs, an MA in world religions from Harvard Divinity School, an MA in modern history from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a BA in history from Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania.

See also: hji.edu/brown-ronald



Ms. Miyoung Eaton

Ms. Miyoung Eaton is the Administrative Assistant to the Vice President at HJ. She graduated from the HJI (2018), specializing in the study of world religions and Unification theology and philosophy. Additionally, she currently serves as the Secretary General of the Research Institute for the Integration of World Thought.



Dr. Keisuke Noda

Keisuke Noda is Professor of Philosophy and Associate Provost at HJI. His area of specialty is phenomenology/hermeneutics, and his recent research focuses on Viktor Frankl. He earned a Ph.D. in philosophy from the New School for Social Research. His publications include A History of Philosophy as Narrative (Japan), Even Then I Keep Living, a philosophical novel on suicide (Japan), and others. He also received a Diplomate credential from Viktor Frankl Institute.

See also: hji.edu/noda-keisuke

10:00-11:30 AM EST - Session V - New Religious Movements and Contemporary Threats to Religious Freedom



Dr. Michael Mickler

Dr. Michael Mickler is Distinguished Professor of Historical Studies at HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership and Director of the Sunhak Institute of History USA which documents Family Federation activities in the United States. His teaching and research interests include the history of Christianity, the American religious experience, the Unification movement, and interreligious peace-building. He is the author of *The Unification Church Movement* (Cambridge University Press, 2022) among other works.



Dr. Franco Famularo

Dr. Franco Famularo is Chair of the Board of Trustees of the HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership. He is also President of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, former Secretary-General of the Universal Peace Federation, Canada and the Canadian representative of the International Sunhak Institute of History. He has written *A History of the Unification Church in Canada* and has a strong interest in religious history, interfaith dialogue and peace activism.



Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett

Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett serves as President of the Lantos Foundation for Human Rights and Justice. She is the former Chair and Vice-Chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) and teaches Human Rights and American Foreign Policy at Tufts University. She earned a Political Science degree from Yale University at the age of 18, a Juris Doctor degree from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, and a PhD in History from The University of Southern Denmark.



Dr. Eileen Barker

Dr. Eileen Barker is Professor emerita of Sociology at the London School of Economics. She is widely regarded as one of leading contemporary sociologists of religion and a founder of the academic subfield of new religious movements studies. In 1988, she founded INFORM, the Information Network Focus on Religious Movements, with the aim of offering unbiased information to the media and the public. She is a past president of the [Society for the Scientific Study of Religion](#) and the [Association for the Sociology of Religion](#).



Dr. Massimo Introvigne

Dr. Massimo Introvigne is the founder and managing director of the Center for Studies on New Religions ([CESNUR](#)), an international network of scholars who study new religious movements. Introvigne is the author of some 70 books and more than 100 articles in the field of sociology of religion. He served the [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](#) (OSCE) and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in monitoring religious freedom and is Editor-in-Chief of *Bitter Winter*, an online magazine on religious liberty and human rights.



Ms. Lynn Walsh

Ms. Lynn Walsh is the Director of the Universal Peace Federation's Office of the Family. She serves on the Executive Committee of the NGO Committee on the Family, NY at the UN. She has been an Adjunct Instructor teaching courses on the family for over 20 years, including at HJI. Before teaching she was an adolescent and family therapist. She received her Master's of Divinity at UTS and Master's of Clinical Social Work at Fordham University.



Dr. Ján Figel'

Dr. Ján Figel' is a former EU Commissioner and Deputy Prime Minister of Slovakia. In 2016-19 he was the first ever Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU. He is member of the International Council of Experts of the Int'l Religious Freedom and Belief Alliance and also member of the IRF Summit Global Leadership Council. Dr. Figel has been active in promoting marriage, family, the "culture of human dignity".



Ms. Sharon Slater

Ms. Sharon Slater is the president of Family Watch International which works to protect families worldwide. She has served as an informal consultant to over 70 UN Member States on life, human sexuality, and family issues, Chairs the UN Family Rights Caucus, has directed widely-acclaimed documentaries including "The War on Children: The Comprehensive Sexuality Education Agenda, and is a renowned expert on the harms of "comprehensive sexuality education." Sharon and her husband have seven children and twenty grandchildren.



Ms. Carolyn Handschin

Ms. Carolyn Handschin has been the President of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women at the United Nations in Geneva since April 2021, strengthening cohesion among women activists and building partnership with the government missions and UN entities in Geneva; She is Vice-President of Women's Federation for World Peace, International, and Director of the WFWPI Office for United Nations Relations globally. She has been leading the advocacy team at the United Nations in Geneva since 1997.



Mr. Tom Sarrouf

Mr. Tom Sarrouf is the Senior Academic Programs Manager at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, as well as the co-host of ISI's podcast, "Conservative Conversations with ISI." He is a teacher for the World Youth Alliance. Tom interned at the James Wilson Institute on Natural Rights and the American Founding in 2021. Sarrouf is a contributor for The American Postliberal, and has published articles in The American Mind, Anchoring Truths, and The American System Substack.

8:00-9:30 PM EST - Session VII - Economic Democracy as an Essential Component of Positive Peace



Mr. James B. Edgerly

James Edgerly founded the [Higher Purpose Forum](#) 2019. He served as Senior Management Consultant at Arthur D. Little, Inc. (Cambridge, MA) and was part owner and Chief Executive of four companies (management consulting, specialty chemicals and textiles) during his 35 year business career. Concurrently, James has served in ministry, including 10 years as Senior Pastor of the Boston Family Church. He is a graduate of Columbia University and the MIT Sloan School of Management.



Mr. Alan Jessen

Alan Jessen has a B.A. in economics from Grinnell College. He has 34 years of experience in small business ownership and management. He served as Economic Development Director for the Iowa Northland Regional Council of Government, and Executive Director of Silos & Smokestacks, a federally funded National Heritage Area in Waterloo, Iowa. Alan is a Financial Professional and currently serves as the North American Coordinator for the International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED).



Dr. Robert Ashford

Robert Ashford is Professor of Law at Syracuse University. He has taught courses in Business Planning, Corporate Finance, Public Corporations, Securities Regulation, Inclusive Capitalism, Property Rights, and Binary Economics. Prof. Ashford holds a J.D. with honors from Harvard Law School, and a B.A. (Physics and English Literature) from the University of South Florida. He was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow at Stanford University. He is a leading authority in inclusive capitalism, binary economics, and socio-economics. His scholarship has been cited by state and federal courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court.



Norman G. Kurland, J.D.

Dr. Norman Kurland is a lawyer-economist, pioneer of employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs), and principal author of the "Economic Democracy Act." He is a leading global advocate for "the Just Third Way," a development model that combines free markets with the democratization of economic power and capital ownership. Dr. Kurlin served for 11 years as a Washington-based political strategist for Louis Kelso, following years of Federal work in civil rights and the War on Poverty.



Ms. Dawn Brohawn

Ms. Dawn Brohawn is co-founder of Equity Expansion International, Inc. an expanded capital ownership investment banking firm. She serves on the Executive Committee, as Director of Communications and Treasurer for the Center for Economic and Social Justice (CESJ), which she co-founded in 1984. Ms. Brohawn has written articles and organized forums on economic democratization, the "Just Third Way", and justice-based management. Ms. Brohawn manages CESJ's Justice University which hosts students, scholars, and professionals from the U.S. and around the world.



Dr. Thomas Walsh

Thomas Walsh is the President of HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership, based in New York City, and where he also serves as Professor of Religion and Peace. He is the recent past Chairman of the Universal Peace Federation, and currently serves as Chairman of the Sunhak Peace Prize Foundation, and as Co-Chair of the Coalition of Faith-Based Organizations. He earned his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University. He is Executive Editor of Dialogue and Alliance, a scholarly interfaith journal.



Mr. Avo Martinson

Avo Martinson, an HJI Graduate Student in Peace Studies, graduated cum laude from Euroacademy in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences, specializing in entrepreneurship. Currently, he presides as the President of the Universal Peace Federation in Estonia and co-founded the One Korea Peace Game in Estonia. Avo's endeavors underscore his commitment to fostering dialogue and unity, exemplifying the transformative potential of grassroots initiatives in promoting peace and reconciliation.



Hon. Ek Nath Dhakal

The **Honorable Mr. Ek Nath Dhakal** is a Member of the House of Representatives of the Federal Parliament of Nepal. He serves at the Int'l Relations and Tourism Committee of the Parliament. He graduated from Tribhuvan University, Majoring in Sociology and Anthropology. He served twice as a Member of the Nepalese Constituent Assembly and Legislature Parliament, as Cabinet Minister for Peace and Reconstruction, and Co-operatives and Poverty Alleviation of the Government of Nepal. Notably, Hon. Dhakal received various awards including Constitutional decoration from the President of Nepal and the Stockholm Peace Award. Hon. Dhakal is Convener of South Asia Peace Initiative, Chairman of Universal Peace Federation Asia Pacific and of the Int'l Association of Parliamentarians for Peace – Asia Pacific.



Ms. Marlies Ladstaetter

Marlies Ladstaetter is a graduate student of the Master of Peace Studies at HJI. She works at the Austrian Red Cross as assistant to the Management Board since 2020, and she serves as the Secretary General of IAYSP EUME since April 2024 and is part of the IAYSP Austria Team. She has been part of Youth UPF and was recently part of the organizing team of an IAYSP Event in the UN in Vienna in cooperation with UNODC on the topic of "The Role of Youth in Achieving the SDGs".



Mr. John Koester

John Koester currently serves as the UN Advocacy Advisor of the International Association of Youth & Students for Peace, an NGO in consultative status with the UN ECOSOC. Born in Germany of French-German heritage, he later became a naturalized Canadian. Last year, he undertook an internship at the UN Department of Peace Operations while completing an MA in Peace Studies at HJI. He also holds an undergraduate degree in Peace and Conflict studies from the University of Toronto.

11:30-1:00 PM EST - Session IX - Prospects for Peace in Israel and Palestine



Dr. Drissa Kone

Dr. Drissa Kone is Associate Professor of Conflict Resolution and Ministry at HJ International Graduate School for Peace and Public Leadership. Dr. Kone teaches a variety of courses in the ministry and peace studies program. Dr. Kone obtained his B.A. in Teaching in the Ivory Coast at the Félix Houphouët Boigny in 2007. He worked as a teacher before moving to the US in 2008. He earned a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) at HJI in 2012, and a Master of Arts in Diplomacy at Norwich University in Vermont in 2014, with a concentration in conflict management. He obtained his D.Min. at HJI in 2016 with a concentration in peace and justice. His research focuses on transformational leadership and effective management of cross-cultural conflict between communities. In 2020, Dr. Kone was appointed Chair of the Doctoral Ministry Program at HJI.



Bishop Munib Younan

Bishop Munib Younan, former president of the Lutheran World Federation, and a president of Religions for Peace, is a Sunhak Peace Prize Laureate, honored for his many decades of service to the promotion of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and cooperation. A Palestinian Lutheran based in Jerusalem, Bishop Younan has been instrumental in promoting Lutheran-Catholic dialogue and reconciliation, culminating in an historic meeting with Pope Francis. His work throughout the Middle East has earned the respect of millions as he has built bridges among Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Druze populations.



Imam Shamsi Ali

Imam Shamsi Ali is a well-known religious scholar and interfaith bridge builder in New York and beyond. Imam Ali leads the Jamaica Muslim Center, the largest Muslim community center in NYC. He is Founder and President of Nusantara Foundation, a nonprofit focused on building peace and harmony. He also founded the first Islamic Boarding School in America. Imam Ali is Chaplain at the Bellevue Hospital, NYC. He obtained his education from Pesantren Muhammadiyah “Darul-Arqam” in Makassar, Indonesia. He obtained his Bachelor and Master Degree on the Comparative Studies of Religions at the International Islamic University, Islamabad. He obtained his PhD on Political Science from the University of Southern California. Imam Ali travels the world to lecture, is a frequent speaker at the UN, and has appeared on national and international media outlets including CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, NBC, CBS, and Al-Jazeera.



Mr. Rony Smolar

Rony Smolar is Founder of “CORE” society to promote dialogue and cooperation between various religions and cultures in Finland. Having lived and worked in the Middle East as a journalist Mr Smolar knows the area well and thus he hosts a weekly radio program dealing with Israel and the Middle East issues. He is also a member of various committees in both public and Jewish life. He is a welcomed guest lecturer of the Middle East conflict, Jewish issues, Antisemitism and History. He is a graduate of the Helsinki Business School of Economics. He is an Editor, writer, researcher and historian. Mr. Smolar has published numerous articles on the Middle East conflict and is a Frequent guest on radio and TV programs. He has written five books, of which one will later this year turn into an international full movie.



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I will attend all sessions from Thursday, April 11 to Saturday, April 13

Thursday, April 11

- 6:30-6:45 PM EST - Session I - Opening Session
- 6:45-8:15 PM EST - Session II - Unification Worldview & Conflict Transformation
- 8:45-10:15 PM EST - Session III - Christology & Women: Relevance for Peace

Friday, April 12

- 8:00 – 9:30 AM EST - Session IV - Philosophical Issues in Religion & Peace
- 10:00-11:30 AM EST - Session V - New Religious Movements & Contemporary Threats to Religious Freedom
- 2:00-3:30 PM EST - Session VI - Faith and Family at the UN: Challenges and Opportunities
- 8:00-9:30 PM EST - Session VII - Economic Democracy as an Essential Component of Positive Peace

Saturday, April 13

- 9:30-11:00 AM EST - Session VIII -The Future of the United Nations: HJI Student Presentations
- 11:30-1:00 PM EST - Session IX - Prospects for Peace in Israel & Palestine
- 1:00-1:15 PM EST - Session X - Closing Session

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