Leaders of World’s Faiths to Visit Ukraine, April 12th

The historic mission unites leaders of many faiths to demonstrate friendship and solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and all who have been impacted by the war.

London- A high-level delegation of religious leaders will pay a historic visit to refugee camps and the city of Chernivtsi, Ukraine on 12th April. Participants include: the Archbishop of Canterbury (Emeritus), Rowan Williams (Anglican, UK), Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg (Jewish, UK), Grand Mufti (Emeritus) Mustafa Cerić (Muslim, Bosnia), Archbishop Nikitas Lulias (Orthodox Archbishop of the UK), Grand Imam Yahya Pallavacini (Muslim, Italy), Br. Massimo Fusarelli (Catholic Minister General, Franciscan Order of Friars, Italy), Swami Sarvpriyananda (Hindu, India/USA), Abbess Sister Giác Nghịên, (Buddhist, France), and many others (full list on next page).

The leaders will visit various sites in the Chernivtsi region to show friendship, offer comfort, and share experiences of maintaining spiritual well-being under distressing circumstances.

As part of this visit, a public event will be held in the city’s main theater where the faith leaders will address refugees and other citizens impacted by war. Their words will be accompanied by live musical interludes from faith institutions outside the Ukraine, testimonies from refugees, and interactions with audience members. This will be the first public event permitted at the theater since the war began.

The messages of the event are informed by a Glocalities report, in which nearly 25000 people were interviewed across the EU, Russia and Ukraine on their values in 2020. Their report, published today, shows time and again that in all three spaces, people’s highest aspirational values were identical. Martijn Lampert, the Research Director of Glocalities, said ‘we have revealed by empirical means that caring, friendship and freedom were consistently among the top values of responders.’ The mission has been framed by this research and aims to demonstrate by example that even in times of war and division we have to keep appealing to the highest values of humanity that unite us.

The event is the co-initiative of James Sternlicht, founder of the Peace Department and Rabbi Alon Goshen-Gottstein, Founder and Executive Director of the Elijah Interfaith Institute and supported and inspired by Glocalities.
Said James Sternlicht, “In this moment, in a world gripped by profound darkness, we must unite to heal humanity.”

Said Rabbi Goshen-Gottstein, “To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time ever that an interfaith delegation has undertaken a mission of friendship and solidarity, in entering a country at war. This is all the more remarkable considering the high level of religious representatives.”.

The event can be accessed via live video streaming on a page that will be available on the day of the event, at www.FaithinUkraine.com/Stream

# ENDS #

Notes to Editor:

Members of the Delegation Will Include:

- Archbishop Rowan Williams (Anglican, UK), Archbishop of Canterbury Emeritus, Representing the Present Archbishop of Canterbury.
- Metropolitan Nikitas Lulias (Greek Orthodox, UK), Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Great Britain under the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Representing Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew
- Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg (Jewish, UK), President of the Council of Christians and Jews, and Senior Rabbi of Masorti Judaism
- Br. Massimo Fusarelli (Catholic, Italy), Minister General of the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor
- Rabbi Daniel Kohn (Jewish, Israel), Chief Rabbi, Bat-Ayin
- Grand Mufti Mustafa Ceric (Muslim, Bosnia), Emeritus Grand Mufti of Bosnia, and present Head of the world Bosniak Congress
- Grand Imam Yahya Pallavacini (Muslim, Italy), President and Imam of the Islamic Religious Community of Italy and advisor on Islam to Italy’s Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education
- Sister Giác Nghiêm, (Buddhist, France), Abbess of Maison de l’Inspir (of Plum Village)
- Swami Sarvapriyananda (Hindu, USA), Spiritual Leader of the Vedanta Society of New York
- Sister Maureen Goodman (Brahma Kumari, UK), Programme Director, Brahma Kumaris UK and Executive Circle member, Spirit of Humanity Forum
- Swami Rameshwarananda (Hindu, Spain), President of the Phi School of Vedanta
- Rabbi Alon Goshen-Gottstein (Jewish, Israel), Founder and Executive Director of the Elijah Interfaith Institute

About the Peace Department: The Peace Department is a US based non-profit that pulls from deep networks across the realms of business, impact investment, public policy, science, faith, and philanthropy. It aims to pursue the art of the possible, using systems thinking and comprehensive design expertise to unite powerful actors behind shared works to build a sustainable and compassionate future that benefits all of humanity. For more information, please visit: https://peacedepartment.global

About the Elijah Interfaith Institute: The Elijah Interfaith Institute provides a strong foundation of global leadership, from which this initiative emerges.
Founded 26 years ago, the Elijah Interfaith Institute is a nonprofit, international, UNESCO-sponsored interfaith organization which is renowned for bringing together world religious leaders and renowned scholars from across the world. Its unique programming generates interfaith dialogue at the highest levels through public events, research initiatives, conferences, and educational programmes.

Elijah’s Board of World Religious Leaders is the highest-ranking active forum, with its global members meeting biennially, and collaborating regularly for nearly 20 years. As a result, it has become world-renowned for its leadership in promoting friendship and solidarity across faiths and nations. For more information, please visit: www.elijah-interfaith.org

**About Glocalities:** Glocalities is an Amsterdam-based international research agency that specializes in global insights based on values, lifestyle and culture. The Glocalities research program that started in 2014 now covers 35 countries. NGOs, companies and the public sector use Glocalities insights to connect with audiences, based on a deep understanding of trends, people and cultures. In the international Glocalities surveys conducted since 2014, we have incorporated several research instruments that provide a deeper understanding of people, such as values segments and trends. These instruments make it possible to obtain a holistic view of groups of people and gain deeper knowledge of their drivers and behaviors. Free reports on a multitude of topics are available on our website. For more information, visit www.glocalities.com

About the survey: The survey in Ukraine, Russia and Europe is based on online interviews with 23,647 people in the first quarter of 2020, with representative samples of 1,406 respondents from Ukraine, 2,216 respondents in Russia and 20,025 respondents from Europe. The extra analysis of people who feel their world is falling apart is based on the Glocalities 2021 survey among 22,370 people from 21 countries, held in the first quarter of 2021. Prior to the data collection quotas for age, education, gender and region were set up, based on reference data for each of these countries. The Glocalities samples are weighted according to census data with respect to age, gender, region and education. It can be accessed at http://www.glocalities.com/ukraine