



NEWS RELEASE

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Many Faiths, Common Action

***Muslim, Christian and other faiths working together against global poverty;
Launch the Global Initiative for Faith, Health and Development;
Release a Strategic Framework for Action***

WASHINGTON, DC (Nov. 23, 2010) Over 90 leaders of faith, health and development organizations from across the world gathered at Washington National Cathedral and at a meeting at the White House to recommend new ways to work together to deliver aid and care to the poorest people. The group formally launched the “Global Initiative for Faith, Health and Development” (<http://www.cifa.org/initiatives/the-global-initiative-for-faith-health-and-development-2010.html>).

Faith-based organizations represent the greatest untapped resource in the global fight against disease and poverty. Across sub-Saharan Africa, over 40% of all health services are provided by faith-based entities.

Admiral Tim Ziemer, U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator, said, “Governments should continue to engage multireligious faith communities and equip local congregations to better educate and serve their followers. Close collaboration between the public sector and civil society is smart, effective and can achieve significant impact.”

In a world often dominated by religious intolerance and violence, these high ranking leaders from Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jewish, Hindu and Bahai’i organizations launched a “Strategic Framework for Action,” which lays out an action plan for high-level collaboration between faith based organizations, governments and the private sector, on health and development (available at: www.cifa.org/report).

A new survey of Multireligious Collaboration (www.cifa.org/initiatives/database.html) demonstrates interfaith collaborations for health and development are rapidly growing. In Nigeria, for example, Christians and Muslims are working with the Nigerian government to mobilize over 300,000 imams and pastors to end deaths due to malaria (www.cifa.org/initiatives/nigerian-inter-faith-action-association-nifaa.html)

Ruth Messinger, President of American Jewish World Service, said, “AJWS has common cause and long standing partnerships with diverse faith based organizations, but we need platforms like GIFHD to help us deliver on powerful large-scale common action for health and development.”

The Global Initiative for Faith, Health and Development is staffed by Washington DC-based Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty (www.cifa.org), and guided by an 83-member international Task Force. At the White House session, attendees heard from senior US Government representatives,

including USAID Administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah and National Security Council member Gayle Smith. Attendees asked the government officials to support national-scale collaboration with faith communities and increase resources and fully support congregations to advance causes of health and development.

Indonesian Ambassador Dr. Dino Patti Djalal, said, “One of our greatest hopes is the 21st Century will finally usher in that elusive goal of confluence among civilizations and religions, and the Global Initiative is a great step towards this goal.”

About CIFA:

The Center for Interfaith Action on Global Poverty (CIFA) aims to improve the capacity of the faith community in its collective effort to reduce poverty and disease through increased interfaith coordination, best practices sharing, and advocacy.

www.cifa.org