



### **COP27: Consensus on guiding principles essential to climate action, says BIC**

From: The Bahá'í World News Service (Nov. 2022)

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt — In their contributions to discussions at the COP27 climate summit, which has now drawn to a close, the delegates from the Bahá'í International Community (BIC) have emphasized a pivotal idea—if humanity is to address the myriad of climate issues it is facing, the nations of the world need to reach consensus on the essential guiding principles that recast the relationship between society and the natural world.

“The natural world offers profound insight into the essence of coexistence and interdependence,” said Hatem El-Hady, a representative of the Cairo Office of the BIC, at an event titled “Coexistence between peoples and the earth.”

Mr. El-Hady explained that the nations of the world must develop their capacity to work together in order to protect the environment and that the animating force behind this advance must be the recognition of humanity’s inherent oneness.

Saphira Rameshfar, a representative of the New York Office of the BIC, elaborated on this idea, stating: “We cannot talk about coexistence and living in harmony with the planet unless we are able to consult together and understand one another deeply. We have to learn to see reality from many different perspectives and be open to our own thinking being enhanced by the perceptions and experiences of others.”

Ms. Rameshfar highlighted that consultation, when approached as a means for investigating truth, can enable people from diverse backgrounds to avoid adversarial tendencies, transcend differences, and harmonize perspectives.

“The ability to consult in this way,” she said, “and really understand where humanity is at present, is essential to moving toward a mature society that is at peace with itself and with the environment.”

The two-week UN conference brought together more than 100 heads of state and government, as well as over 35,000 other attendees, including numerous civil society organizations, journalists, media outlets, businesses, climate activists, and members of the public, to examine global efforts addressing climate change.

(Continued next column)

(From last column) **COP27:**

Mr. El-Hady and Ms. Rameshfar were joined in the BIC delegation to the conference by Bani Dugal and Daniel Perell from the BIC New York Office, Peter Aburi and Laura Musonye from Kenya, and Ian Hamilton from the United States.

### **A glimpse of BIC’s participation at COP27**

Provided below are a few highlights from contributions of the BIC delegation to numerous discussions at COP27, in which representatives explored themes that are essential for establishing new patterns of social organization that meet today’s needs, including: redefining notions of progress and development on the basis of a more accurate understanding of human nature and the important role of government in building a more sustainable world.

At a press conference held by the BIC, two of its representatives, Bani Dugal and Daniel Perell, highlighted the gap between intention and action as one of the central challenges facing humanity in addressing climate change. “Humanity has tremendous potential and ingenuity to solve the many problems before it,” said Mr. Perell, “These must now be harnessed through determined collective volition—a resource that rests on confidence in humanity’s capacity and hope for a better future.”

Ms. Dugal, quoting the BIC statement *One Planet, One Habitation*, said: “The world that beckons is one of integration and balance, beauty, and maturity. It is a world with a redefined sense of progress, filled with communities and individuals working together with the support of institutions toward the realization of their highest aspirations. It is a world increasingly relieved of the destructive moral compromises—social, economic, and environmental—that have so often been asserted as necessary to progress.” (**Recording go to: [https://unfccc-events.azureedge.net/COP27\\_87371/agenda](https://unfccc-events.azureedge.net/COP27_87371/agenda)**)

Mr. Perell moderated an event titled “Realizing Ambition through Ethical, Intergenerational and Multisectoral Responses to Climate Crises.” Ms. Dugal spoke about the need for constructive relationships between the individual, the community, and institutions.

Other panellists included Azza Karam, Secretary General of Religions for Peace; Bakoa Kaltongga, Member of Parliament in Vanuatu and Special Envoy on Climate Change; Maria Fernanda Espinosa, former President of the UN General Assembly; Judge Mohamed Abdelsalam, President of Religions for Peace, (Continued page 2)

## No Fighter Jets Coalition, December 29, 2022

While Canadians struggle with rising energy and food costs, extreme weather events, and economic strife this winter, the Trudeau government is trying to push through a \$7 billion deal for 16 F-35 stealth fighter jets with American weapons giant Lockheed Martin. On December 22, Global News and La Presse reported that the Canadian government is planning on signing a contract with Lockheed Martin early in the new year.

According to a leak by federal government officials, the Department of National Defence has received approval to buy the F-35s despite years of widespread opposition from Canadian citizens, celebrities and parliamentarians. The government is advertising the cost as \$7 billion; however, that is only the cost of the initial buy-in for 16 F-35's. Further, while the government is advertising the cost as \$19 billion for the full order of 88 fighter jets, according to the No Fighter Jets campaign 2020 report, *From Acquisition to Disposal: Uncovering the true cost of 88 new fighter jets*, the lifecycle cost of buying 88 fighter jets is estimated to be at least \$76.8 billion over 30 years.

Experts, including former procurement chief at National Defence Alan Williams, have denounced this procurement, because the total cost of this purchase has not been fully disclosed by the federal government. Williams said: "It is distressing to read information being made public regarding billion-dollar procurements that is so opaque and piecemeal rather than being transparent and comprehensive...(It) makes it appear the government is hiding the truth from Canadians."

Our report *Soaring: The Harms and Risks of Fighter Jets and Why Canada Must Not Buy a New Fleet* details the many adverse financial, social and environmental impacts of fighter jets. Excessive operational and maintenance costs, air pollution, extreme noise and damaging air weapons training in and around Indigenous communities are some of the many harms of fighter jets. As the U.S. Government Accountability Office explains, the F-35 continues to be plagued with cost overruns and technical flaws. In its April 2022 study, the GAO found that the F-35 has over 900 open deficiencies.

A new fleet of fossil fuel-powered F-35s will lock Canada into decades of carbon intensive militarism and prevent us from decarbonizing. One F-35 releases more carbon emissions in one long-range flight than a car does in a year. Moreover, the F-35 is a stealth fighter jet designed for first strike attack, meaning it is only effective as an offensive warplane used against other countries. It has also been designed to carry the B61-12 tactical nuclear weapon and will put Canada in violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Fighter Jets are weapons of war and exacerbate global warming.

As winter sets in and Canadians struggle to make ends meet, it is irresponsible and unjust for the Trudeau government to spend public money on American warplanes. Instead, the federal government should invest in affordable housing, health care, education, economic assistance, and climate action. Canada's planned F-35 procurement is unacceptable and immoral and must be cancelled.

Tell your Member of Parliament to say no to the F-35 deal. Join the No Fighter Jets campaign in an urgent weekend of action from January 6-8, 2023. #NoFighterJets. #DropTheF35Deal. Learn more at: [nofighterjets.ca/ourwork](https://nofighterjets.ca/ourwork).

#DropTheF35Deal  
**WEEKEND OF ACTION**  
January 6-8, 2023  
Write, Call, Speak out, March, Disrupt.  
Call on the Trudeau Government to  
Spend \$19 BILLION on Human Needs,  
NOT Warplanes  
#NoFighterJets | nofighterjets.ca

## (From page 1) COP27:

Bakoa Kaltongga, Member of Parliament in Vanuatu and Special Envoy on Climate Change; Maria Fernanda Espinosa, former President of the UN General Assembly; Judge Mohamed Abdelsalam, Senior Representative of Grand Imam of Al-Azhar and Co-President of Religions for Peace, Egypt.

The BIC created a booth that invited participants to describe the values needed for stewardship of the environment.

The BIC delegates also participated in an event titled "Localized Financing for Climate Change Adaptation: Reducing Loss & Damage and Inequity Cycles," which was moderated by Mr. Perell. (**Recording at:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ZJVeVULo3I>)

Mr. Perell at an event titled "Changing Youth Narratives from Risk to Resilience," which looked at experiences from the efforts of young people to increase climate resilience.

The BIC screened a short film titled "Tanna: A study in leadership and action," which explores how constructive relationships between individuals, the community, and institutions paved the path for a youth-led social action initiative to revitalize and protect a coral reef ecosystem off the shores of Tanna, Vanuatu. (**Film is at:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBm5V2C12ek>)

At an event titled "Expanding Coexistence Between Peoples and With the Earth System: Insights and Experiences from the Egyptian National Bahá'í Community," Aya Mustafa, a member of the Bahá'í community of Egypt, spoke about how Bahá'í moral educational programs are enabling young people from diverse backgrounds to serve the needs of their communities together. "These young people learn to transcend their differences by striving to develop qualities and attributes such as trustworthiness, forbearance, and patience, because they understand that these are building blocks for social progress and for taking care of our planet," she said.

Mr. Aburi spoke at a press conference about the need for rethinking economic arrangements in light of the principle of the oneness of humanity.

"Our efforts will need an awakening of values, ethics, and leadership that unite us in working together for the betterment of society," he said, emphasizing the point that there is an inherent moral dimension to the generation, distribution, and utilization of wealth and resources.

He added: "Economic decisions must, therefore, be taken in accordance with high ideals. The start of any deliberation can no longer be about the accumulation of wealth or power but geared towards an understanding that wealth must serve humanity."

This BIC statement, titled *One Planet, One Habitation*, presents a thought-provoking

(Continued page 3)

### Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

**BPI web site: [www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org](http://www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org)**

**For info contact Laura at (250) 444-0524 or (250) 442-0434 or email: [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).**

### UN International Days

**Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>:** International Day of Education

**Jan. 27<sup>th</sup>:** International Day of Commemoration in memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

(From page 2) **COP27:**

reading of the root causes of escalating environmental breakdown and highlights principles and proposals for action that draw on experiences over many decades “where the international community not only imagined a better world, but attempted action along paths previously untraveled.”

A microsite created by the BIC further explores the themes from the statement One Planet, One Habitation, providing insights from Bahá’í endeavors in several places around the world that address local environmental issues.

Another statement released by the BIC, titled *The Heart of Resilience*, proposes that the principle of equality of women and men will need to be intentionally woven into the processes of governance for fostering resilience in the face of the climate crisis.

Be slow to fall into friendship; but when thou art in, continue firm & constant.

*Socrates*

People speak of hope as if it is this delicate, ephemeral thing made of whispers and spider's webs. It's not. Hope has dirt on her face, blood on her knuckles, the grit of the cobblestones in her hair, and just spat out a tooth as she rises for another go.”

*Author Unknown*

In 1939, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, reportedly said: “Somoza may be a son of a bitch, but he’s our son of a bitch”, referring to the ruthless military dictator of Nicaragua the US government was propping up.

*Taken From Rights Action*

### (From last issue) **2022 International Day of Peace**

Maxine stated that Racism overlaps with prejudice, sexism, bigotry, financial and social status distinctions such as poverty. She also brought up that Cultural misappropriation is also a form of racism. Peace will and is created through diversity and respect, added Maxine.

Laura agreed and related a story about misappropriation; when she cooked at a Chinese Restaurant they were making Borscht. That Borscht did not taste or look like actual Doukhobor Borscht or even Russian Borscht, since it was made in a Wok and they did not follow the method at all. But tourists and others did not know the difference and were left with the impression of this Borscht. The same holds true for other cultures. So when we appropriate food, ceremony, tradition, art, crafts, anything, we are acting with racial bias or being racist for we are not truly valuing that culture and presenting an inauthentic interpretation. I value the First Nations, Métis and Inuit but I am not one, even when I participate with them; I can support, work with them, stand with them but I am not a First Nations, Métis or Inuit person.

Martin outlined some of the changes brought about by the Ottoman Empire in Turkey and the surrounding region. He then continued that in Turkey the media is not allowed to use any references to race, religion or ethnicity as is acceptable in the Western media. This then maintains equity in reporting and focuses on the incident or event.

A young lady shared how stereotyping is so prevalent and how it affects us. She explained that because she is a light skinned Indian, she has and continues to be treated as a ‘white person’ and that also is racist for I identify as Indian, as Métis or First Nations. By assuming my heritage by the colour of my skin is demeaning me as a person. If we aren’t sure then we should ask. I wonder if it is even relevant to ask such questions.

Martin added some insights into the current situation in the world. His time in Turkey taught him a lot and even though he was on the receiving end of Racism, he has not let that rule his life but has learnt from it. What I see today and what the major media in the West is doing is helping to polarize people, to divide and perpetuate stereotyping, prejudice, bigotry, etc. Of course, we all see the world through our own lens, through our own life experiences, our own history but by broadening our minds and learning about others with a positive attitude we can stop Racist violence.

Further discussion brought forward some insights (the speakers were not identified in the notes but it is not important who said it only that it was shared).

We need to continue to build awareness of all aspects of the big heading of Racism and how it affects all of us not just the people of colour or different cultures—all of us. It is not rude to ask questions about a culture or tradition we are unfamiliar with. What is rude and demeaning is to assume you understand or know when you don’t.

Laura thanked everyone for sharing their thoughts and then asked us to switch into solutions for ourselves and community. What can we do, what are we prepared to do, so as to at least take steps to eliminate Racism and Racial Bias?

(Continued page 4)

## WHAT'S UP?

The BPI urges you to call, email or go to the office of your MP to ask him/her to vote against the procurement of F-35 Fighter Jets. For more information please go to:

<https://nofighterjets.ca/2022/12/30/dropthef35dealstatement/>

We hope that 2023 brings a change of attitude and behaviour so that Peace, Social and Economic Justice, Equity, Environmental Sustainability, and Love guide all of us to a world free of violence and abuse. Thank you for your ongoing support as we look forward to continuing to work with you.

Remember, we have only you as our source of funding, so if you can, please donate what you can: to donate contact Laura by email at [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net) or call 250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6  
Go to the Government of Canada website for MP email and phone contact at: <http://www.canada.gc.ca>

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at 250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434 or email [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).

The BPI is an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Peace Pledge Union, Abolition 2000 & CNANW and works with local and many global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

## 2022 International Day of Peace

Martin suggested schools ensure that the curriculum includes all the cultures in their region as much as possible. A teacher new to the area, said she will check out what is available for the students and if not how to get that into the local schools. Victoria added that it is vital that the content is respectful and truly honours the culture and ethnic group presented from the perspective of that culture, not someone's interpretation or observation of it. At present in the local schools we do have access and Joan is our elder involved with the schools. Shelley reminded us that we must go beyond just awareness; we need to move further and believe that it is possible to eradicate racism, that it is possible to create peace and harmony. A young lady agreed adding that changes begin with 'me' and then we are an example to others.

Laura asked us to think about how we could create unity and respect of each others' cultures in order to break the chain of fear and mistrust. What can we do to introduce ourselves to all the cultures in the area and build relationships?

Anna suggested that since music unites people and speaks on a different level than words maybe a festival to celebrate the various cultures in our region is possible. Laura, Joan and Dorothy Ann shared that some years ago, when the Multicultural Society existed, they held yearly cultural nights with a potluck dinner followed by entertainment from all who wished to participate. It was something that everyone looked forward to but the society fell apart and there was no one to organize such an event. But it is something that could be considered and explored.

Laura then asked some of the elders that had not yet shared with us to add their voice to the discussion. Nina, a Doukhobor elder, said that this has been a great eye-opener on what racism is and how it affects us. This can be a beginning on a long journey to right the wrongs of the past and move into the future. It is so sad that after all these years we still are labelling people, dividing and segregating each other. We need to proceed with an open mind and heart, without prejudice and judgement.

The teacher shared that in her opinion we need to have all those different voices in the classroom through books but even more importantly personal living experiences. We need to encourage ourselves and our youth to find the commonalities among all cultures.

Another lady added that we can't respect what we don't know so the approach of multiculturalism must happen in safe spaces and a relaxed atmosphere. She agrees that a Festival of some kind would be a good first step to introduce ourselves to the variety of people in our region and through that lower the fear of 'the other'. Dorothy Ann agrees that we must find a way to bring back the celebration of cultures locally.

Joan advised us that we need to talk to our neighbours but first we must talk to ourselves about how we are going to talk to our neighbours and what we are going to ask and/or talk about. She explained that the reason that the First Nations, Métis and Inuit use the term 'All My Relations' is to remind ourselves that we are all related, we are one with humanity, with animals and plants and water and air, the sun the moon, the stars—everything is connected and we must learn to work in harmony with each other and all Creation. She added that we must hear our youth and they must be involved in creating the present and the future.

The consensus reached was that a day of celebrating culture in our local area must happen. Maxine shared that this discussion was already happening within the Rotary Club and that together with the BPI and the USCC and others we can create a wonderful daylong event full of learning and sharing and a safe space for unity in diversity and peaceful living to grow.

Martin shared a phrase by Rumi as he was translating documents in Turkey that stuck with him: *you are the ocean in a drop; we are the sum of everything in the Universe.*

And so the day ended on a very positive note where all agreed to find a way to bring the community together to learn and share and grow together.

