Article

Global Issues in Religion and Diplomacy

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Analyses and recommendations from the TPNRD

The Transatlantic Policy Network on Religion and Diplomacy (TPNRD) was born out of a series of dialogues organized through the *Bridging Voices* program. One TPNRD mission is to bring together diplomats from participating governments who share concern for, expertise on, and interest in integrating the worlds of foreign policy and faith-based engagement.

In addition to this practical mission, the TPNRD also produces original research and scholarship. The TPNRD Secretariat commissions this content and publishes it on the *Religion and Diplomacy* online portal. Among a wide array of other resources, *Religion and Diplomacy* publishes original reports that examine different issues at the intersection of religion and global affairs. Below are three examples of these reports

Universal Rights and Particular Beliefs

In the paper *Universal or Particular or Both? The Right to Freedom of Religion or Belief in Cross-cultural Perspective*, Erin Wilson and Christoph Grüll compare and contrast discussions of freedom of religion or belief in three main contexts: Western discourse;

Gujarat, India; Cirebon, Indonesia. The following are some of the conclusions produced from their analysis:

- Understandings of religion are fluid.
- In many contexts, communal identity is just as important as individual belief.
- There is a difference between infringement on freedom of religion and belief and discrimination against groups because of their religious identity. The framework of freedom of religion or belief does not adequately address discrimination against these groups.
- Western policymakers should work with—and not just impose their agenda or speak for—different religious communities.

Religion and the Russian Invasion of Ukraine

How have faith-based actors responded to the Russian invasion of Ukraine? This is the topic of the article "Ukrainian Religious Actors and Organizations After Russia's Invasion: The Struggle for Peace," written by Tetiana Kalenychenko and Denys Brylov.

Among many other findings, the authors point out the high social capital that local ministers can wield in favor of peace and humanitarian response; the opportunity for secular and faith-based actors to collaborate in response to the war; and the need for spiritual leaders to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine or otherwise lose their connection to youth and other elements of their communities.

Religious Organizations against Human Trafficking

In "Religious Organizations as Partners in the Global and Local Fight Against Human Trafficking," Mary Graw Leary writes, "As a crime with both global and local dimensions,

trafficking must be combatted with tools that are both global and local. Such tools include the world's religions and religious organizations."

The reports summarized here are just a few examples of TPNRD-commissioned papers. Other reports include "Religion and Coloniality in Diplomacy" and "Faith in Numbers: Can We Trust Quantitative Data on Religion?" The full body of TPNRD reports, along with other resources, can be found on the TPNRD website *Religion and Diplomacy.*

More reports

Other TPNRD resources