



United Nations International Day of Peace Conference

The 2025 UN Theme - "Act Now for a Peaceful World"

20 September 10.00 to 3.15 PM

Venue: Mount Waverley Community Centre
47 Miller Crescent Mount Waverley



UN International Day of Peace Conference

Program

10:00 – 10:30	Registration and Morning Tea
10:30 – 10:45	<p>MC – Jess Ness</p> <div><p>Jess is a community builder, advocate, and former independent federal candidate whose work is grounded in the pursuit of peace, dignity, and shared humanity. With over 15 years' experience in grassroots organising, multicultural engagement, and sustainability education, Jess has led initiatives that bring people together across cultures and beliefs—from establishing the Bedford Park Community Garden and Sustainability Fair, to chairing the Migrant Settlement Committee and contributing to statewide policy discussions.</p></div> <p>Acknowledgment of Country and Introduction to the Day</p> <p>Video Presentations – The Founders – Man and Women of Peace</p>
10:45 – 11:00	<p>Topic: What makes peace possible and sustainable? Using the case of Afghanistan in the context of South-Central Asia</p> <div><p>Presenters: Dr Mujib Abid - Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Initiative for Peacebuilding University of Melbourne</p></div> <div><p>Mr Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai - Honorary fellow at the Asia Institute and a research affiliate of the University of Melbourne. One of the founders and a member of the leadership committee of the movement for peace and justice and former Chief Peace Negotiator of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.</p></div>



Parisa Sekandari - a Refugee Advocate and co-creator of the collectives 'Amplify Afghan Women' and 'Community for Humanity'.

11:00 - 11:15

Table discussions and Q&A

11:15 - 11:30

Presenter: Anthea Hancocks



Anthea is the CEO of the Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, dedicated to making social cohesion research accessible and easy to understand. She brings extensive leadership experience across government, professional services, academia, philanthropy, and the not-for-profit sector.

She serves as Chair of the Huddle Advisory Committee at the North Melbourne Football Club and the Monash Migration and Inclusion Centre Advisory Board. Anthea is a Fellow of Monash University, a Civil Society and Public Administration Fellow with Toronto Metropolitan University, and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Topic: Act Now for Peace? Which actions are the right actions to create meaningful peace?

Although we all have the best intentions to take actions to foster and engender peace in Australia and beyond, are we sure that all actions are the best we can take? How do we know if our good intentions are having the right impact? Where are Australia's existing strengths to building on? Who can we partner with on this journey? What do we mean by peace and does this automatically ensure social cohesion?

This contribution to the day is intended to stimulate our thinking while providing some guidance to how to best deploy our energies to build the peace we want.

11:30 - 11:45

Table discussions and reporting and Q&A

11:45 – 12:00	<p>Presenter: Dr John Bellavance</p> <div data-bbox="360 197 587 479">  </div> <p>Global Vice President, Sun Moon University (SMU); Oceania Coordinator, International Association of Academicians for Peace; and, Vice-President, Universal Peace Federation Australia</p> <p>Topic: Peace Building Principles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peacebuilding requires finding commonality based on universally shared values that support social cohesion and good public policy, serving the concerns of all humanity. 2. Peace must be established in the individual first. This means that conflict between one's values (mind/conscience) and one's practices (body) must be resolved. 3. Peace is realised through interactions and cooperation between people of different races, ethnicities, nationalities, cultures, spiritual beliefs and religions. 4. Peacebuilding requires a moral reckoning, humility, an openness to truth and being willing to listen to the story and history of others and see the good in others.
12:00 – 12:15	<p>Table discussions and reporting and Q&A</p>
12:15 – 1:00	<p>Group Photo & Lunch</p>
1:00 – 1:15	<p>Dr. Birgit Trauer - Founding Director the Cultural Angle</p> <div data-bbox="360 1469 635 1742">  </div> <p>Dr Birgit is a Board Member of the Institute of Tourism – Voices of Insight and Change; a Founding Member of the World Tourism Network (WTN); a Charter Member of the International Institute of Peace through Tourism' (IIPT).</p> <p>Her professional engagements included work at international universities and educational institutions in Canada, England, Austria, Germany, New Zealand, Australia, and the United Arab Emirates. Birgit holds a PhD in Tourism Management and has published in top international academic journals and academic textbooks.</p> <p>Topic: Peace Through a Relational Lens - Dare to Care in a World of Disconnect</p>

1:15 – 1:30	<p><i>"We need to find within ourselves the will to live by the values we proclaim, in our private lives, in our local and national societies, and in the world."</i> Kofi Annan</p> <p>For many, the word peace might draw attention to peace in the public sphere, at the macro level with geopolitical conflicts, climate change, and human rights at the forefront of our minds. On the other hand, peace also suggests harmony and cooperation, mutually rewarding connections, and healthy relationships at the micro level in our private sphere.</p> <p>Peace starts at home, reflected in the attitudes and behaviour we demonstrate in our intimate relationships, in our close and extended families, our friendships and work environments. Our actions at the micro level echo in our communities and the wider world around us.</p> <p>Table discussions and reporting and Q&A</p>
1.30 – 1.45	<p>Presenter: Arfa Sarfaraz Khan</p> <div data-bbox="344 929 593 1258" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Arfa has established herself as a cross-cultural champion and dedicated community leader since her arrival in Australia from Pakistan in the early 2000s. With a passion for women's empowerment, children's education, and interfaith dialogue, Arfa has made significant contributions to the Latrobe Valley community.</p> <p>President of the United Muslim Sisters of Latrobe Valley (UMSLV) since 2015, Arfa along with her team have developed successful projects that connect, inform, and educate locals, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious society.</p> <p>Topic: Breaking the Silence: Confronting Violence Against Women in Conflict and Beyond</p> <p>In conflicts around the world, women bear a disproportionate burden—facing increased risks of sexual violence, displacement, and loss of livelihoods. Yet, they are also powerful agents of change, leading peacebuilding efforts and driving humanitarian responses.</p> <p>For peace to be inclusive and lasting, women must have a seat at the table. Confronting gender-based violence and amplifying women's voices in conflict resolution are not optional—they are essential to building security and justice for all.</p> <p>Today, we come together to shine a light on the darkest corners of human suffering and to call for urgent action, justice, and equality for every woman and girl.</p>

1.45 – 2.00	Table discussions and reporting and Q&A
2:00 – 2:20	Grab a Cuppa Break
2:20 – 2:35	<p>Presenter: Raviana Sailo</p> <div data-bbox="359 434 686 766" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Raviana is Chair of Psylaw Incorporated and Strategic Programs & Partnerships Lead at the AusChin Foundation, driving initiatives that bridge cultures, generations, and languages. With over five years in grassroots organising and multicultural advocacy, she champions refugee voices, equitable justice, and culturally responsive systems for migrant communities. A proud advocate for the Mizoram and Chin-Myanmar diaspora and a legal professional, her work is rooted in connection, storytelling, and lasting systems change.</p> <p>Topic: A Peace of Mind</p> <p>Drawing inspiration from Psylaw’s partnership with a preschool in Myanmar, A Peace of Mind explores how meeting fundamental needs—like nutrition and education—builds inner peace and societal stability in hardship-stricken regions.</p> <p>As a refugee and Psylaw founder, Raviana knows that a wholesome, nutritious meal is more than sustenance; it’s a foundation for hope, learning, and well-being. In a turbulent world, what we “consume” physically and emotionally shapes our resilience. This initiative affirms that true peace begins with giving every child the tools to thrive, fostering both individual and collective strength for a more peaceful future.</p>
2:35 – 2:50	Table discussions and reporting and Q&A
2:50 – 3:00	Concluding remarks: Anne Bellavance – Women’s Federation for World Peace Australia President

Conference Organisers



Women's Federation for World Peace is an international NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. We adhere to the principle that women working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families can resolve the complex problems of our societies and world. www.wfwpaustralia.org



Universal Peace Federation is an NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. We support and promote the work of the United Nations and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Family Federation for World Peace and Unification is comprised of families from around the world striving to establish a world of peace and unity among all peoples, races and religions as envisioned by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon and to embody the ideal of true love, which is to live for the sake of others. FFWPU champions three ideals: family, peace, and unification.

Supporting Organisations



International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP) represents a new global interdisciplinary academic initiative aimed at contributing to the realization of a world of lasting peace by building a professional network for academicians to foster a world of peace based on the ideals of interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universal values.



The Center for Global Nonkilling

Imagine a world in which humans no longer kill each other. Is a nonkilling world possible? Amidst continued killing following the violent 20th century, the Center for Global Nonkilling arises out of new understanding that a killing-free world is possible. It is possible for humans to stop killing each other from homicide to genocide, terrorism and mass murder in war. A killing-free world is a measurable goal. The methods and means of realization are open to infinite human creativity.



The Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce & Industry (AACCI)

is the only national association for two-way trade and investment between Australia and the Arab League countries. AACCI is a member of the Union of Arab Chambers of and has fostered strong links with the Australian State and Federal governments since it began in 1975.



The Global Somali Diaspora (GSD)

is a global not-for-profit organization working to bring together and mobilize members of the Somali Diaspora for positive action. Global Somali Diaspora (GSD) is a global not-for-profit organization working to bring together and mobilize members of the Somali Diaspora for positive action.



Beit-Jala Palestinian Association

focuses on building networks and relationships with other community groups. The association knows most members of the association are suffering the consequences of the political instability in their town of origin, Beit Jala in Palestine. Therefore, it seeks to meet their needs and carry out the required support for them to achieve their full participation in Australia.



Australian Arabic Council

is an award-winning organisation in human rights committed to human rights and community relations issues affecting the Australian Arabic culture and profile.



The Institute of Tourism

represents voices for change fostering ethical tourism. The institute looks at how tourism affects the lives of local people and the environment aiming for sustainable tourism. The Institute is world leader in tourism conferences and research.



Care • Compassion • Commitment

Friends of The Children Foundation has come together to nurture our environment, to improve our children's health and to educate them on leading healthy lifestyle. The work includes assisting Children Hospitals to buy critical equipment, support refugee houses by providing food and essential items. The Foundation also cares for the poor and homeless.



The Cultural Angle" is a boutique consultancy founded by Dr. Birgit Trauer, focusing on travel, tourism, and cultural understanding. It aims to inspire enriching travel experiences while promoting sustainable practices and a culture of peace.



As an organisation, UMSLV works to bring unity and cooperation between all Muslims, and foster goodwill and better understanding between Muslims and the broader society.



The Multicultural Media Centre (AMMC) seeks to engage cross-cultural communities through media and social media platforms. We focus on enabling Australia's multicultural groups to tell their stories and engage the wider Australian society about things that matter to them.