

## Webinar

May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. EDT

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### Religious Soft Diplomacy and the UN – Dialogue with the Editors



#### Ticket options:

- \$10.00 – Suggested
- Free

#### Speakers

- Sherrie M. Steiner
- James Christie

### [Online Registration](#)

**Event Summary:** The engagement of religious diplomacy with the United Nations systems has become increasingly important for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The editors argue that effective religious diplomacy must reflect the great diversity of religious and spiritual expressions within human communities. Religious engagement in the United Nations systems has been understandably constrained by limited and formal organizational structures and conventions. The editors discuss how increased engagement with marginalized voices of religion or belief contributes to a more inclusive public discourse.

#### Bios

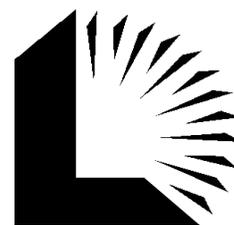
**Sherrie M. Steiner**, PhD, is assistant professor of sociology at Purdue University Fort Wayne. Dr. Steiner's research focus is on religious soft power, environmental sociology and improvement of public health. This research is conducted transnationally in relation to the G20 Interfaith Forum and at the community level through collaborative relationships with public not-for-profit organizations. Dr. Steiner teaches courses on religion, development, social movements, and the environment.

**James Christie**, The Rev. Prof. Dr. James Christie is an ordained minister of The United Church of Canada and Ambassador-at-Large of The Canadian Multifaith Federation. Professor Christie's career encompasses: Professor of Whole World Ecumenism and Dialogue Theology at The University of Winnipeg; Dean of Theology, University of Winnipeg; President of The Canadian Council of Churches; General Secretary of the 2010 G8 World Religious Leaders Summit; an executive member of the G8 and G20 Interfaith Fora; Chair, World Federalist Movement; Chair, Project Ploughshares; and former co-chair of The Group of 78. His most recent publication on Religious Diplomacy is *Religious Soft Power and The United Nations*, co-edited with Dr. Sherrie Steiner of Purdue University, to be released by Lexington N.Y., Spring, 2021.

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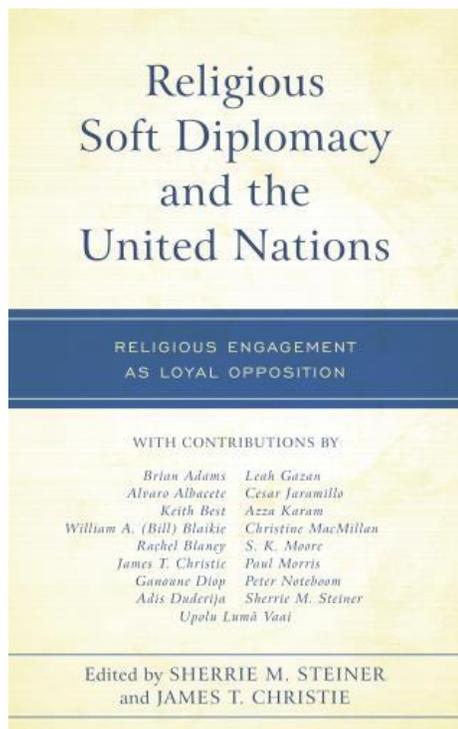
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“In this important and timely book, the editors and contributors set out persuasively why and how religion is an essential component of—and that it should be valued for—its past and present influence on our global polity, especially as a constructive challenge to the discharge of international politics. It is encapsulated in the concept of a loyal opposition, tracing its origins and emphasis on peace and unity, including religious freedom, applying fundamental truths, rights of women, and how these can be more integrated into the way in which increasingly we need to govern our world in transnational ways.”

— **Sandra Coyle, Executive Director, World Federalist Movement/Institute for Global Policy**

“When we say that North Americans are secular, we do not mean that they are not religious. The degree of religiosity is much higher here than in Europe, but there is no official state religion. This volume is much needed, and helps us to better understand both the political and the religious.”

— **Amir Hussain, Loyola Marymount University**

### ABOUT THIS BOOK

The engagement of religious diplomacy within the United Nations systems has become increasingly important for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The editors argue that effective religious diplomacy must reflect the great diversity of religious and spiritual expressions within human communities. The editors argue that this can best be achieved through a worldview shift within the United Nations systems. Religious engagement in the United Nations systems has been understandably constrained by limited and formal organizational structures and conventions. However, the existing patterns of engagement mitigate against the very goals they seek to achieve. The editors argue that expanded, yet measured, religious inclusion will strengthen social cohesion in the global community. Contributors demonstrate how communities become stronger when marginalized minority voices are included in public discourse. The editors further argue that governance has a responsibility to ensure a safe environment for this interaction. The editors propose that the United Nations adopt the posture of "loyal opposition", that is inherent in parliamentary democracies, to serve as a guideline for expanded religious engagement. The contributors advance this proposal with illustrations from multiple contexts that address a diverse array of social problems from perspectives rooted in theory and practice.

### ABOUT THE EDITORS

**Sherrie Steiner** is assistant professor of sociology at Purdue University Fort Wayne.

**James Christie** is ambassador-at-large for The Canadian Multifaith Federation.

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