



U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Hearing

Protecting Houses of Worship and Holy Sites

Panel I



Sam Brownback was sworn in as Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom on February 1, 2018. He served as Governor of Kansas from 2011 to 2018. Previously he served as a U.S. Senator (1996-2011) and a U.S. Representative in the House of Representatives (1995-1996) from Kansas. While a member of the Senate, he worked actively on the issue of religious freedom in multiple countries and was a key sponsor of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. He also served as Kansas Secretary of Agriculture (1986-1993) and was a White House Fellow in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (1990-1991).

Prior to his public service, Ambassador Brownback was a private attorney in Kansas and taught agricultural law at Kansas State University, co-authoring two books on the subject. He earned a B.S. from Kansas State University and a J.D. from the University of Kansas.

Panel II



H.E. Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos is the United Nations Under-Secretary-General holding the post of the High Representative of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) since January 2019.

Mr. Moratinos has committed his professional and political career to international relationships and development cooperation, notably as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain from 2004 to 2010. Between 1987 and 2004, he served as Deputy Director General for Northern Africa (1987-1991), Director of the Institute of Cooperation with the Arab World (1991-1993), Director General of Foreign Policy for Africa and the Middle East (1993-1996), Ambassador of Spain to Israel (1996), and the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process (1996-2003). As the top diplomat in Spain, he represented his country presiding over the UN Security Council in 2004, holding the chairmanships-in-office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe and the Council of the European Union. Mr. Moratinos succeeded in fostering the implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

During 2013-2018, Mr. Moratinos was the Honorary Chairman of the CIRSD Board of Advisers (Center for International Relations and Sustainable Development), Senior Advisor of Sustainable

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Development Solutions Network of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and member of the Leadership Council of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). Most recently on March 19, 2019, Mr. Moratinos was awarded with the “League of Arab States” Award by Mr. Ahmed Abulghait, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States in a ceremony in Madrid in recognition for his role in strengthening Arab-Spanish relations.

Panel III



Hassan Abbas is Distinguished Professor of International Relations at the Near East South Asia Strategic Studies Centre (NESA), National Defense University in Washington, DC. He serves as a senior advisor at Project on Shi'ism and Global Affairs at Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and a senior fellow at the Centre of Global Policy, a think tank focusing on intersection of U.S. foreign policy and Muslim geopolitics. His current research work focuses on building narratives for countering political and religious extremism & rule of law reforms in developing states.

Earlier, he served as professor and department chair at National Defense University's College of International Security Affairs (2011-2019) and as the Distinguished Quaid i Azam Professor at Columbia University (2009-2011). He held various fellowships including at Harvard Law School's Islamic Legal Studies Program & Program on Negotiation (2002-04); the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Harvard's Kennedy School of Government (2005-09); Asia Society in New York as Bernard Schwartz fellow (2009-2011); and as a Carnegie fellow at the New America Foundation (2016-2018). He has appeared on various television news shows as an analyst on security related issues in South Asia and the Middle East.



Sharon Rosen has served as Search for Common Ground's Global Director of Religious Engagement since 2017. In this role, she oversees the development and project implementation of Search's global religious engagement strategy. Sharon first joined Search in 2005 as Senior Advisor to the Jerusalem office and continued as the office's Co-Director for nine years before assuming her current role. Prior to Search, she co-founded and directed *Education for Life*, an international non-governmental organization that provides tools for the development and wellbeing of children within state educational systems. She was also a faculty member at the Jerusalem Center for Near East Studies teaching courses on Bible, gender, and contemporary relevance.

Sharon is an expert on designing and implementing interreligious programming that builds collaboration across religions and promotes peace. She is also an experienced facilitator in conflict resolution and strategic planning. In her time at Search, she co-created and leads the [Universal Code of Conduct on Holy Sites](#) initiative and has managed multiple projects on religion, development, health, and media. She was also senior editor of the Common Ground News Service – Middle East. Additionally, her chapter, “The Importance of Interfaith Cooperation for the Protection of Jerusalem's Holy Sites,” was published in *Sacred Space in Israel and Palestine* (Routledge 2012).

Originally from London, England, Sharon holds a B.A. and a Masters from Hebrew University, Jerusalem. She speaks English and Hebrew.