

The background of the page is composed of several large, overlapping, curved shapes in various shades of blue and teal. These shapes flow from the top left towards the bottom right, creating a sense of movement and fluidity. The colors range from a light, airy blue to a deeper, more saturated teal.

# **Event Report**

## **Water and Peace Innovation**

**March 23, 2023**

# Acknowledgments

Thank you to Anu and Naveen Jain for your most generous donation, leadership, and commitment to catalyzing innovative change and bringing health and wellbeing to all people as a foundation for peace.

To our founding partner, the University for Peace, and Rector Francisco Rojas and Vice-Rector Juan Carlos Sainz-Borgo: thank you for your incredible leadership in promoting and educating for peace. Thank you to Ambassador Narinder Kakar, for your unwavering dedication to this great movement for peace.

We wish to thank Ambassador Isabelle Picco, Counsellor Benjamin Valli, Rim Raslan & the entire team at the Permanent Mission of Monaco for your leadership, inclusivity and generosity in co-hosting and sponsoring this panel. Your vision and commitment to action on behalf of water and peace innovation are superlative. Thank you to Ambassador Maritza Chan & the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica for your support and excellence in co-sponsoring this panel, and to Ambassador Lachezara Stoeva and Mr. Nikhil Seth for your tireless efforts and pursuit of peace for people and planet.

Thank you to our moderator, Whitney, and each of our panelists, Emilie, Chris, Aleks, Erica, and Kristy: Your prowess and dedication to our planet and its people not only positively disrupts the conventional but pushes us towards practical, sustainable, and inclusive solutions. Thank you Laurice Rahme, for offering your ingenious creativity and support, and thank you to Bond No. 9, Fifty Shades Greener, and Dr. Munr Kazmir for your generous sponsorship.

## About the Peace Innovation Initiative

Founded as a 501(c)(3) in November 2021, the Peace Innovation Initiative is the new accelerator for peace practice: a team of pioneer bridge-builders committed to making peace a sustainable reality. Devoted to the mission of creating and enabling a global practice of peace, PII envisions a world where our global systems operate on a framework of sustainable peacebuilding. Driven by research and a commitment to harnessing the power of our individual and collective strengths, PII is building the bridge from peace potential to peace practice by developing programs that connect diverse minds and equip them with the knowledge and tools for peace. For more information, visit [innovatepeace.org](http://innovatepeace.org)



# Convening for a Global Movement

From March 22 - 24, the United Nations' Water Conference brought together global actors from around the world to "unite the world for water" as we reached the midterm of the Water Action Decade. Held during this "watershed moment," our panel session was co-hosted by the Permanent Mission of Monaco to the UN and the Peace Innovation Initiative (PII) and convened under one core tenet: any sustainable water action is only possible through an inclusive movement that connects leaders across diverse intelligences and



**The panel session was one of many cross-sector convenings hosted during the UN Water Conference and brought together local and global leaders at the Permanent Mission of Monaco.**

experiences to design and launch locally-informed and globally-minded solutions.

With the University for Peace as the Peace Innovation Initiative's founding educational and research partner, PII hosted a series of cross-sector convenings last year alongside the Global Center of Peace Innovation. Through the process, we collectively came to define this overarching movement and its underlying practices as "peace innovation."



# Exploring Peace Innovation for Water

## How do we unite local and global efforts for sustainable water action and who gets a seat at the table in the design, implementation and governance processes?

Peace innovation is not merely relevant to the peacebuilding and mediation sectors themselves, but rather serves as the means of effective implementation for any sector or industry seeking to activate positive disruption, measurable and sustainable impact, and the integration of peace constructs into project plans early on. Yet beyond its universal applicability, peace innovation is also contextually-specific. While it includes social practices utilized to enact change, the distinct (technological or methodological) tools we employ to create positive impact for water, water ecosystems, and sanitation are equally relevant, and their development requires industry-focused experts, corporate stakeholders, and multidisciplinary global thinkers.

With this framework and two years of crowd-sourced data collection as the basis for further discussion, our collaborative session on March 23rd was intentionally designed to “connect and equip” each person in the room with the knowledge and tools needed to launch or refine their own water-and-peace innovations. Discussing the data, social and technological resources, and cross-disciplinary partnerships already being implemented in various sectors and communities, the objective was to explore the barriers to sustainable water action and consider the role of locally-informed and global-minded innovation in “uniting the world for water.” Over the course of the discussion, participants and guests empowered one another to reconnect with our genetic capacity to build collaborative and sustainable solutions while collectively uncovering a number of specific



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elements needed to do so within the context of SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation).

Broadening the scope of who gets a seat at the table is at the heart of peace innovation. The session was therefore intentionally designed to prioritize the work of young leaders who play active roles in creating inclusive spaces for water governance and implementation. The panel session featured global cross-sector leaders from the United Nations and the private sector, and critically brought them into conversation with water-and-peace innovators, including: local and industry-specific peacebuilders, activists, and scholars working at the intersections of water, health, and peace.

### What does peace innovation include?

- Locally-rooted participation and partnerships
- Cross-sectoral incubation spaces
- Globally-minded peace education for blue and circular economies
- Data, technology and frameworks for peace

Opening Remarks were made by H.E. Ms. Isabelle Picco, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Monaco to the United Nations, and H.E. Ms. Maritza Chan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations. Keynote addresses followed, led by H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations and the President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and Mr. Nikhil Seth, Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). The session was followed by an in-depth discussion between panelists, moderated by journalist Whitney Bauck and including: Emilie McGlone, Chris Desai, Aleks Gosiewski, Kristy Drutman and Erica Asinas. Ms. Barbara Winston, the Founder & President of the Peace Innovation Initiative (PII) and the Commission for Peace, made closing remarks upon the conclusion of the panelists' discussion.



**Pictured left to right: H.E. Ms. Isabelle Picco, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Monaco to the UN, H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the UN and the President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Ms. Barbara Winston, Founder and President of the Peace Innovation Initiative, and H.E. Ms. Maritza Chan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN**

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Water is one of the most critical building blocks we have to begin building sustainable peace. A generative and connective element of life, it is more than a basic human need. Water is at the center of life itself.

- Barbara Winston

# Key Innovations for Clean Water and Sanitation

We're here now, the time is now... if we're to help the planet, we have to act now. And let's not forget that innovation looks different: we don't always need new technology. Sometimes we need to simply implement what's already working.

- Whitney Bauck



Throughout the panel session, it became clear that the barriers we face to sustainable water action do not involve a shortage of resources. We have the minds, knowledge and capacity to take action now. What is needed is the connectivity and investment of stakeholders across generations, geographies and industries- all of whom can help bridge the divide between policy promises and real solutions. In this sense, the work required to “unite the world for water” is that of peace innovation: effectively channeling the power of positive disruption and the opportunity that diverse thought, experience and on-the-ground action provides to reinvigorate our global systems for sustainable impact.

Panelists and speakers illuminated a number of peace innovations currently being used for water and sanitation efforts. Global education and incubators about and for clean water, peace and sustainability were referenced, including Peace Boat's Youth Scholarships and Ambassador Programs and the Peace Innovation Initiative's joint fellowship with the University for Peace: the DNA of Peace Fellowship Program. Emilie McGlone spoke to the value of these programs, which provide up-and-coming peace innovators with the opportunity and space to learn together while operating across differences.

Sustainable economic opportunities rooted in environmental trust and care are equally important, and Keel Labs' work to harvest textiles from the ocean and test and monitor to ensure sustainable resourcing is a central example of efforts to “do well while doing good”. UOCEAN 2050's community-based cooperative programs in multinational jurisdictions are also creating measurable impacts,



**Pictured left to right: Moderator Whitney Bauck and panelists Emilie McGlone, Kristy Drutman, Erica Asinas and Aleks Gosiewski**

job opportunities, and blue capital economic value for our oceans through their community-based circular economy programs. Their efforts are driving a bottom-up movement amongst people of all demographics to clean-up and recycle ocean plastics, engage youth, and connect with other communities and industries committed to similar or complementary efforts worldwide.

Digital engagement can also play a critical role in water-and-peace innovation. Brown Girl Green is providing collaborative digital content capable of linking local and global sustainability efforts more effectively while supporting better communication between generations, whereas the Green Jobs Board focuses on increasing inclusivity in the sustainability sector.

Cross-sector policy-based discussions and action that bring together local and global leaders to implement solutions more effectively may be a tool that interlinks all other other peace innovations. Urban Ocean Lab, for example, is working to develop an ocean justice platform capable of translating policies into local action, and the panel session itself served as a peace innovation, bringing together stakeholders across sectors to incubate and accelerate action for water and peace.

Panelists and speakers illuminated a number of peace innovations currently being used for water and sanitation efforts, including:

## Global Education

and incubators about and for clean water, peace, and sustainability

## Economic Opportunities

and sustainable value for our oceans, rooted in environmental trust and care

## Digital Engagement

## Policy-Based Dialogue

and action that bring together cross-sector local and global leaders to implement more effectively

## Whitney Bauck



Whitney Bauck is a freelance climate and environment reporter who contributes to the New York Times, Washington Post, Financial Times, Bloomberg, Slate, Grist, MIT Tech Review, Fast Company and more. She's currently a climate solutions fellow at Solutions Journalism Network and was formerly an environmental reporting fellow at the Metcalf Institute. Whitney grew up in Manila, Philippines and is currently based in Brooklyn, New York. For more information on Whitney's work, follow her on Instagram, [@unwrinkling](#)



## Emilie McGlone

Emilie is the United Nations liaison and Director of the New York-based office of Peace Boat US, a non-profit organization working to promote peace, sustainable development and respect for the environment through educational programs organized onboard the Peace Boat, a chartered passenger ship that travels the world on peace voyages. Emilie works to foster youth education and develops specific programs to learn about important global issues onboard the Peace Boat. For more information on Emilie's work, please visit: [peaceboat-us.org](#)



## Chris Desai

Chris is a world renowned philanthropist who has made considerable contributions to the benefit and protection of planet Earth through his organic luxury fashion brand Vayyu and his charity The Vayyu Foundation. He launched two global environmental projects: UOCEAN 2050, created to stop ocean plastic pollution, and UEARTH 2050, which replants forests. Chris brings together diverse voices and perspectives to tackle these global challenges while forging a circular economy. For more information on Chris' work, please visit: [uoclean.org](#)



## Aleks Gosiewski

A fashion designer turned entrepreneur, Aleks is focused on green solutions to fight climate change. She is the Co-Founder & COO of Keel Labs and drives the development of business and R&D operations to scale the production of Kelsun, the company's flagship product. She is a Forbes 30 Under 30 member, a testament to her unique and pioneering perspective on the intersection of science and design. For more information on Aleks' work, please visit: [keellabs.com](#)

## Kristy Drutman



Kristy, also known as "Browngirl Green," is a speaker, consultant, media producer, and environmental educator who is passionate about working at the intersections between media, diversity, and environmentalism. She is the Co-Founder of the Green Jobs Board, a climate tech start-up bridging the equity and inclusion gap within the green economy through conversations, resources, and pathways to bring more diverse talent into the environmental field. For more information on Kristy's work, please visit: [browngirlgreen.com](#)



## Erica Asinas

Passionate about strengthening the science-policy interface to advance equitable climate resilience for historically underserved communities, Erica serves as Policy Advisor for Urban Ocean Lab. She is currently an author for the United States' 5th National Climate Assessment and formerly worked as a research scientist at the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group, where she facilitated collaborative, equity-focused adaptation planning processes with governments, tribes and historically marginalized communities. For more information on Erica's work, please visit: [urbanoceanlab.org](#)

# Water and Peace Innovators ... and our panelists



# Overcoming Barriers to Inclusive Water Governance

The importance of taking immediate action to more effectively channel resources for water and sanitation efforts was underscored in the discussion by current local and global realities that have resulted from not doing so:

The burden of clean water and sanitation falls heavily on women and girls, who globally spend roughly 200 million hours a day fetching water. These efforts keep them out of school and jobs to which they could essentially contribute, drive continued gender violence and inequity, and inhibit innovative solutions capable of supporting sustainable development globally (Ambassador Lachezara Stoeva).

Multigenerational frustrations continue, with younger generations disenchanted by promises that fail to drive action (Ambassador Isabelle Picco and Kristy Drutman).

Without local and industry-specific representation, education and benefits, high-level policy change faces severe implementation barriers, struggling to “make its way into the local communities that can take action” and perpetuating structural inequities (Erica Asinas).

Redoubling innovative efforts and exploring ways to implement more effectively was emphasized as critical to overcoming these and other barriers to inclusive water governance, propelling solutions to other intersectional challenges like gender and race-based inequality and violence, and promoting progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Open access to data and accountability in data-sharing practices was also named as central to these efforts. The development of programs that incubate and accelerate water-and-peace innovation through education and public engagement was highlighted throughout the session.



**Mr. Nikhil Seth, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of UNITAR**



Promises aren't enough.  
We need action. If we want a future with water,  
then we must act now, and it must be collectively.

- Nikhil Seth

# Concluding Remarks from Barbara Winston

The panel discussion and the many conversations preceding it are critical reminders of the interconnected nature of human and planetary wellbeing. The power of collective brilliance drew my team at the Peace Innovation Initiative to partner with the University for Peace in launching our DNA of Peace Fellowship Program at the Global Center of Peace Innovation, starting with the Anu and Naveen Jain endowed health-and-peace innovation fellows. Using data-driven research to uncover the building blocks necessary for peace innovation, fellows will incubate and launch their own peace innovations, partnering with other positive disruptors across industries to propel transformational change.

We hope you will join us in sponsoring the PII global fundraising campaign for water-and-peace innovation. As we broaden the scope of who gets a seat at the table and expand our fellowship to include fellows who can represent, research and innovate for peace in every sector and industry, including water and sanitation, please consider sponsoring a fellow in their groundbreaking work to uncover the building blocks of peace. We invite you to partner with us to provide mentorship, technology access or data to help fellows launch their own innovations for our planet and its people.

Most importantly: join us as we expand this tremendous momentum and movement into the world, wherever we may work and whatever we might do, starting today.

With best regards,  
Barbara Winston



**Ms. Barbara Winston, President and Founder of the  
Peace Innovation Initiative**



**Are you bold  
enough to  
practice  
peace?**



**JOIN US!**

If you're interested in learning more or becoming further involved, please visit [www.innovatepeace.org](http://www.innovatepeace.org) or write to [contact@innovatepeace.com](mailto:contact@innovatepeace.com)



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