

## **The Peace Innovation Initiative accelerates sustainable solutions for locally-informed and global-minded water action New York, NY, March 2023**

The UN Water Conference provided a unique opportunity to connect local and global actors and diverse industries from around the world as we “unite for water.” Alongside the conference, the Peace Innovation Initiative (PII), in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Monaco to the United Nations, the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations, and the Permanent Observer Mission of the University for Peace (UPEACE) presented their panel session, Water and Peace Innovation: Uniting Local and Global Efforts for Sustainable Development.

With the recognition that all stakeholders must convene under a shared commitment to inclusivity, action, and cross-sectoral partnership, the panel session invited global cross-sector leaders from the United Nations and the private sector into conversation with local peacebuilders, activists, and scholars working within intersections of water, health, and peace in order to accelerate the development of sustainable solutions. Held at the Permanent Mission of Monaco to the United Nations in New York, and sponsored by Bond No. 9 New York, speakers and panelists discussed data, social and technological resources, and cross-disciplinary partnerships already being used in various sectors and local communities to make progress towards SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation).

Introductory remarks were given by co-host, H.E. Ms. Isabelle Picco, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Monaco to the United Nations and H.E. Ms. Maritza Chan, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations. Keynote speakers included H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations and President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as well as Mr. Nikhil Seth, Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training & Research (UNITAR).

The panel session proceeded, led by Journalist & Climate Solutions Fellow, Whitney Bauck and was comprised of Emilie McGlone, Director of Peace Boat US, Chris Desai, Founder & CEO of UOCEAN 2050 and the Vayuu Foundation, Aleks Gosiewski, Co-Founder & COO of Keel Labs, as well as Kristy Drutman, Founder of Brown Girl Green & Co-Founder of the Green Job Board, and Erica Asinas, Policy Advisor with the Urban Ocean Lab.

Interactive discussion with audience members then began, focusing on topics such as healthy water governance and effective utilization of ocean and water resources to counter historically exploitative practices. Additionally, conversation explored the creation of a better foundation upon which we might observe added value for our oceans, and how local solutions for global water issues could be elevated to amplify diverse voices, bridge agendas, and integrate multigenerational efforts.

Concluding remarks were provided by PII President & Founder, Ms. Barbara Winston, stating “in this ‘watershed moment’ of the UN Water Conference we believe that sharing space reconnects us with our genetic capacity to discover unity amongst our differences... when we get curious together, we have the power to change the trajectory of humanity and our relationship with the planet.” Peace innovation is a reminder that when we connect with diverse minds and are equipped with the knowledge and skills of peace, each of our brilliant individual ideas and actions can then become a building block upon which the entire DNA of Peace is constructed.

Lastly, Ms. Winston announced the start of the Peace Innovation Initiative's global fundraising campaign, an expansion of their [DNA of Peace Fellowship Program](#), designed with their founding partner, the University for Peace (UPEACE), and housed at the Global Center of Peace Innovation. Using data-driven research to uncover the building blocks necessary for peace innovation, fellows will incubate and launch that of their own, partnering with other positive disruptors across industries to propel transformational change.

To broaden the scope of who gets a seat at the table and expand the [Fellowship Program](#) to include fellows who can represent and innovate for peace in every sector and industry, the Peace Innovation Initiative urges readers to consider partnering with them to provide mentorship, technology access, or data that will help fellows launch their own innovations for our planet and its people.

### **About The Peace Innovation Initiative**

Founded as a 501(c)(3) in November 2021, the Peace Innovation Initiative is a team of pioneers - bridge-builders committed to making peace a sustainable reality. Dedicated to the creation and implementation of a global practice of peace, PII believes in the power of positive disruption and that conflict can trigger the reaction to sustainable peace practice. PII builds the bridge from peace potential to practice by developing programs that connect innovative minds. For more information, visit [www.innovatepeace.org](http://www.innovatepeace.org)

### **About The University For Peace**

Created by the UN General Assembly in 1955, the University for Peace is an educational arm of the United Nations with its own Permanent Observer Mission. Training leaders for peace for the past four decades, it is a unique global academic institution with over 2,000 Alumni from over 120 countries. Through its Master's and Doctoral degree programs, UPEACE assists future leaders to explore and implement peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies and practices to address threats to human and global wellbeing. The UPEACE experience is uniquely empowering, transformative and cultivates critical thinking in its students. For more information, visit [www.upeace.org](http://www.upeace.org)

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