



# Civilizations Exchange & Cooperation Foundation



## **Better Understanding for a Better World** **2019 BUBW International Conference – Uganda** Leadership, Intercultural and Interfaith Conference in Kampala - Uganda

Faith Leaders, Youth & Women for Development,  
Cooperation and Radicalization Prevention in East Africa

**March 12-16, 2019**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**

Civilizations Exchange and Cooperation Foundation (CECF) held the BUBW conference in Kampala, Uganda from March 13-16, 2019, where religious leaders and young leaders alike were engaged in discussion on religion, culture, caring for humanity, international diversity, discrimination, radicalism and extremism, and women's empowerment. We also engaged in a "Pre-Conference Discussion" with Top Religious Leaders of Uganda on March 12, 2019.

### BACKGROUND – KAMPALA, UGANDA

Better Understanding for a Better World (BUBW) was launched in 2006 to give American high school students and international exchange students of diverse cultural backgrounds and various faith traditions the opportunity to meet and learn from one another. The most pressing issue our youth face today is how they view the "other", people who are different from them. Through 1) Diversity & Multi-Cultural Competency Training, 2) Leadership Development, 3) Conflict Resolution & Peacebuilding Workshops and 4) Interfaith Experiences, BUBW aims to breakdown the stereotypes and the barriers that lead to fear and hate of the "other".

Despite a surge in the use of social media, people still lack the face-to-face dialogue needed to foster understanding, respect, compassion and cooperation amongst the various nations and communities of our ever so intricate world.

The 33 BUBW Conferences in the USA, which were attended by students from 68 countries, have been full of incredibly rich discussions, which removed many misconceptions participants had of one another through education and personal interactions. The positive impact sent a ripple effect that has made CECF feel compelled to bring these conferences to university students and young professionals around the world. To hear from some of our participants, please visit: <http://vimeo.com/68963013>. **It is with great enthusiasm that we invite our fellow global stewards to attend the first-ever BUBW in Kampala, Uganda!**

### VISION

A world of multicultural and interreligious understanding and cooperation

### MISSION

To provide multicultural, youth-oriented leadership and interfaith programs for life transforming opportunities

### GOALS

- Emphasize worldwide citizenship and cultural competency development
- Focus on leadership development and being ambassadors of good will, reconciliation and justice
- Become familiar with conflict resolution approaches and peacebuilding strategies
- Encourage civic engagement among program participants

### CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

- To facilitate dialogue that fosters mutual understanding and cooperation between participants from diverse economic, social, religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- To expose participants to the beauty of diverse faith practices in a pluralistic world with emphasis on respect, common values and our shared humanity
- To discuss the dangers and solutions for discrimination, radicalism, ethnic nationalism and religious extremism, which have historically been recipes for war and conflict for many civilizations
- To introduce various aspects of leadership including those central to entrepreneurship, innovation and social business
- To cultivate ties of friendship and encourage future leaders of tomorrow to foster and seek out a better world and a better future for all





Tuesday, March 12

## CONVERSATION WITH TOP RELIGIOUS LEADERS



### ATTENDEES

- Msgr. Dr. Lawrence Ssemusu  
(Brazilian Catholic Apostolic Church)
- Sheikh Abdallah Semambo  
(Uganda Muslim Supreme Council)
- The Rev. Canon William Ongeng  
(Anglican Church)
- Pr. Dr. John B. D. Kakembo  
(Seventh-Day Adventist Church)
- Sheikh Muhammad Ali Waiswa  
(Uganda Muslim Supreme Council)
- Apostle Charles Tumwine  
(Born Again Faith)
- Bishop Mark Wamala  
(Roman Catholic Church)
- Bishop Herbert Buyondo  
(Born Again Faith)
- Pr. Kamiza John  
(Seventh-Day Adventist Church)
- Joshua Kitakule  
(Inter-Religious Council of Uganda)
- Nalwoga Jessica  
(Inter-Religious Council of Uganda)
- Phil Dimon  
(U.S. Embassy Kampala)
- Shamilla Kara  
(U.S. Embassy Kampala)

On March 12<sup>th</sup>, specially selected religious leaders gathered at the Pearl of Africa Hotel before the BUBW conference to discuss **“Challenges & Opportunities for Interfaith Relations; Locally, Regionally & Globally”**. The goal was to further develop Interfaith relations by discussing:

- 1) Interfaith, Diversity & Pluralism
- 2) Youth Leadership & Global Cooperation
- 3) International Women’s Leadership Development Programs
- 4) Countering Radicalization & Violent Extremism
- 5) Interfaith Dialogue Vs. Inter-Spiritual Dialogue
  - a. The Sultan & The Saint

**Imam Mohamad Bashir Arafat**, Founder of CECF, thanked the U.S. Embassy in Uganda for supporting such an important and unique conference that gives the opportunity to top religious leaders to go beyond scratching the surface of an interfaith discussion. During the 30 years of experience conducting interfaith discussions and activities in the U.S. and around the world, he found out that not all of the Islamic or Christian seminaries prepare their graduating religious leaders to work with the *“Other.”* The ability to transcend theological differences to theological similarities is what is needed today.

Top leaders of Uganda were also challenged to take the lead in East Africa by realizing the importance and need for inter-spiritual dialogue and an even deeper training as a primer for them to share with their parishioners.

**Imam Arafat** shared the importance of interweaving public diplomacy and religion, speaking the language of culture first, then theology. Once people realize how theology is shaped by culture, they are more open to hearing about each other's religions.

We need to separate the ideas of theology and values. Varying theologies are not nearly as important as seeing the similarities in our values. We need to show the world this message of unity between religions.

**Mr. Robert Stucky**, CECF staff and Al Basheer Interfaith faculty member shared about paradigms and how important it is for us to be able to see what is really there, instead of seeing what we want to see. *"We are all capable, even though it is hard. When we want a paradigm shift we do not have to all agree with our point of view first. We hope that when we all begin working together, it makes a quantum leap for the betterment of humanity."*

**Mr. Joshua Kitakule**, Secretary General for Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU), spoke about the history of Uganda and it's wars because of religion. *"But, we have to come to our senses."* He spoke of the realization of IRCU and its goal to bring different religions together and get to know one another as friends.

Other religious leaders commented that even within his own family where different religions are represented, he struggles with how to relate, *"What do I have to share?"*

**Sheikh Muhammad Ali Waiswa** reiterated that it's very important that we do not see ourselves as competing with one another, because in doing so and by discriminating, we are destroying our own values.

We need to separate the ideas of theology and values. Varying theologies are not nearly as important as seeing the similarities in our values. We need to show the world this message of unity between religions.

Many of the leaders felt very encouraged by the openness of this day's conversation and expressed the need and interest to continue this on a deeper level in Uganda with the idea of in-depth interfaith clergy training.





## RESULTS

The meeting was a success. While conversation began on a more reticent note, by the end of the meeting, the atmosphere and dialogue were very warm and engaging.

**The Rev. Canon William Ongeng** from the Anglican Church commented: *“This is a new concept for us here and we must accept to apply it. Can you (CECF faculty) return and teach these courses?”*

**Mr. Kitakule** from the IRCU supported the idea and suggested: *“We can have your visits alternate between various universities and seminaries in Uganda.”*

**Sheikh Abdallah Semambo**, Deputy Mufti raised his hand and said: *“Consider me from now the first student to register!”*



**Wednesday, March 13**

## YOUTH RELIGIOUS LEADERS TRAINING



The second day we met with the younger generation of religious leaders, who come from a wide range of personal experience. These leaders displayed an enormous amount of diversity of religious and social background and an inherent openness to multi-culturalism, which was less visible in the older generation the day before.

U.S. Embassy Spokesperson **Mr. Phil Dimon** in opening remarks said, “I’m delighted to see these young religious leaders who I feel are the “change-makers” for the future of Uganda. I’m also happy to see women here because it’s so important to have women represented in this Better Understanding for a Better World conference.”

The Youth Religious Leaders (YRLs) were quick to dive into discussion, all recognizing the importance of interfaith unity. **Ms. Jessica Nalwoga**, Inter-Religious Council of Uganda: *“I was encouraged yesterday with the top religious leaders saying we need to learn more about each other across religions, not to convert. We need to take this message back to the institutions where we came from. It’s not automatic and easy. It takes work and it takes time to change a society. We need to understand why we must work together and cooperate so that we can answer the questions from our community.”*

**Ms. Esther Waiswa**, National Youth Director of Seventh Day Adventist Uganda Union: *“We really need this in the modern world. This is where we live, there are differences. There are different cultures, different religions – so many different types of people. We need to eliminate the element of the inferiority complex.”*

These youth religious leaders seemed eager to participate in future and ongoing efforts by CECF and BUBW. They pointed out that Uganda has the youngest population in Africa- 77% are under the age of 35 and recognized that tech-savvy young people are eager to make their country work better. They are committed to helping find ways to break down barriers and get people working more cooperatively for the common good.



## RESULTS

The Youth Religious Leaders (YRLs) were ready to interact with the other participants. The difference between them and the more senior Top Religious Leaders (TRLs) was striking. The YRLs were immediately able to see the importance of the BUBW conference all over Africa as a tool to counter radicalization through interaction. One of them commented, *“differences among tribes can easily be used to prompt violence”*. All of the YRLs patiently attended the entire conference and have continued to remain in contact with CECF. Their presence during the next three days was very important for the success of the conference and to keep the momentum going by guiding the youth and confirming the lessons and topics discussed. As anticipated, they enriched the conference with their ideas and experience. Plans for follow-up activities began once the conference came to a conclusion.





Thursday, March 14

## CONFERENCE DAY AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

### APPRECIATING DIVERSITY, CULTURAL AWARENESS & THE HUMANITY WITHIN US ALL

On Thursday, over 150 sponsored participants ranging from 18-35 years of age and from eight African countries (Uganda, South Sudan, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria and Eritrea) gathered for a full day of guest speakers, discussions and interactive sessions. This important day allowed the participants to discuss the need for better understanding across cultural and religious divides while also providing the opportunity for them to reflect on and talk about solutions and ways they can make positive and lasting changes in the communities.

The day began with welcome remarks and a gracious acknowledgement of Makerere University, who previously signed an MoU with CECF for hosting the BUBW conference day. Each of the following MU officials were recognized:



- 1) **Dr. Hajji Katende Abdu**, Chair of the School of Liberal and Performing Arts
- 2) **Dr. Patrick Mangeni**, Associate Professor of Applied Theatre and Dean of the School of Liberal and Performing Arts
- 3) **Professor Barnabas Nawangwe**, Vice Chancellor, Makerere University

The U.S. Embassy was also thanked for sponsoring the conference. Both **Mr. Ron Hawkins**, Public Affairs Officer (PAO) and **Ms. Shamilla Kara** were in attendance.

After the Anthem of Makerere University, the National Anthem of Uganda and the United States' National Anthem, **Dr. Mangeni** gave the initial welcome and introduction of **Dr. Eria Hisali**, Principal of the College of Business and Management, who welcomed everyone as the Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor, who also gave welcome remarks.

**Mr. Hawkins** shared his thoughts, welcomed the BUBW participants, and expressed the U.S. Embassy's pleasure to sponsor the conference and supports its goals.

**Imam Arafat** spoke about the *"Inspiration for Developing the BUBW Conference in 2005"* and *"His Experience in the U.S. and Around the World"*. He considers ignorance of the "Other" and judging others from a far as contributing factors for conflicts and wars around the world.





**MacKenzie Bills**, East Africa Programs Officer for CECF, gave a pointed and practical presentation on ***“Civic Engagement and How to Continue Deepening Our Knowledge”***. Advice was offered to empower participants to use their civic action and voice to be active in their communities.

**Mr. Stucky** spoke about ***“Changing Our Paradigms and Thinking Outside the Box”***. Paradigms can change or limit our perceptions, but they can be flipped and in doing so we can change ourselves and our communities.

Participants enjoyed a delicious, catered lunch after listening to various presentations and engaging in dialogue.







After lunch the focus shifted to discuss **“Youth Leadership, Locally and Globally”** and **Imam Arafat** presented the concept of youth participation in their communities and beyond. This often shows itself in volunteerism and creating new initiatives as young leaders see a need.

The following four sponsored BUBW International – Uganda participants presented about their experiences and ongoing organizational leadership:

- **Mr. Bright Peter** - **“Volunteerism and Civil Society”**

- **Ms. Jamila Mayanja** - **“Smart Girls Foundation Uganda: Supporting and Empowering Girls”**

- **Mr. Mukasa Christopher** - **“Tokens of Life Uganda: Helping Those in Need”**

- **Ms. Zaituni Kakyama** - **“Uganda Muslim Women Civilization Initiative: Empowering Women Economically Through Skills, Development and Financial Literacy”**



The spirit of service was clearly motivating to all in the cheers and praise for each after their presentations.

Many additional participants came forward and shared their own feelings about these initiatives and their own current efforts as well as plans for future opportunities to serve and lead in their own communities.





## Breakout Sessions

As the discussion about mobilizing for change continued, participants were divided into groups of 10-20 to discuss three questions which were then shared with everyone:

- What are the main obstacles in front of our generation to make a change locally and globally?
- What do you think the BUBW Alumni could / should do to get the conference message to people around the world?
- How do you think you can help?



Conversation was lively and engaging and the consensus among all groups was that despite the challenges and obstacles, there are many ways that Alumni can share the message of BUBW. The energy and conviction when participants shared what had been discussed in their groups was truly inspiring.





Throughout the day, opportunity was given for participants to share their thoughts on the topics shared. There were always more hands in the air of individuals ready to share their views on diversity and the need for unity than there was time to allow for all to speak. It was apparent that these young leaders all saw the need for change and were very eager to share.

### Cultural Performances

The last segment of the day was some cultural performances offered by the participants themselves. It represented Poetry, Dance and songs of local tribal anthems. As the day ended, it was so evident that Tribal Diversity in the conference hall was so much appreciated and celebrated.



### CECF Private Dinner at IUEA



Speakers and other guests were invited to CECF catered dinner at the International University of East Africa (IUEA). Invitations were sent to Makerere University Administration, U.S. Embassy staff and CECF Faculty.





Friday, March 15

## INTERFAITH ENCOUNTERS: VISITING HOUSES OF WORSHIP

### VISITING THE HINDU TEMPLE

The fourth day was our Interfaith Day - a highlight for virtually all of the attendees. The first visit was to **BAPS Temple – Nakivubo** and was for the majority, their first experience of **Hinduism**. The temple staff received everyone warmly and offered a video presentation of the work they are doing in the community and a historical background of their temple and its traditions. The visit was a positive experience for all and there were many engaging questions asked thoughtfully and answered respectfully after the presentation.



### CORE BELIEFS IN HINDUISM:

1. Truth is Eternal. *(Hindus pursue knowledge and understanding of the Truth: the very essence of the universe and the only Reality).*
2. Although Hindus believe in One God (Brahman), the Hindu faith has many different god's that represent Brahman's different forms.
3. Vedas are the ultimate authority. *(Vedas are Hindu scriptures that contain revelations received by ancient saints and sages. Hindus believe that the Vedas are without beginning and without end; when everything else in the universe is destroyed (at the end of a cycle of time), the Vedas remain).*
4. Everyone should strive to achieve Dharma. *(Understanding the concept of dharma helps you understand the Hindu faith. Unfortunately, no single English word adequately covers its meaning. Dharma can be described as right conduct, righteousness, moral law, and duty. Anyone who makes dharma central to one's life strives to do the right thing, according to one's duty and abilities, at all times).*



### VISITING THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The second visit was to the **Roman Catholic, Lubaga Cathedral**. The participants were quite interested in asking questions of the priest about the rituals and practices within **Catholicism**. Many questions were raised and hands continued to be raised as new questions came up. The curiosity and desire to understand each different faith was obvious. Many Muslim participants mentioned how rich the experience was, especially since this was the first time for them to enter a church.





## CORE BELIEFS IN ROMAN CATHOLICISM:

1. Roman Catholics believe in One God. *(They profess that there is one living and true God, Creator and Lord of heaven and earth, omnipotent, eternal, immense, incomprehensible, infinite in intellect and will and in all perfection Who, being One, singular, absolutely simple and unchangeable spiritual substance, is to be regarded as distinct really and in essence from the world most blessed in and from Himself, and unspeakably elevated above all things that exist, or can be conceived, except Himself.)*
2. Roman Catholics believe that Jesus Christ is the "Second Person" of the Trinity, God the Son. *(In an event known as the Incarnation, through the power of the Holy Spirit, God became united with human nature through the conception of Christ in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary.)*
3. The Bible is the inspired, error-free, and revealed word of God.
4. According to the Catechism *(a summary of the principles of Christian religion in the form of questions and answers, used for the instruction of Christians)*, Christ instituted seven sacraments and entrusted them to the Church.

These are:

- a. **Baptism** *(The rite of becoming a Christian, is necessary for salvation — whether the Baptism occurs by water, blood, or desire).*
- b. **Confirmation (Chrismation)** *(The supernatural equivalent of the growth process on the natural level. It builds on what was begun in Baptism and what was nourished in Holy Eucharist. It completes the process of initiation into the Christian community, and it matures the soul for the work ahead).*
- c. **Eucharist** *(A Christian ceremony commemorating the Last Supper, during which the bread and wine are consecrated (declared to be or represent the body and blood of Christ) and consumed).*
- d. **Penance** *(A confession of all serious sins committed after Baptism)*
- e. **Anointing of the Sick** *(A priest or bishop will place his hands on a person's head and say: "Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in His love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. It is generally administered to a Catholic "who, having reached the age of reason, begins to be in danger due to sickness or old age", except in the case of those who "persevere obstinately in manifest grave sin").*
- f. **Holy Orders** *(It is a sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time. For example, In the last year of seminary training, a man will be ordained to the "transitional diaconate.")*
- g. **Matrimony** *(covenant/mutual agreement by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring").*

## VISITING THE MOSQUE

The last visit was a trip to the **Uganda National Mosque at Old Kampala**.

As we arrived, Muslim participants prepared for Friday (Jumu'ah) prayers. Everyone was warmly guided to our respective areas to either observe or pray.

Many of the female participants expressed that they felt welcomed and excited to learn from this new experience. For many of the participants, it was their first time in a mosque. One of the Young Religious Leaders shared that she left work specifically so she could join for the prayer service because she wanted to learn about **Islam**, as well as experience the visit to a mosque.





After Jumu'ah and lunch, **Sheikh Muhammad Ali Waiswa** conducted the presentation on the tenants of Islam, followed by the question and answer session. As with the previous places of worship, there were many hands in the air and an abundance of questions asked seeking a better understanding of all three religions. The participants were also eager to tour the masjid.



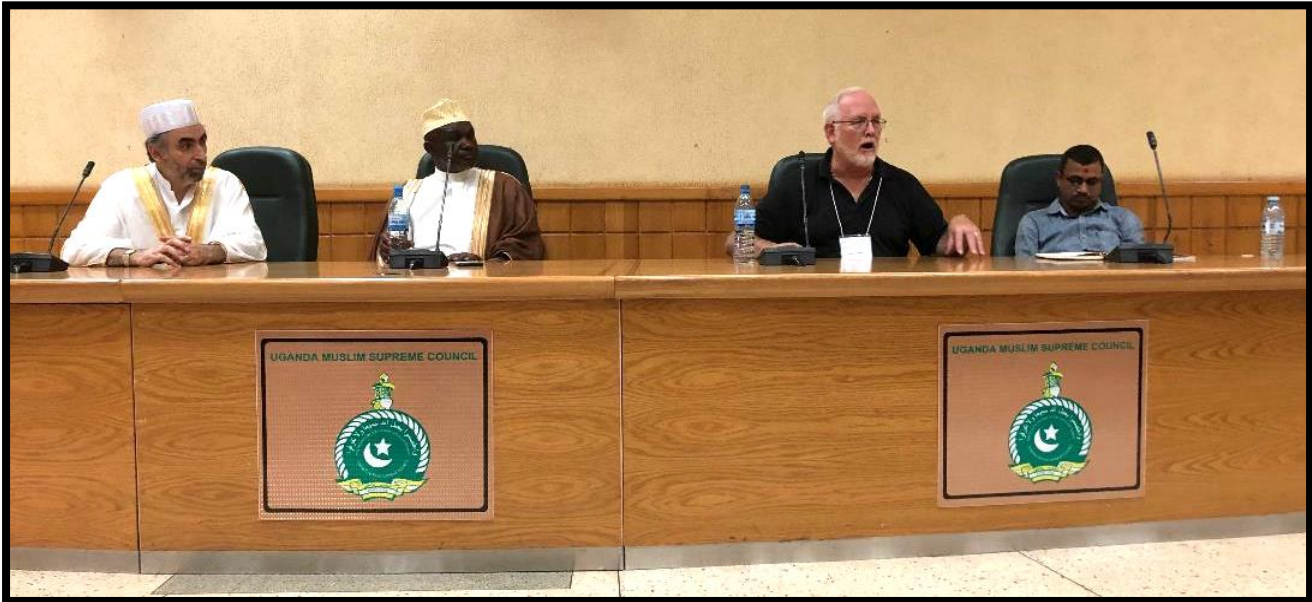
#### CORE BELIEFS IN ISLAM:

1. The 7 articles of faith in Islam are:
  - **Belief in the Oneness of God**
  - **Belief in the Angels of God**
  - **Belief in the Revelations (Books) of God**
  - **Belief in the Prophets of God**
  - **Belief in the Day of Judgment**
  - **Belief in Divine Destiny / Predestination / Fate (Qadar)**
  - **Belief in Resurrection After Death**
  
2. The 5 pillars of faith in Islam are:
  - **Shahada** (*confession of faith*)
  - **Salat** (*prayer*)
  - **Zakat** (*almsgiving*)
  - **Sawm** (*fasting, especially during the month of Ramadan*)
  - **Hajj** (*the pilgrimage to Mecca*)

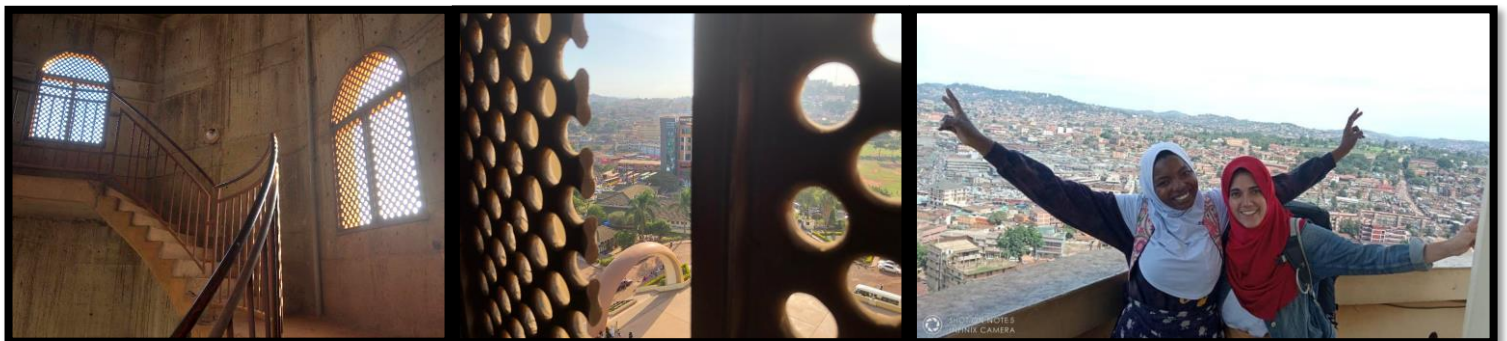


## Interfaith Panel Discussion

The day concluded with an interfaith panel which included clergy from all three faiths: **Hinduism, Christianity and Islam**. Many of the students reflected on their values. Some participants shared that they noticed there were similar values, beliefs and prayer rituals across all three religions. There were conversations on how this type of interfaith dialogue could be brought to different tribes across Uganda.



After the program was over, many participants enjoyed a trip up many stairs to the top of the mosque where they saw an incredible view of Kampala. While doing so, conversations were had and it was noted they purposely wanted to talk with people they just met from different religious backgrounds. Many of these relationships have the potential to be ongoing among Alumni as they continue to work together after the conference to share the message of the BUBW.





Saturday, March 16

## UGANDA WILDLIFE EDUCATION CENTER – ENTEBBE ZOO & LAKE VICTORIA

### REACHING BEYOND: NETWORKING AND MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Saturday the first half of the Day was a journey to **Uganda Wildlife Education Center – Entebbe Zoo** and a picnic on the shores of **Lake Victoria**. A guided tour of the entire grounds seeing all of the wildlife was very informative. Then it was time for dancing and splashing around on the lake shore, playing football and volleyball, taking pictures and selfies, and just relaxing and enjoying one another's company before lunch. It was refreshing and a lot of fun for everyone. This was a valuable opportunity for people to get to know each other better as well as a chance for networking and planning for future collaboration.





## Banquet & Closing Ceremony



Saturday early evening was the conclusion of the conference with the Interfaith banquet and closing program at Pearl of Africa Hotel.

The event was well attended. The program of the night was diverse and packed. It started with an invocation by a representative of the office of the Inter-religious Council of Uganda.

**Dr. Patrick Mangeni**, Associate Professor of Applied Theatre and Dean of the School of Liberal and Performing Arts shared his reflections on behalf of Makerere University.

The *Inter-Religious Council of Uganda* speech was delivered by **Sheikh Abdallah Semambo**, 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Mufti of Uganda.



The participants enjoyed performances throughout the evening by **Sosolya**, a dynamic Ugandan group, who sang, drummed and danced many songs from various tribes with incredible energy and skill.





**Mr. Stucky** and **Amelie Buerger**, German BUBW Alumni of 2016 BUBW International - Kyrgyzstan and 2019 BUBW International - Uganda participant, shared their reflections on this unique and historic conference. Mr. Stucky also asked additional participants to voluntarily share their experience. The energy and enthusiasm that filled the room was unmistakable.



Everyone commented that the Pearl of Africa Hotel prepared food that was so delicious and the buffet had many dishes from which to choose.

U.S. Ambassador to Uganda, **Deborah R. Malac** was the special guest and Keynote Speaker. She shared her optimism for the future of Uganda as she witnessed the passion of the participants that evening.

The closing remarks, reflections and prayers were offered by **Imam Mohamad Bashar Arafat**.





## Certificate Ceremony

As each individual name was called to come forward and receive their certificate. It was clear that every participant felt proud to have participated in this unique **Better Understanding for a Better World (BUBW) Conference** in Kampala, Uganda.





## PARTICIPANT QUOTES

*"It was your wish to see us inspired, motivated and empowered. I laughed about it at the start, but on completion of the conference, I experienced the three feelings and I am no longer the same. I thank you so much together with all the other organizers for this opportunity to create a better me, and I look forward to spreading what I attained and seeing a change in the ideology in my fellow youth."*

*-Martha Nankya, BUBW Participant, Student at Makerere University Business School*

*"I am very grateful for the Better Understanding for a Better World. Looking at the case of Uganda, we have been having a lot of difference based on religious and tribal lines. When we get such conferences, we all come together, Muslims and Christians and all types. Such experiences enable us to come to a better understanding and fight for a common cause that is humanity. However much we are different because of religion and culture, we all remain one – we are humans and that is the best value of all."*

*-Swaibu Ibrahim, BUBW Participant, Student of Islamic University of Uganda – Journalism*

*"Thanks so much for the initiative, care and good moral leadership skills you imparted in us. I am so humbled that through this I am already changed and built on my confidence to change my community, Uganda, Africa and the globe at large."*

*-Philip Woniala, BUBW Participant, Student at Kampala International University*

*"Diversity is not about gender or race; it is also about diversity of background and mindset. Look for similarity and compatibility. Be intentional. Intentional Diversity is important because we know our differences and these differences make us stronger. Now is the time to embrace this diversity. The message to spread love and understanding is more important than ever in our day and time."*

*-Hashim Musisi, BUBW Participant, Volunteer with Hearts Extended Uganda*

*"I take the pleasure to congratulate you upon the completion of the powerful and interesting conference. Uganda is blessed to host the first ever and it is historical. Everything was inspiring and we will work to ensure that BUBW succeeds in Uganda."*

*-Amanya German, BUBW Participant, Student at Kyambogo University*

*"Can we use our diversity to foster development, peace, unity, reconciliation and justice? Thank you CECF and the U.S. Embassy in Uganda for giving us the opportunity to share, learn and network."*

*-Stephen Kapere, BUBW Participant, Executive Director, Youth for Charity Missions International*

Excerpt from "To Co-Exist" by **Nantongo Betty**, BUBW Participant, Chief Operations Officer, Girly Network

*Is this why we exist?  
To prove who is better?*

*Why fight each other senselessly?  
You turn a deaf ear to the world's biggest problems,  
Mothers are still dying in hospitals,  
Girls are being raped every minute,  
Children are starving.  
Holy Places of worship are still burnt down.  
What is wrong with human beings?  
Is this what your God would want you to do?*

*Religious leaders! you have neglected your role.  
You are dragging the countries in turmoil  
You promote hatred amongst your followers  
You stir conflicts in the communities  
You imprison people with extreme ideologies.  
what examples are you giving us the Young generation?*

*I was born in a Christian home  
I Had never stepped in any other holy place of worship  
I'm proud that Civilizations Exchange and Cooperation Foundation through their  
'The Better Understanding for a Better World conference '  
gave me an opportunity to do so.  
To appreciate the value of diversity on religion  
To observe and learn about how others worship  
it gave me a fresh perspective on the value of co-existence  
it showed me the Value of respect.*

*From that point, I realized that my country  
will remain in its ramshackled state  
unless it Embraces diversity in all spheres of life.  
This is the time to promote religious freedom  
To allow everyone worship any God they want in peace.  
Let the women be treated with dignity and respect  
Let the youth's potential be recognized  
For these shall contribute  
to the better understanding of a better world.*





## ***SPECIAL THANKS TO:***

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*CECF was delighted to conduct this BUBW Conference in partnership and with financial support from*

- *The U.S. Embassy in Kampala – Uganda*

*CECF is also thankful to the following institutions and organizations for their support and partnership*

- *Makerere University*
- *Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU)*
  - *Uganda Interfaith Network (UIN)*
- *International University of East Africa (IUEA)*
- *Kampala International University (KIU)*
- *Allied Muslim Youth Uganda (AMYU)*
- *Numerous Volunteers in Uganda*



*Report Prepared By:  
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