Faith Leaders Urge Governments to Honour Commitments to Poor

The three-day World Religions Summit concluded on June 23 at University of Winnipeg, with religious leaders urging governments to honour their commitments to the poor and vulnerable of the world, especially children.

The summit drew 80 senior leaders from eight world religions and faith-based organizations, along with 13 youth delegates. They represented Abrahamic, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Shinto, Christian, and Sikh religious traditions.

"It was just a fantastic, stimulating experience," said Dr. Mohinder Singh Dhillion, co-chair of the Advisory Council for Millennium Development Goals.

Among the leaders who convened in Winnipeg were Senator Romeo Dallaire, the Rev. Dr. Andre Karanagia (General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches), His Holiness Dalai Lama, and Dr. Mohinder Singh Dhillion.

"It's important to know people's ideas, different religions, and then you interact with each other, which creates more respect and understanding among the religions," said Dr. Dhillion.

Since 2005, faith leaders from around the globe have met in parallel to the G-8 leaders summit. Previous summits have taken place in the UK, Germany, Russia, Japan, and Italy.

"It was an opportunity and highly regarded such a high-profile and high-level summit," Dhillion said. "It happened in Canada and it happened at University of Winnipeg. I'm very pleased that it happened in my lifetime."