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PRESS RELEASE

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Tanenbaum CEO Joyce Dubensky is available to speak with the press.

Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* to Speak at United Nations

New York, NY – Leading grassroots peacebuilders and Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action Network* members from six of the world’s most dangerous conflict zones – Afghanistan, Pakistan, South Africa, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Colombia – will make a rare appearance at the United Nations on Wednesday, July 13, 2016 to address the question of engaging religiously-motivated people for peacebuilding in global hot spots.

“Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* are the religious actors you don’t hear about. The ones doing the hard, dirty work that tackles violence head on,” says Joyce Dubensky, Tanenbaum CEO. “We have to ask ourselves why most people have never heard of them. As violence and extremism threatens their countries, and really all of us, everywhere, we can learn from them. That’s why we are especially honored to co-present this event, so that those charged with solving our global crises learn more about these inspiring men and women. There is a lot to learn about their on-the-ground peacebuilding strategies – real life efforts that can work.”

The two-panel event, “Turning the Tide: Engaging Religiously-Motivated Peacebuilders in Conflict Zones,” will address two topics: how these grassroots peacemakers forge relationships and build trust in local communities with citizens as well as diplomats and government officials (10:00-11:30 a.m.), and alternative approaches to combating extremism (11:35 a.m.-1:00 p.m.).

The first panel will focus on how diplomats, international agencies, and government officials are increasingly seeking the expertise of religious actors. It will feature Tanenbaum *Peacemakers* Ms. Maria Ida “Deng” Giguiento, Mr. Azhar Hussain, and Ms. Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, as well as H.E. Mr. Rubén Ignacio Zamora Rivas, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations. H.E. Mr. Kai Sauer, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations will moderate.

The second panel will review innovative approaches to tackling violent extremism and the prominent but frequently overlooked role of women in this field. This panel will feature *Peacemakers* Mr. Ricardo Esquiva,

Ms. Dishani Jayaweera, and Ms. Sakena Yacoobi, as well as Ms. Faiza Patel, Co-Director of the Liberty and National Security Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law School, and Mr. Andrew Tomlinson, Director & Quaker U.N. Representative. Both panels will be held in Conference Room 12 at the U.N. Headquarters in Manhattan.

“As the *Peacemakers* share stories about their hard-earned successes and the skills they have gained – at great personal risk – it will become crystal clear why they are such an invaluable resource for anyone wishing to work toward peace,” Dubensky says. “The headlines focus on destruction caused in the name of religion, but these powerful individuals are shining examples of how religiously-motivated action is also part of the solution, one step at a time.”

The two-panel discussion is part of the 2016 Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action Network* Retreat, which brings together *Peacemakers* from all over the world to exchange ideas and best-practices in peacebuilding. This year’s retreat training sessions focus on combating violent extremism and women in peacebuilding.

The U.N. event is sponsored by the Tanenbaum (Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding), the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, KAICIID, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, and the GHR Foundation.

To learn more about the Tanenbaum *Peacemakers in Action* visit: <https://tanenbaum.org/peacemakers-in-action-network/meet-the-peacemakers/>

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Tanenbaum systematically dismantles religious prejudice, hatred and violence and simultaneously promotes justice and respect for people of all religious beliefs. As a secular and non-sectarian non-profit, Tanenbaum works to promote religious peacebuilders who help counter extremism and violence in armed conflicts and tackles religious bullying of students, harassment in workplaces, and disparate health treatment for people based on their beliefs. More information about Tanenbaum’s offerings can be found here: <https://tanenbaum.org/>