

## Singapore hosts inter-religious roundtable

By Qiuyi Tan | Posted: 15 March 2011

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SINGAPORE: Singapore is the venue for an inter-religious roundtable about post-conflict reconciliation; with some 50 senior religious leaders, diplomats and scholars participating in the two-day event.

Organisers say Singapore was chosen for this international dialogue because of its history of inter-religious harmony.

The high-level event was organised by the United States Institute of Peace and the World Conference of Religions for Peace, and runs from March 15 to 16 at Furama Hotel.

The participants, from different parts of Asia, were keen to learn of Singapore's experience in managing community relations, at a dialogue session Tuesday afternoon.

"Some people think that when people of different religions live together, their common space is at the expense of my personal space. So if we have a common space in Singapore that means you have to be less Muslim, less Buddhist, less Catholic, less Hindu. That's not our view. Our view is our common space is our space of overlap," said Singapore Foreign Affairs Minister George Yeo.

Participants include former UN Under-Secretary-General Yasushi Akashi and the Great Supreme Patriarch of Cambodia, Venerable Tep Vong.

Assistant Secretary General of Religions for Peace, Reverend Kyoichi Sugino says Singapore can serve as a unique space for substantive dialogue towards peace and reconciliation because of its diverse population, as well as a high degree of appreciation for action-oriented interfaith work.

Singapore established the Inter-Religious Organisation (IRO) in 1994, and was also host of the inaugural Asian Conference of Religions for Peace in 1976.



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Foreign Affairs Minister George Yeo