



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The 9th Annual Psychology Day at the United Nations

From Vulnerability to Resilience: Using Psychology to Address the Global Migration Crisis

New York, New York, April 10, 2016 - Psychologists who represent NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) accredited at the United Nations will host the 9th Annual *Psychology Day at the United Nations* on 28 April.

The theme of this year's conference is "*From Vulnerability to Resilience: Using Psychology to Address the Global Migration Crisis.*" The topic was chosen because forced migration is an overwhelming crisis today on the international stage, both in scope and complexity, affecting every region of the world. Migration, in particular the forced migration of refugees fleeing conflict and economic deprivation, is a crosscutting issue relevant to the goals of the newly adopted UN agenda.

Psychology Day at the UN 2016 features presentations from psychologists, government policy makers and UN representatives that address the relevance of the science and practice of psychology to issues in the UN agenda.

The meeting will be held at UN New York headquarters, in Conference Room 1, with entry at 47th Street on First Avenue. The event is from 3:00p.m. to 6:00p.m.

Psychology Day at the United Nations is an annual event sponsored by psychology organizations that have Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) status accredited by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and/or affiliated with the UN Department of Public Information (DPI). The event offers UN staff, ambassadors and diplomats, NGO representatives, members of the private and public sectors, students, invited experts, guests, media and other stakeholders, the opportunity to learn how psychological science and practice contributes to the United Nations agenda, as well as to exchange ideas and establish partnerships on global issues.

The 2016 program examines the global migration crisis through human rights, psychological, and intercultural perspectives, with presenters showing how psychological science and practice can address this serious situation.

"Efforts to provide humanitarian aid for refugees must take into account psychological needs as well as basic survival needs and economic integration. Resilience is key to surmounting the challenges of forced migration and resettlement, said Rashmi Jaipal, Ph.D., co-chair of Psychology Day at the UN 2016, Professor Emeritus of Psychology from Bloomfield College, New Jersey, and a UN NGO representative for the American Psychological Association. She adds, "Psychological research and interventions can guide the development of refugee relief and resettlement programs that promote healing and psychological resilience."

"Children and youth constitute over half of the 60 million displaced people and are the most vulnerable of all refugees, with many traveling alone and subject to trafficking, violence, and

abuse,” said Roseanne Flores, Ph.D., co-chair of Psychology Day at the UN 2016, a UN NGO representative for the American Psychological Association, and an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Hunter College of the City University of New York. She adds, *“Consistent with Article 22 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child that calls for special protection of children seeking refugee status or who are refugees, States must ensure that all children and youth are protected and their human rights upheld, to allow them to thrive and rebuild their lives.”*

Opening remarks will be given by H.E. Ambassador Rubén Ignacio Zamora, Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations. Ambassador Zamora commented, *“This is a timely conference on a very pressing issue, to inform the UN community of the many contributions psychology can make to addressing this crisis.”*

The program consists of two panels. The first panel addresses the topic of “Cultural Integration in the Process of Resettlement.” Speakers include Brigitte Khoury, Ph.D., Associate Professor at Psychiatry Department, Faculty of Medicine, American University of Beirut; Monica Indart, Psy.D., Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology at Rutgers University; and Ambreen Qureshi, Deputy Executive Director, Arab-American Family Support Center.

The second panel is on the topic of “Children, Youth, and the Migration Crisis.” The speakers are Michael Wessells, Ph.D., Professor, Program on Forced Migration and Health, Columbia University, speaking on “Supporting the Rights and Well-Being of Children and Youth in Settings of Forced Migration: A Resilience Approach”; Eskinder Negash, Senior Vice President of Global Engagement at the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, addressing “Mental Health and the Refugee Journey”; Dina Birman, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Educational and Psychological Studies, Director of the Ph.D. Program in Community Well-Being, University of Miami, School of Education and Human Development; and Naqibullah Safi, Senior Emergency Coordinator, Emergency Programme Division (EMOPS), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

Closing remarks will be made by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Caleb Otto, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Palau to the United Nations. Ambassador Otto is a public health physician who partnered with the Psychology Coalition of NGOs accredited at the UN to insure the inclusion of the promotion of mental health and well-being in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Psychologists representing NGOs accredited at the UN come from varied specialties, including clinical, educational, social, developmental, counseling, community and industrial/organizational psychology. They participate in committees and working groups on various topics (e.g., the family, migration, technology, human rights, women’s rights, children’s rights, climate change and disaster recovery) and at invited high-level meetings; present side events at UN commissions (e.g., on Social Development and the Status of Women); design, implement and evaluate original field projects related to the global goals (e.g., poverty eradication in Haiti and women’s empowerment in Africa).

Admission to the conference is free. A reception (for a small fee) following the sessions will be held at the Piccolo Fiore Restaurant at 230 East 44th Street.

For up-to-date information regarding registration for the conference and reception, please visit <http://unpsychologyday.org> or contact: unpsychday@gmail.com.