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*The Society of Foreign Consuls in New York, Inc.*

## PRESS RELEASE

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#### **Faith-Based Organizations, Diplomats, and Humanitarian Partners Unite for the Faith-Bridge Iftar in Support of Displaced Women & Girls**

**New York, March 21, 2025** – Last night, faith-based organizations, UN permanent missions, consuls general, and humanitarian partners gathered in New York for the Faith-Bridge Iftar for Displaced Women & Girls. Held during the holy month of Ramadan, this significant event highlighted the role of faith-based engagement for supporting refugee women and girls worldwide.

The iftar was co-hosted by USA for UNHCR, Islamic Relief USA, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the Society of Foreign Consuls in New York (SoFC). It provided a platform for discussions on the specific challenges faced by displaced women and girls, and how faith-based and diplomatic communities can work together to provide culturally sensitive support to empower them with dignity and hope.

**Ahmed Shehata, CEO of Islamic Relief USA** said, “In a time of great uncertainty for refugees all over the world, it is a blessing and privilege to collaborate with partners who are steadfast and committed to these vulnerable communities. We know that no one chooses to be a refugee, and it is our faith-based duty to protect them. Together, we can mobilize our collective resources to ensure that the tremendous needs of refugee populations are met, and they are able to live in a secure and dignified manner.”

“It has never been more important than right now that we find ways to reach across our differences to lift and support and build together,” said **Bonnie H. Cordon, President of Southern Virginia University and former president of the worldwide Young Women’s program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints**. “We were honored to participate in this interfaith iftar and we look forward to continuing our work with faith-based and diplomatic partners in support of displaced women and girls.”

**H.E. Amir Farid Abu Hasan, President of the Society of Foreign Consuls (SoFC)**, emphasized the diplomatic community’s role in supporting diaspora populations and those facing displacement. “Consulates serve as a bridge between governments and their people abroad, ensuring that the needs of diaspora communities—including those who have been displaced—are met with compassion and action. As SoFC marks its 100th anniversary, we are proud to reaffirm our commitment to humanitarian efforts that reflect the values of solidarity and support for those most in need.”

The event brought together high-level leaders, consuls general, representatives from permanent missions, and humanitarian organizations to discuss practical solutions and strengthen partnerships. Discussions emphasized the importance of diplomatic collaboration, faith-based engagement, and community-driven initiatives in addressing the needs of forcibly displaced women and girls.

Taking place alongside the **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) High-Level Week**, the iftar also underscored the intersection of faith-based humanitarian efforts and global policy discussions on supporting women and girls fleeing violence. The event reinforced the need for policy-driven advocacy, international cooperation, and faith-inspired action to ensure that refugee women and girls are not left behind.

As global displacement reaches unprecedented levels, this iftar reaffirmed the critical need for solidarity, action, and faith-driven humanitarian efforts. The co-organizers remain committed to strengthening support networks for refugee women and girls and fostering a global environment where they can thrive.

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### About The Society of Foreign Consuls

The Society of Foreign Consuls (SoFC), representing over 51 consulates in New York, underscored the role of the diplomatic community in supporting diaspora populations, including those affected by forced displacement. This year marks SoFC's 100th anniversary, a milestone that highlights a century of diplomatic service, humanitarian engagement, and community-building in New York City.

For more information about the event or to inquire about future initiatives, please contact the Society of Foreign Consuls at:

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