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Oman's Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs Calls on G20 to Make Religious Institutions Partners in the Energy Transition

Salt Lake City, October 17, 2026 — H.E. Dr. Mohammed bin Said Al Maamari, Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman, called on G20 leaders on Saturday to adopt energy and development policies that protect the rights of future generations and treat religious and community institutions as genuine partners in the energy transition. He addressed the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) in Salt Lake City by video during a plenary on energy needs and building peace.

"In a world of interwoven interests, energy security cannot be achieved for anyone unless it is achieved for all, and what we share in resources, we must also share in responsibility," Al Maamari said.

Al Maamari described the balance among security of supply, affordable access and protection of the environment as a question of values as much as economics, and offered Oman's centuries of experience as a contribution. He recalled Omani seafarers who carried values of integrity, fidelity to one's word and respect for those who differ to East Africa, India and China; the 1833 Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United States; and the 1840 arrival in New York of the ship *Sultanah*, bearing the first Arab envoy to the United States. He pointed to Oman's aflaj irrigation systems, five of which are inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, and to the waqf, or endowment, as traditions in which the right to benefit from a resource carries responsibility for its preservation and for the rights of others across generations.

"Religions hold that what is owed to those in need is a right, not a favor; fairness, then, means giving priority to those whom energy has not yet reached," Al Maamari said. "They call for moderation and forbid waste and harm to the earth. Abundance and sustainability need not conflict when moderation governs both."

He drew these principles together in the concept of trusteeship.

"All of this is brought together by the concept of trusteeship: that human beings are entrusted with the earth, not its absolute owners, and that empowerment is a responsibility before it is a privilege," he said.

Al Maamari noted that Oman, which has shared its model of coexistence with the world through its Message of Peace and United Human Values projects, has now moved from presenting that model to practical peacemaking. On June 12, Oman launched the Muscat Plan at United Nations Headquarters in New York, in partnership with the United Nations, the UN Alliance of Civilizations and the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers. Developed through consultations with religious and traditional leaders and representatives of Indigenous peoples, the plan seeks to strengthen their role in preventing conflict and countering hate speech.

“From the Sultanate of Oman, we call through this forum on the leaders of the G20 to shoulder their responsibilities by adopting energy and development policies that safeguard security of supply, broaden opportunity, protect the rights of the future generations, and value religious and community institutions as genuine partners in shaping and implementing the pathways of transition,” Al Maamari said.

The panel that followed, moderated by Professor Peter Mandaville of Georgetown University’s Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs, took up the question of whether energy systems can be abundant, equitable, sustainable and conducive to peace at the same time.

Professor Husna Ahmad OBE, CEO of Global One 2015, echoed the minister’s call for moderation, noting that Islamic teaching holds that creation has an order and warns against waste, and urged that women and faith-based actors be part of the energy conversation.

“Energy security is not an abstract policy issue, it determines whether a hospital can keep their lights on, whether a child can study at night, whether a farmer can irrigate a field, and whether a family can afford to cook,” Ahmad said.

Ambassador Amr Aljowaily, Director of the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate at the African Union Commission, said some 600 million Africans, nearly half the continent’s population, live without electricity, and that universal access must be the starting point. He called for fairer terms of international cooperation, including grants rather than loans, and described electricity not as a luxury but as “a first link, as a first connection” to opportunity. Professor Azza Karam, President of Lead Integrity, said religious communities must not only call on governments to change but take responsibility for changing their own behaviors and attitudes.

Former Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the energy debate has become an article of faith on both the political right and left, rather than a practical challenge to be solved.

“When politics became religion, I think it led us into a cul-de-sac, and we are still not out of it,” Morrison said.

Asked for a single recommendation, panelists proposed electrifying health facilities run by faith-based organizations, using digital platforms to translate technical energy policy into language communities can act on, taking stock of what the global interfaith movement has achieved, and helping the African Union’s voice reach the tables where global policy is made.

Plenary 5, “Energy Needs and Building Peace: Challenges Facing the G20,” took place October 17, 2026, from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. MDT at the University of Utah Institute of Religion. The Forum closed that afternoon at the Cathedral of the Madeleine with a handoff to the organizers of the 2027 Forum in the United Kingdom, ahead of the G20 Leaders’ Summit in Miami on December 14–15. The full program is available at g20interfaith.org/2026-forum-program.

Speakers included:

- **H.E. Dr. Mohammed bin Said Al Maamari (Video Address)** — Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs, Sultanate of Oman

- **Professor Peter Mandaville (Moderator)** — Senior Fellow, Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs, Georgetown University
- **The Honorable Scott Morrison AC** — 30th Prime Minister of Australia
- **Ambassador Amr Aljowaily** — Director, Citizens and Diaspora Directorate, African Union Commission
- **Professor Husna Ahmad OBE** — CEO, Global One 2015
- **Professor Azza Karam** — President, Lead Integrity; Professor of Diplomacy and World Affairs and Director of the UN Program, Occidental College

Full speaker bios are available in the [2026 Forum Directory](#).

About the G20 Process

The Group of Twenty, or G20, is the premier forum for international economic cooperation, bringing together the leaders of Earth's most prosperous economies. Collectively, G20 members represent around 80 percent of the world's economic output, two-thirds of the global population and three-quarters of international trade. Throughout the year, representatives from G20 countries gather to discuss financial and socioeconomic issues as well as broader humanitarian issues targeted by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum seeks global solutions by collaborating with religious thought leaders and political representatives to help shape the overall G20 agenda. It draws on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting a rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values. Through its extensive network of networks, it helps prioritize key global policy goals and point toward practical means of implementation at every level of society.

For more information, please visit www.g20interfaith.org.

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