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Available to Speak in Congregations, Colleges and Community Forums

Biographical Information

2003 – Consultant for the National Interreligious Initiative for Peace (NILI). Ron works with leaders of 25 U.S. Jewish, Christian and Muslim national religious organizations to develop united advocacy positions and mobilize public support for active, fair and firm U.S. leadership for Arab-Israeli-Palestinian peace. Building on founding “Principles of Cooperation,” in November 2008 religious leaders of NILI issued a new consensus statement, “A Window of Hope for the Peace of Jerusalem.” In January 2009 the leaders wrote to President Obama commending his commitment to make Arab-Israeli-Palestinian peace a high priority from the start of his presidency and urging specific steps the United States should support to provide urgent leadership for peace. Ron is available to travel nationwide to meet with local religious leaders and speak in congregations, at colleges and in community forums on interreligious efforts for Arab-Israeli-Palestinian peace

Building on the work of the U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace organized by Ron in 1987, the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative was organized in 2003. In 2004-05 Ron held meetings with local religious leaders in 40 cities. In June 2004 Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders met Secretary of State Colin Powell and in January 2006 with Karen Hughes, Under Secretary of State. In June 2005 the Initiative organized 50 local host sites for a Town Meeting for Peace (via the Internet) sponsored by A Different Future with speakers from Jerusalem and Washington DC. In January 2007 NILI leaders met with Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice and then met regularly with her Deputy. The religious leaders believe the Annapolis Peace Conference, the Arab Peace Initiative, and the current emphasis on negotiations among the parties make interreligious efforts for peace important and timely in the coming months. Looking ahead to a new Administration and Congress, NILI leaders believe the new President must make Arab-Israeli-Palestinian peace an urgent priority of U.S. policy.

Ron Young has spoken and written widely on the Middle East and interfaith cooperation; he taught a course on the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict at Haverford College; organized Interfaith Convocations for Peace; and generated statements and other resources endorsed by Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders. Ron was invited by the White House for the Israel-PLO Oslo Declaration in 1993. Ron has lectured at the Chautauqua Institution, speaking on peace in the Middle East, and “Religion As a Source of Violence or Peace.” He was Chautauqua’s Chaplain on the theme “Iraq and Its Neighborhood.”

1987 - Organized the U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace, a national organization of 2500 Jews, Christians and Muslims, working together based on the deepest values in their three traditions. Ron organized the National Interfaith Convocation and Congressional Visitation for Mideast Peace in March 1989; he’s led ten interreligious leadership trips to the Middle East.

1986 Authored Missed Opportunities for Peace: U.S. Middle East Policy, 1981-86, a book praised by Jewish American and Palestinian American leaders, and by prominent U.S. policy analysts.

1982 - 1985 Middle East Representative for American Friend Service Committee (Quakers). Ron and his wife, Carol Jensen, lived in Amman, Jordan and traveled regularly in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, Egypt, Syria and Lebanon to explore Arab and Israeli views about prospects for peace and how the United States could help to achieve peace.

1972 - 1982 National Peace Education Secretary, American Friends Service Committee. Ron coordinated peace education work nationwide on a range of international issues, including Vietnam, arms control, human rights and the Middle East.

1965 - 1972 National Youth Secretary for the Fellowship of Reconciliation; popular speaker at hundreds of high schools and colleges; and National Coordinator of the Marches on Washington for Peace in Vietnam in November 1969 and May 1970.

1960 - 1965 Student at Wesleyan University in Connecticut and participant in the Student Interracial Ministry in Memphis as Assistant to the Reverend J.M. Lawson, Jr.; served as Youth Minister at a Congregational Church in Connecticut ; and in March 1965 Ron worked with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma, Alabama.

Suggested Topics for Lectures and Discussion

- **President Obama Makes Arab-Israeli-Palestinian Peace a High, Immediate Priority: What Will It Take to Achieve Peace?**
- **American Jewish, Christian and Muslim Leaders United on How the U.S. Can Help Achieve Arab-Israeli-Palestinian Peace**
- **From War Between Hamas and Israel to Renewed Hopes for Peace: Four Changes Needed in U.S. Foreign Policy**
- **Investing for Peace in the Holy Land – Interreligious Support for Israeli-Palestinian Cooperative Projects**
- **Sharing Jerusalem: Impossible Dream or Essential Goal for Regional and World Peace?**
- **American Jews, Christians and Muslims: Conflict or Cooperation for Mideast Peace?**
- **Religion: Source of Peace or Source of Violence?**