



KAICIID DIALOGUE CENTRE

# Council of Parties

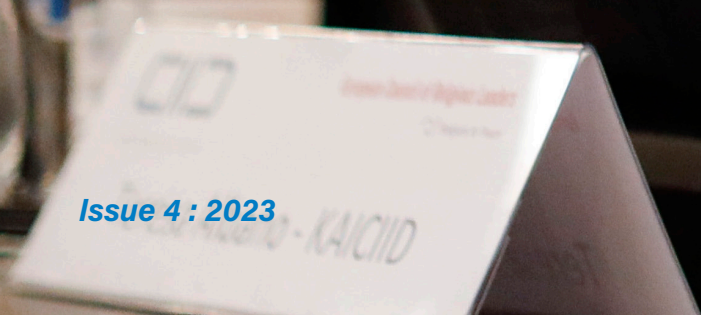
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# Board of Directors

## Quarterly Newsletter

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# Letter From the Secretary General



Esteemed Representatives of the Council of Parties,

As we conclude this quarter, I am delighted to share with you the significant advances made in fostering interfaith and interreligious dialogue. These past 3 months have been marked by notable events and collaborations, including the European Muslim Leaders Majlis meeting in Sevilla, our engagement in the Annual Advisory Group Meeting of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, and the renewal of our partnerships with two key global organizations: the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and Religions for Peace (RfP).

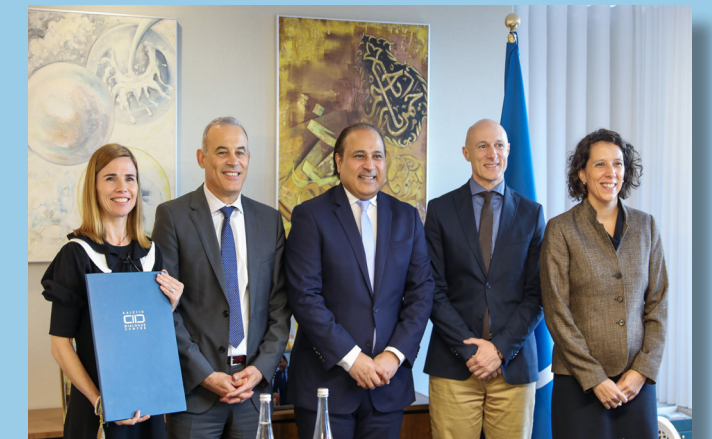
KAICIID's 5th European Policy Dialogue Forum (EPDF), which took place this year in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, highlights the Centre's commitment to addressing contemporary global challenges through dialogue. The active participation of youth in this year's Forum is particularly encouraging, aligning with our mission to empower the next generation.

Looking ahead, the Centre's upcoming collaborations, such as with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (ASEAN-IPR), reaffirm our dedication to building a more peaceful world and furthering KAICIID's mandate. I am grateful for the unwavering support of the Council of Parties in these activities and partnerships, and I am optimistic about our collective impact in the future.

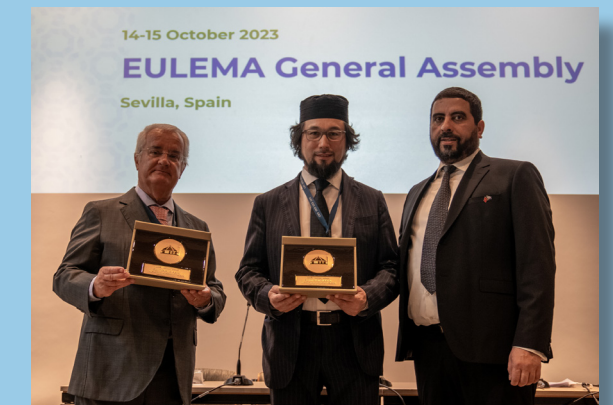
Together, let's continue to foster peace and dialogue, embracing the challenges and opportunities that await us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Zuhair Alharthi  
Secretary General  
International Dialogue Centre - KAICIID



*Dr. Zuhair Alharthi leading the Memorandum signing between KAICIID and the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and Religions for Peace (RfP).*



*The European Muslim Leaders Majlis meeting in Sevilla, Spain.*



*KAICIID's 5th European Policy Dialogue Forum (EPDF), in Rotterdam, Netherlands.*



*Annual Advisory Group Meeting of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers in Finland.*

*KAICIID - ASEAN-IPR Workshop in Bangkok, Thailand.*





## Updates from the Executive Office of the Secretary General

### October 2023: Bilaterals and MoUs

- **Local Engagements:** Meetings with the Mayor of Lisbon, H.E. Carlos Moedas, and other local dignitaries like Mr. Rui Esgaio and Comendador Nazim Ahmad, highlighted the importance of local partnerships in achieving global peace initiatives.
- **International Cooperation:** The meeting with H.E. Christoph Meran, Austria's Ambassador to Portugal marked the celebration of the National Day of the Republic of Austria and emphasized the strong ties between Austria and KAICIID.
- **Preparation for MoU Signings:** Online bilaterals with Dr. Ahmad Alhendawi and Ms. Deepika Singh were pivotal in laying the groundwork for the signing of two significant Memorandums of Understanding, enhancing the collaborative framework of KAICIID with global organizations.

### November 2023: 5th EPDF and Bilateral Engagements

- **Engagement with Dr. Mustafa Field and Religious Leaders:** Throughout the 5th EPDF in Rotterdam, the Secretary General conducted a series of bilaterals with key figures such as Dr. Mustafa Field, H. Em. Metropolitan Emmanuel, and H.Em. Mufti Dr. Nedžad Grabus. These meetings emphasized the role of religious leadership in fostering peace and understanding.
- **Discussions on Religious Tolerance:** Engagements with Alexandre Guessel and Dr. Kishan Manocha were centered on addressing religious intolerance and promoting diversity and non-discrimination.
- **Collaboration with Religious and Diplomatic Figures:** Meetings with Imam Yahia Pallavicini, Rev. Thomas Wipf, and various ambassadors including H.E Clara Nuno de Santos and H.E. John Camilleri, reinforced KAICIID's commitment to interreligious dialogue and international cooperation.



Dr. Alharthi's meeting with H.E. John Camilleri, Malta's Ambassador to Portugal.



Dr. Alharthi's meeting H.E. Christoph Meran, Austria's Ambassador to Portugal.



Dr. Alharthi's meeting with Comendador Nazim Ahmad, the esteemed Diplomatic Representative of the Ismaili Imam in Portugal.



Dr. Alharthi's meeting with Mr. Carlos Moedas, Mayor of Lisbon.



Dr. Alharthi's meeting with Mr. Rui Esgaio, Secretary General of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

### December 2023: Engagements and Diplomatic Meetings

- **Engagement with H.E. Eid Aldhafeeri:** On the occasion of the graduation of the 2023 Fellows cohort, Dr. Zuhair Alharthi engaged in a bilateral meeting with H.E. Eid Aldhafeeri, the Plenipotentiary Minister of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Portuguese Republic. This meeting underscored the continued collaboration and mutual interests between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and KAICIID.
- **Dialogue with H.E. Chakib Rachid Kaid:** The Secretary General held a productive dialogue with H.E. Chakib Rachid Kaid, the Ambassador of Algeria to the Portuguese Republic. The discussion focused on enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation in areas of shared concern.
- **Consultation with H.E. Earif R. Bakhtiar:** In a constructive session, Dr. Alharthi consulted with H.E. Earif R. Bakhtiar, Advisor at the Embassy of Indonesia to the Portuguese Republic. They explored opportunities for partnership and knowledge exchange.
- **Discussion with Mr. Francisco Neves:** The meeting with Mr. Francisco Neves from the High Commission on Migration in Portugal highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts in addressing migration and integration challenges.



## Organizational Update

On the 11th of December 2023, KAICIID moved to its new location, symbolising a significant milestone in KAICIID's journey towards becoming a global hub for interreligious and intercultural dialogue and peacebuilding. The move to the new headquarters is more than a logistical change; it represents a strategic positioning of KAICIID to better carry out its mandate. Having relocated from Vienna in the summer of 2022, the Centre which was initially housed at Av. Jose Mahloa 19, faced challenges in accommodating its growing team. With the support of the Portuguese and Saudi Governments, a new headquarters was identified. The premises, located at Maleo Castilho on Rua Castilho 52, provides the necessary capacity and capability for the Centre's expanding mandate. This move is anticipated to enhance the Centre's operational efficiency and expand its influence globally.

The Secretariat is actively engaged in fortifying its leadership team with the recruitment process for a Chief Communication Officer underway. This pivotal role is anticipated to be appointed by March 2024, marking a significant step towards enhancing the Centre's communication and media strategies.

The foresight and diligence of the Secretariat were evident in the prompt finalization of the Programme and Budget for 2024. This comprehensive financial document was disseminated to the distinguished members of the Council of Parties on the 25th of October 2023, demonstrating the Secretariat's commitment to transparency and fiscal accountability.

In a strategic move to define its future direction, KAICIID is in the process of obtaining approval from the Council of Parties for its Strategic Plan spanning 2024-2027. This plan, currently in draft form, serves as a blueprint for the Centre's focus areas over the coming years. Concurrently, the Centre has undertaken revisions of critical policy instruments, underlining its commitment to both organizational efficiency and the well-being of its dedicated staff.

Further solidifying its collaborative endeavors, the Centre has renewed Memoranda of Understanding with both the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and Religions for Peace (RfP) on the 30th of October 2023. These renewals underscore the enduring partnerships and shared objectives between KAICIID and these venerable organizations.

### Board of Directors

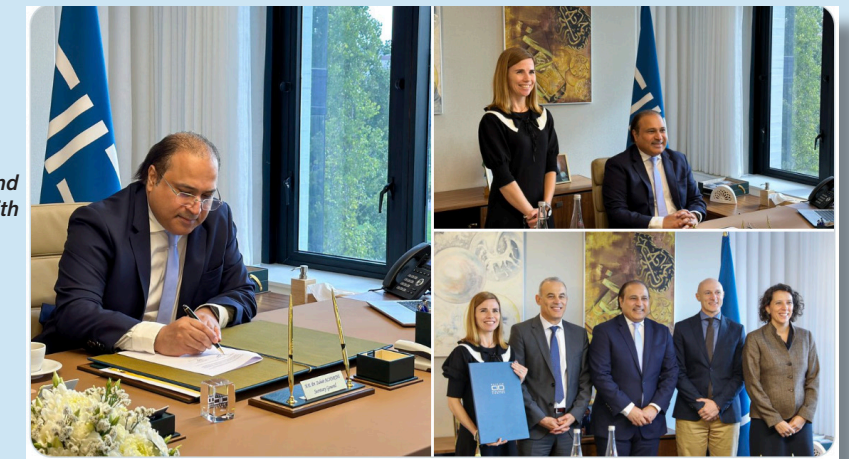
The current Board of Directors' term ended on 30 September 2023. The KAICIID's Council of Parties is currently in the process of appointing a new Board of Directors for a renewable term of four years.



## External Relations, Partnerships and Local Outreach



*Dr. Zuhair Alharthi leading KAICIID Programme and External Relations teams in the MoU signing with the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM).*



*Dr. Zuhair Alharthi leading KAICIID Programme and External Relations teams in the MoU signing with the Religions for Peace (RfP)*

The renewal of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and Religions for Peace (RfP) on 30 October marked a continued commitment to partnership and joint initiatives in peacebuilding and interfaith dialogue. These renewed agreements have fortified KAICIID's collaborative network, enabling more robust and impactful interventions globally.

In the latter part of 2023, KAICIID embarked on significant technical missions. These missions were fundamental in expanding KAICIID's influence and partnerships. During this period, KAICIID's leadership engaged in pivotal discussions with Ambassador Frans Van Daele, the EU Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU. These interactions provided a platform for presenting KAICIID's significant efforts in the European context and exploring partnership opportunities for future initiatives.

One notable collaboration was the Policy Talks held in the framework of Article 17 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union at the European Parliament, supported by Ms. Lidia Pereira, a Member of the European Parliament from the European People's Party. These talks laid the groundwork for ongoing dialogue and partnerships, enhancing KAICIID's visibility and influence in European policy-making circles.

KAICIID also played an instrumental role in informing the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief's thematic report on "Advocacy of Hatred Based on Religion or Belief: Transformative Responses." This report, which will be presented at the 55th session of the UN Human Rights Council scheduled for February to April 2024, benefits from KAICIID's expertise in interreligious dialogue and conflict resolution. The Centre's contributions are expected to have lasting impacts on policy recommendations and international frameworks addressing religious intolerance.





- Youngest elected municipal councilor in Slovenian history
- Youngest elected Member of the Slovenian National Council, the Parliament's Upper Chamber
- Deputy Mayor of Idrija, Slovenia

15/11/2023



## Major Events and Conferences

### The 5th European Policy Dialogue Forum

The 5th European Policy Dialogue Forum (EPDF), KAICIID's signature event in the Europe region, was held 13–15 November in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Gathering around 140 participants, the forum focused on "Young People and Social Inclusion in Cities." This year's emphasis on migration, prevention of hate speech, and youth leadership had a particular impact on shaping policies and practices for social inclusion of, especially young, refugees and migrants and countering extremism in European cities.



### KAICIID Fellows Graduation

The third and final training and graduation of the KAICIID Fellows, encompassing the Africa, Arab and International cohorts, occurred from the 29 November to 5 December in Lisbon, Portugal. This event brought together 69 Fellows, providing a platform for them to share experiences, evaluate the results of their initiatives, and plan for sustained collaboration and impact. The training has significantly contributed to building a global network of leaders skilled in interreligious dialogue and peacebuilding.



### The 4th World Scout Education Congress

The 4th World Scout Education Congress, held 1–3 December in Paris, was a pivotal gathering of educational and programme experts from WOSM's National Scout Organizations. The congress, building on the outcomes of the 2019 World Non-Formal Education Forum, emphasised the increased impact of scouting in promoting global citizenship and peace. KAICIID's participation, especially in the technical strategic meeting held following the congress on 4 December to agree with WOSM on the 2024 workplan, marked a significant step in reinforcing the role of scouting in addressing challenges faced by young people.



### The Global Migration Film Festival

The Global Migration Film Festival, organised on 13 December in Lisbon, Portugal, by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Information Centre for Western Europe (UNRIC) and KAICIID, was a landmark event, commemorating International Migrants Day and the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The festival played a crucial role in raising awareness about migrants' rights and the challenges of integrating refugees and migrants into European societies. This initiative was part of a broader effort under the EPDF to foster understanding and cooperation in migration governance.





## Programme News and Highlights



### EuLeMa General Assembly

The European Muslim Leaders Majlis (EuLeMa) General Assembly, held 13–15 October in Sevilla, Spain, was a significant convening of 23 founding members and two honorary members. This assembly provided a strategic platform for these leaders to chart the course of their collective efforts and address critical issues impacting Muslim communities in Europe. The long-term impacts of this assembly are seen in the strengthened leadership and collaboration among European Muslim leaders, influencing policies and social dynamics across the continent.



### International Partnership on Religion and Development (PaRD) Annual Forum

Highlighting its influential role in interreligious dialogue, KAICIID participated in the General Assembly of the International Partnership on Religion and Development (PaRD) and its Annual Forum held in Berlin from the 16th to the 20th of October. At this gathering, KAICIID was honoured with the nomination as co-chair of PaRD's Steering Board, reaffirming its leadership in the SDG16 workstream. The Annual Forum, themed "*Multiplex Collaboration in a Multipolar World*," witnessed the convergence of over 100 experts and stakeholders from a diverse array of sectors, including government, academia, religious institutions, and civil society.



### The Annual Advisory Group Meeting

The Annual Advisory Group Meeting of the Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, held 25–27 October in Helsinki, Finland, was another milestone. Represented by Chief Programme Officer Davide Capecchi and Senior Programme Manager Agustin Nunez, KAICIID's participation underscored its commitment to collaborative peacebuilding efforts. The meeting's outcomes have been instrumental in shaping strategic directions for the Network, enhancing its capacity to respond to contemporary challenges in peace and conflict resolution.



### African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum

KAICIID's support in implementing the African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum 8–9 November in Kigali, Rwanda, on the theme "*Faith in Harvest: Sowing Seeds of Climate Resilience*," underscored the Centre's role in addressing contemporary global challenges such as climate change. This forum had far-reaching impacts, particularly in mobilising faith communities in Africa towards sustainable environmental stewardship.





### KAICIID - ASEAN-IPR Interreligious Dialogue Workshop

In a collaborative effort with ASEAN-IPR, KAICIID developed an interreligious dialogue course, taught as part of professional development training provided for 24 ASEAN officials. This initiative, involving representatives from various state ministries across Southeast Asia, took place in Bangkok, Thailand, from 27 November to 1 December 2023. The training not only enhanced the participants' skills in dialogue and peacebuilding but also fostered a network of professionals committed to promoting peace and understanding in the region.

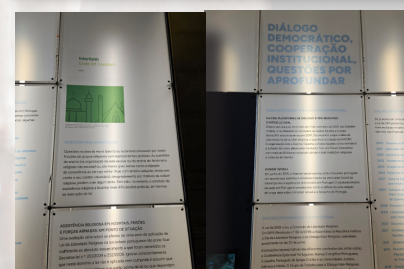


### Interreligious Calendar "Celebração do Tempo 2024"

On 6 December 2023, the Interreligious Calendar "Celebração do Tempo 2024" was launched, marking a milestone in interfaith collaboration among various religious communities. The event featured prominent figures from the Grupo de Trabalho para o Diálogo Inter-Religioso (GT DIR) and Agência para a Integração, Migrações e Asilo, I.P. (AIMA), including Fr. Peter Stilwell, Sónia Pereira, and José Reis. Youth from MEET IR, supported by KAICIID and invited by AIMA, also attended, highlighting KAICIID's role in fostering interfaith understanding. This year's calendar commemorates the 50th anniversary of Portugal's April 25th Revolution, emphasizing religious freedom, a key focus for KAICIID. The organization's influence was evident in its participation in the parliamentary event for Portugal's National Day of Religious Freedom and Interreligious Dialogue and the "Os caminhos da liberdade religiosa em Portugal" exhibition. KAICIID plans to continue its impactful work, including utilizing the Health and Pharmacy Museum for future events and enhancing GT DIR's efforts to unite national stakeholders and beneficiaries.

### Annual Exhibition at the Portuguese Parliament

KAICIID's Programme Department was extended a prestigious invitation to partake in the annual exhibition at the Portuguese Parliament, commemorating the 20th anniversary of Portugal's Law on Religious Freedom on 19 December 2023. This event was a continuation of KAICIID's engagement from the World Youth Day earlier in the year, emphasizing the Centre's dedication to youth engagement. The exhibition featured a presentation of KAICIID's efforts in promoting religious freedom globally, and highlighted the Interfaith Code of Conduct, which was an initiative from Nigeria, intended to foster dialogue and education on freedom of religion and belief (FoRB) and interreligious dialogue (IRD) among Portuguese parliamentarians. The visit also served to underscore KAICIID's gratitude to Portugal, demonstrated by the Centre's engagement with Augusto Santos Silva, the President of the Portuguese Assembly of the Republic.



### Dialogue Journalism Fellowship (DJF) Training and Graduation

The Dialogue Journalism Fellowship (DJF) concluded its 2023 training and graduation from 15 to 19 December in Lisbon, Portugal. This programme equipped 30 journalists from 14 Arab countries with skills in interreligious and intercultural dialogue, conflict analysis, and peace journalism, thereby contributing significantly to promoting peaceful coexistence and understanding in the region.



### Muslim-Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) Ambassadors Graduation

From 18 to 19 December, The Muslim Jewish Leadership Council (MJLC) Ambassadors gathered and celebrated the culmination of its inaugural Ambassadors Programme. This groundbreaking initiative saw six young Jewish and Muslim leaders from London, Warsaw, and Frankfurt undertake community-based dialogue initiatives under the guidance of MJLC religious leaders. The Graduation Ceremony not only honoured the achievements of these emerging intercultural leaders but also set the stage for the continued development of the Ambassadors Programme into 2024, thereby cementing KAICIID's commitment to fostering interreligious and intercultural dialogue among the youth.



### Collaborative Agreement with the Club of Lisbon.

In a significant step toward intellectual and social advancement, KAICIID entered into a strategic partnership with the Club of Lisbon. This collaboration entailed the launch of a series of insightful quarterly seminars set to span across 2024. These seminars aim to foster understanding, critical thinking, and discourse on the misuse of religion in justifying violence, as well as strategies to counteract extremist ideologies. The initiative will feature experts sharing their experiences from Nigeria, Kenya, the Central African Republic, and Mozambique, thereby enriching the narrative with diverse perspectives and solutions.



## Impact Corner



**Groundbreaking Achievement in Interreligious Dialogue: João Magalhães becomes the 1st Portuguese person to complete training in Interreligious Dialogue through the KAICIID Fellows Training Programme**



**João Magalhães**

João Magalhães, a 49-year-old Buddhist from Portugal, made history as the first Portuguese to complete training in interreligious dialogue at the International Center for Dialogue – KAICIID. Selected from a pool of 500 global candidates, Magalhães reflected on this accomplishment as a significant privilege. His participation in the KAICIID Fellows program was not only a personal journey of immense growth but also a path to a deeper understanding of diverse religions and customs.

As a representative of the Buddha's Light International Association in the Working Group for Interreligious Dialogue (GTDI), Magalhães viewed the program as a crucial opportunity to build bridges among people of different cultures and beliefs. The intensive and transformative course required the implementation of at least one intercultural dialogue initiative.

Magalhães chose to focus on intra-religious dialogue, specifically aiming to integrate the Chinese and Portuguese Buddhist communities who speak Portuguese. His efforts yielded positive outcomes, enhancing mutual understanding and support between these communities.

Through the course, Magalhães discerned both common ground and differences, underscoring that dialogue serves as a pathway for mutual growth, even without immediate solutions. As a KAICIID Fellow, he will be involved in several projects in the coming year 2024, notably adapting a game called Diálogo for inter-religious and intercultural dialogue. This adaptation, intended for the youth, aims to foster greater awareness of diverse cultures in classrooms, involving both students and teachers.

Since its inception in 2015, the KAICIID Fellows program has graduated 516 individuals, including 69 graduates from 37 countries this year. The training facilitated 64 initiatives, mainly individual projects, with a global outreach impacting approximately 21,887 people. This achievement marks a significant milestone in the ongoing effort to promote interreligious understanding and harmony.



## Fostering Peace through Dialogue: KAICIID's Initiative in Northern Mozambique

In the final week of November, a significant interfaith dialogue event took place in Pemba, the capital of Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province. Organized by KAICIID's Africa Region programme, the meeting focused on fostering "dialogue between religious leaders and political decision-makers as a tool for conflict prevention" in the region. The event drew a diverse array of attendees, including representatives from the Office of the Secretary of State for Cabo Delgado, the Interreligious Council of Mozambique, the Aga Khan Foundation, Kuendelea (a volunteer association aiding displaced persons from Cabo Delgado), and the Institute for Economic and Social Development Council of Cabo Delgado (IDES CEPCI), along with other institutions.

This gathering aimed to strengthen community bonds and create actionable plans for peace and security in Mozambique. As a pivotal outcome, a commission was established, consisting of local community members, religious leaders, and civil society organizations. This commission, with the support of KAICIID, is set to spearhead initiatives that enhance intercultural peace, contributing significantly to the well-being, prosperity, and most importantly, the security of Mozambique's populace.





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