

KAICIID

United Against Violence in the Name of Religion: Supporting Diversity in Iraq and Syria

18-19 November 2014



KAICIID
CID
DIALOGUE
CENTRE

**KING ABDULLAH BIN ABDULAZIZ
INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR INTERRELIGIOUS
AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE**

Address by the Secretary General of KAICIID	3
Methodology	7
Background	7
Rationale	7
Representation and Participation	8
Working Methodology	9
On Behalf of the KAICIID Board of Directors	10
Speeches	12
Speech by H.B. Patriarch Raphael I Louis Sako	12
Speech by the Grand Mufti of Lebanon	16
Speech by H.E. Dr. Ahmad Mohammad Ali Al Madani, the President of the Islamic Development Bank	19
On Behalf of H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General, Speech by H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, UN High Representative	24
Speech by H.E. Dr. Abdullah bin Abdulmuhsen Al Turki Secretary General, Muslim World League	26
Vienna Declaration	30
United Against Violence in the Name of Religion	30
Recommendations	36
General Recommendations	36
Social Cohesion	36
Media	37
Education	37
Recommended Actions	37
KAICIID Initiatives	38
Preventing Atrocities	38
Empowering Religious Leaders and Youth to Reach Broader Audiences and Advocate Pluralism	38
Educators Preserve Plurality through Interreligious Education	39
Arabic Religious Institutions Network to Support Social Cohesion	39
18 November Sessions	41

Session 2 Diversity in Crisis: Analysis from the Region and Implications for Action	41
Session 3.1: Social Cohesion through Dialogue and Peacebuilding	43
Session 3.2: Social Media and Communication	44
Session 3.3: Citizenship and Interreligious Education	46
SESSION 4: Recommendations, Commitments, Conclusions to the Working Meeting	47
November 19 Sessions	49
Panel 1: Social Cohesion, Diversity and Coexistence	49
Panel 2: Role of Religious Institutions and Civil Society in Building Peace	51
Panel 3 Role of Religion and Education in Countering Violence	53
18 November Programme	55
19 November Agenda	60

Address by the Secretary General of KAICIID

Esteemed Religious Leaders, Excellencies, on behalf of the Board of the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, it gives me great pleasure in extending a very warm welcome to you and high level officials from international organizations and members of the diplomatic corps.



I would also like to greet their Excellencies the representatives of the Centre's founding countries, His Excellency Dr. Nizar Madani, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, His Excellency Mr. Ignacio Ibanez, Secretary of State for Foreign Relations of the Kingdom of Spain and the Holy See's Representative and Observing Member, Father Miguel Ayuso.

Please allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Ibanez on his recent appointment as the Kingdom of Spain's Secretary of State for Foreign Relations and I sincerely wish him all possible success in carrying out this prestigious role.

Ladies and gentlemen, we gather here to stand united against all forms of violence carried out in the name of religion within conflict zones, in particular Iraq and Syria.

I would like to honour the assembled religious leaders here today, and with their kind permission, deliver the remainder of my speech in Arabic.

We, at this international centre, now in its second year, are deeply honoured by the presence of such an eminent assembly of religious leaders from the Arab world, representing the Muslim, Christian, Mandeian, Yazeedi and other religious minority communities. We are also proud to pursue our mandate as the international organization that brings together religious leaders and policy makers.

Situation in Iraq and Syria

In Syria and Iraq many of the religious communities have been torn apart, suffering horrific injustices and humiliation at the hand of terrorists. These terrorists continue to deliberately use the cloak of religion to justify killing, brutality, intolerance and humiliation. They spread fear, cause turmoil and commit injustice on a daily basis. Their terrorist ideology is entirely alien to Islam and to that of any other religion.

Religious minorities are natives and not strangers in their own homelands. Mutual respect and understanding, through dialogue are the only sure means of combatting religious extremism, thereby ensuring inclusion, not exclusion, and the preservation of dignity for all, regardless of creed or ethnicity.

Global digital media communication has been a blessing to the modern world. However, it has been abused by those who seek to exacerbate exclusion by using it as a vehicle to spread hatred of others. Such manipulation of beliefs is totally at odds with the ethics of any religion or faith.

Our world today continues to face increasingly complex issues in the form of local, regional and global conflicts that affect us all. As a result, managing these challenges has become a much more complex affair. There have been successes, and sadly failures, especially when military options have been used as the sole method of resolution. Where military and political solutions have failed, we find anarchy.

Ladies and gentlemen, we gather here today, resolutely united in solidarity to reject all forms of violence perpetrated in the name of religion.

The Contribution of Arab Culture

Our gathering today, one of the most important meetings to be held with religious leaders, international institutions and decision makers, focuses on united action to counter all forms of violence, particularly violence in the name of religion, which is contrary to all religious precepts.

The Middle Eastern region is the common birthplace of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and other faiths. It is a region where the followers of these religions have coexisted for thousands of years. Therefore, we must seek to cement this coexistence.

We must stamp out all forms of injustice suffered by communities no matter who they may be.

We must stand up against the unjust, irrespective of their religion or military might.

We must close ranks to eliminate injustice through respect and cooperation.

We must manage problems rationally and peacefully, not through killing and destruction.

KAICIID's Values

For all of the above reasons, we at the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, seek to contribute to peace-making. We rely on the wisdom of religious leaders and policy makers. We foster respectful and rational dialogue through peacebuilding, training in dialogue and communication skills, and mapping international achievements to support peace. The Centre also builds partnerships with international religious and cultural institutions around the world.

We affirm and hold sacred the principles of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, granting freedom of thought and religious expression. We believe and seek to preserve the sanctity and dignity of human life, regardless of creed, race, sex or language.

These are principles that KAICIID believes in implicitly and are the reason and basis for our mission.

At this international organisation, KAICIID, we operate completely free of any political influence, in particular from the founding countries. Furthermore, we are not subject to any economic pressure from any party, even from the countries and institutions that support us financially.

When the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz announced his initiative in 2005, which won the support of Pope Benedict XVI, as well as other religious leaders and international institutions, he stressed that the principle goals were to serve the entire world, and that they should not be restricted to any institution, at the exclusion of others.

Our staff of 45 women and men from 25 countries have in two years organized over 45 events, engaging more than 3000 participants from over 100 countries, nine conflict zones, and followers of over 30 religions. We have also trained over 250 professionals and youth in interreligious dialogue methods.

We still have a long way to go to, especially in conflict areas. In the Central African Republic, we are contributing to international initiatives to bring peace and reconciliation. Our aim is to extend the same help to other parts of the world equally affected by conflict.

We are also developing a model for cooperation between Christians and Muslims in a number of Arab countries to strengthen the principles of citizenship. In this regard, we believe and stress that Muslims, Christians and other citizens of Arab countries

are united through common citizenship and have all, in their own unique ways, contributed for centuries to the rich and complex cultural fabric that has bred the civilizations of these countries.

Vienna – a Hub for Dialogue

Today, we gather in Vienna, renowned for its diplomacy in addressing global issues. This city hosts many international organizations, such as the United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency and OPEC. Our Centre is the youngest international organization in Vienna and I trust we will succeed in making it a hub for dialogue initiatives, particularly among religious leaders and policy makers.

Once again, we welcome you all and we are certain in the knowledge that this meeting will mark a promising step for your communities and will allow this Center to address problems, enhance communication and build bridges between all groups in any region of the world. We look forward to fomenting extensive partnerships with international institutions and to pursuing together our joint mission of building respect, understanding and peace through dialogue.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very pleasant and enjoyable stay in one of the world's most beautiful and vibrant cities

In conclusion, I will salute you as is customary in my tradition; may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

Faisal Bin Muaammar
Secretary General
King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID)

Methodology

Background

The violence committed in the name of religion in Iraq and Syria threatens the survival of religious minorities, the social and religious fabric of relations between religious communities, as well as Muslim religious institutions and communities in the region. By claiming to act in the name of religion, violent factions brutalize the image of religion, leading to polarization and community tensions in the region and elsewhere in the world. Proceeding from the striving to foster dialogue and to strengthen the foundations of citizenship, to enhance the spirit of moderation, and to establish purposeful and sincere dialogue founded upon the principles of coexistence, mutual understanding, cooperation and common citizenship and based on recommendations from the consultative meeting that was hosted by KAICIID from 20-21 June 2014, on Common Citizenship: Muslims and Christians in Arab Societies, with participants from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia and Syria and with the expressed need for an international conference that gathers high profile religious leaders from the region, to issue a common statement on the crisis in Iraq and Syria, and develop concrete actions with focus on three thematic dimensions, in the frame work of the Peacebuilding Initiative KAICIID organized a two-day Special Conference in November, in Vienna.



Rationale

The conference methodology was designed to guarantee the following:

- Representation and participation of all the stakeholders
- Discussions focused primarily on Iraq and Syria
- Positively framed and approached content – for this reason, the focus was on social cohesion and common citizenship, rather than on war and security
- Ownership of the content and the process by the participants
- Concrete and practical outcomes

Representation and Participation

The participants were divided into three target audiences:

1. High-level stakeholder representation:
 - High-level religious Muslim representation (Sunni and Shiite)
 - High-level religious Christian representation (all the Churches from the region)
 - High-level representation of other religions and ethnicities in Syria and Iraq
 - Policy Makers
2. High-quality, professional-level representation:
 - High-level religious leaders;
 - Activists and practitioners from the region, especially interreligious dialogue practitioners in Iraq and Syria.
3. High-profile, credible international organizations and donors active in Iraq and Syria, such as UNDP, the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, the Islamic Development Bank, and several other UN agencies and IOs.

To broaden the content to include more than a singular focus on Muslim-Christian relations, minority groups, such as Yazidis and the Druz, as well as civil society organizations were included.

During the two day event, representatives of those groups currently at the forefront in Iraq and Syria were present on every panel to ensure that their voices were given a platform and to ensure the conference content stayed relevant to the situation in Iraq and Syria. The chosen panellists were religious leaders who, due to the nature of their work building peace, face daily threats and acts of violence perpetuated in the name of religion.

To keep the conference rooted in the reality facing populations on the ground, KAICIID provided a platform for refugee voices from Iraq during the conference by sharing a KAICIID-produced documentary on the situation of Northern Iraqi refugees (especially Christians and Yazidis).

Working Methodology

- The programme was designed to include a hybrid model of plenary sessions and working groups; high religious leaders and practitioners.
- The sessions were designed to be moderated both by the participants and KAICIID experts to guarantee ownership of the process and content by the participants.
- A special group with 22 high-level religious leaders was created to guarantee all levels of participation. A closed meeting without media or any external pressure was held to establish a safe environment for dialogue and lay the framework for future cooperation.
- The outcomes and recommendations of the working groups were immediately presented to the religious leaders to be put to immediate use throughout the two-day event.
- Following speeches from ministers representing the Council of Parties, the second day highlighted the outcomes from the working meetings, including their recommendations and KAICIID initiatives as concrete follow up actions.

On Behalf of the KAICIID Board of Directors

November 18, 2014



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As a member of the Board of Directors of The King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue....representing the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew....and as believer of dialogue and peace, I give thanks to God for He is the one that has brought us all together in this great city of Vienna, a city that encourages dialogue and peace, and in this Center, KAICIID, an institution that believes in and promotes dialogue and peace.

Today, the world is filled with more sorrow and pain than has been experienced in recent memory. With yet another beheading over the weekend comes more fear and dread; with another attack inside a Synagogue comes more calls to retaliate; more talk of war. Where will this violence take us? When will it end?

It is our human nature to approach fear by fighting, fleeing, or freezing. It is not clear if any of these human responses to fear caused by violence will be the right action to take.

Consider the consequences of our human intervention: If we freeze in fear at this moment in history, those who aim to abolish civil society through the establishment of a brutally enforced caliphate will trample the human rights of untold millions of people, and destroy the cultural heritage of the populations it conquers.

If we retreat into our own homes and flee from the fear, the violence will continue unchecked until tens or even hundreds of thousands of innocents are slaughtered and subdued, with the whole region negatively affected for decades.

If we fight, no one knows what the outcome will be. An all-out war will bring destruction of many kinds, particularly if the fighting eventually leads to obliteration. Even if IS could be stopped, the hatred will live on in the histories of the families who

lose loved ones in this conflict. The seeds for the next uprising are being sown with every act of violence and retaliation.

How can we change the future?

I believe it will take more than our human response; it will take the hand of God to intervene.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, I beseech God to guide our deliberations and give us the wisdom to respond in ways that save lives and property, while moving humanity closer to justice and dignity.

I pray for peace; for a lasting peace that will allow harmony to return to our planet.

I pray that God will give us His eyes through which we can see our 'enemy': eyes of compassion; eyes of love; eyes that see the pain and suffering of all people engaged in these conflicts.

Only then can we see the way toward peace clearly.

Thank you

Metropolitan Emmanuel



Speeches

The conference featured many prominent speakers who shared their thoughts and ideas with the event's participants. This section includes a selection of the many speeches given on 19 November 2014. An additional publication, to be produced at a later date, will include all of the speeches.

Speech by H.B. Patriarch Raphael I Louis Sako

Dear Muslim brothers and sisters everywhere,

I greet you with the greeting of human brotherhood and the common values we believe in.

In my desire not to let our tragedy be a foregone conclusion, and in line with the aspirations of many to take all necessary action in order not to let this tragedy be forgotten, and being highly confident that it is people who construct life and direct public opinion to respect their aspirations, I turn to the moderation of a



significant segment of Muslims all over the world and I address you openly, while carrying in my hand a bloody map of our East and of our suffering Iraq. It is today, as it was throughout the ages, the focus of the world's attention, but we are at an unprecedented historic turning point caused by those who can never be honoured.

By saying this, I want to let you know the deep feelings of pain that I and my Christian brothers have because of our ordeal. I want to appeal to your conscience to do anything you can to liberate the towns of Christians, where they have been living for ages, and to restore their property and rights. I am addressing you in this sense because I am certain that the message encouraging reform is your message, the message of the moderate majority. I will not be far off from reality if I say that a deep-rooted solution can only come from you. The solution can only come from inside and not from outside.

Perhaps your humanity has been shocked, as mine has been, by the barbaric actions against Christians, Yazidis and other minorities in Mosul and towns in the Nineveh

Plain; how they were kicked out of their homes and uprooted from their land and the land of their forefathers on a dark night, without being able to take anything with them and ever since then, until now, they have been facing the dark unknown.

Since we have common human goals, it should be noted that there is a higher law engraved in every human heart. This law imposes itself on every father that carries his child in his arms and on every person who finds another person suffering or facing imminent danger. This law calls us to love relatives or neighbours, particularly the weakest and the youngest of them.

The crimes that Da'sh (the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) have committed and consider legitimate and legal, are in fact a contravention of moral and human ethics.

Places of worship of different schools of thought and religions have been destroyed. Da'sh committed a grave sin when they violated the sanctity of churches and monasteries. They committed a shameful deed when they targeted defenseless structures such as houses of worship established in the first centuries. With bitter hatred, they burnt or sold books, manuscripts and other found treasures and transformed some of these houses of worship into mosques.

The human conscience is ashamed at the legitimization of female captives and of selling them in the slave market at a paltry price as if they were "pieces of scrap." Isn't this evil in its ugliest form? This reminds us of the Beast in Chapter 13 of the Book of Revelation.

These actions have placed the perpetrators in the ranks of organizations and ideologies alongside Nazism and other totalitarian political ideologies that will remain forever a stigma in human history. History will never be merciful to perpetrators, whether planners or executors, of acts that threaten the disappearance of Christians from a place in which they were among the first indigenous inhabitants.

However, contrary to Nazism and other fascist ideologies of the twentieth century, Da'sh claim that they belong to a religion.

This is the shocking thing that causes us to have doubts about the good intentions of those who underestimate it. Christians, Yazidis and members of other schools of thought were targeted in the name of the Islamic religion. Yes, in its name, even if many try not to believe it.

It is shameful that the official Islamic community only releases timid statements of condemnation as an expression of its inability to actively educate the public about the danger posed by the actions that Da'sh commit in the name of Islam.

How can we stand by and watch the killings, suppression and displacement of innocent people? These crimes persistently humiliate humanity as a whole. What type of era is this that turns its back on values; in which human dignity, and the dignity of women in particular, is transgressed and in which the value of life is discarded? All this is done in the name of a religion with a peaceful majority. We and other minorities are targeted and we receive no protection or care. Our people receive threats and are kidnapped; their homes are raided and looted in public - as if that was legitimate. Is there any other worse sin? Our families were living in their own homes with honour and dignity and today they are displaced to various towns and villages, living in tents, caravans or rooms that the Church provides free of charge. Diseases are spreading fast and the displaced are experiencing terrible anxiety.

I am emotionally appealing you to responsibly address the lack of attention by the State, let alone the lack of serious action by the international community to liberate Mosul and the towns of the Nineveh Plain and to allow people to return to their homes. I also appeal to you to expose the regional and international forces that deliberately intervene to guarantee the survival of such lethal cells.

We express our concerns to you in proportion to our anticipation of your moderate stance. We are not only concerned with the weak hopes of a quick return to our hometowns, which has caused many people to seek emigration to any safe place. We are not only concerned that we may just remain a small piece of history eliciting the sympathy of organizations like UNESCO to preserve as a part of historical memory. We call on you, in the midst of these concerns, to assume the responsibility of thinking about our tragedy and to exert pressure and take action to strengthen security and stability so that citizens can go on with their normal lives and so that the country as a whole can progress.

Based on the responsibility shared by all of us, you must also be extremely careful as the growing religious and Takfiri extremism poses a danger to everyone. Do not forget that Christians are indigenous inhabitants of this land and that they have contributed a lot to Arab culture. We call on Arabs today to take a joint position against extremism in a coalition – that could be called the ‘Arab Coalition’ - towards a peaceful solution and to dust off any responsibility for these catastrophic actions against humanity and against your religious principles. Extremism is everywhere and it is inevitable to adopt moderation and to reject and resist Takfiri ideologies and terrorism in the name of religion.

We call on you to find honourable scholars who would stand up and respond to Da'sh's statements, refute their doctrinal arguments, condemn their heinous

practices and declare in one voice that their ideology is a scourge threatening humanity.

We call on educational institutions to promote an open and moderate culture that respects diversity and presents an objective, respectful image of others and guarantees equality and a life of freedom and dignity for all.

Silence is not effective and will allow Da'sh to direct even more strikes to distort Islam. You should not give them the space to do this, because people will begin to believe that Islam is a threat to global peace. We are very confident that you will take action, before it is too late, to prevent a new Tsunami of violence from hitting the area and destroying everything.

We look forward to the day in which Muslims will, officially and in practice, prohibit attacks on all innocent people, whether Muslim or Christian, whether they have faith or not, for recompense and punishment lies solely in the hands of God.

Speech by the Grand Mufti of Lebanon

In the Name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful

All praise to God, the Lord Almighty, and may peace and blessings be upon Muhammad and upon all the messengers of God.

Extremism did not arise in a vacuum; it is the result of deficiencies in the system of values and principles that govern aspects of human relations. It constitutes a violation of generally accepted rules and a revolt against regulations that govern human relations. It establishes new unrecognized rules and resorts to rejected methods under unacceptable pretexts and justifications. One of the most dangerous pitfalls treaded by extremists includes overemphasis on 'preventative measures' to the extent that they suspended the teachings of the sublime



Sharia. They disregarded the Sharia principles of 'public interest' in their ignorance of current affairs and thus became stringent in matters where leniency and ease is prescribed.

Extremism manifests in the form of harsh dealings with people and addressing them improperly, in contravention of God's instruction to observe wisdom. Almighty God addressed his honourable Prophet saying: "By the Mercy of God, you dealt with them gently. Had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so overlook (their faults), and ask (God's) forgiveness for them; and consult their opinion in matters."

Extremists call for sectarianism and bigotry; they fight under a blind flag that is far from Islam. Their conceit and self-admiration are among those morally destructive things against which the Prophet (May God bless him and give him peace) warned against when he said: "Three things are destructive: stinginess that is obeyed, desire that is followed, and a person's conceit."

Extremists violate the sanctity of life, wealth and honour. They do not respect the sanctities of Muslims or others, especially when they delve into the abyss of *Takfir* (excommunication) and accuse people of having left Islam or of never having been Muslims in the first place. This represents the pinnacle of extremism as their ideology has been corrupted to the extent that they regard their wrongdoing to be good. The efforts they exert go to no avail while they themselves believe they are doing good. The Prophet (May God bless him and give him peace) described them as follows: “They pray and fast in such a way that you will consider your prayers and fasting negligible in comparison to theirs. They recite the Qur’an but it does not go beyond their throats and they pass through the religion just as an arrow passes through the target.”

Their distinguishing characteristics, as mentioned by the Prophet (May God bless him and give him peace) include killing Muslims and leave the pagans.

Extremism has negative impacts on the society as it destroys the foundations of social cohesion. It divides instead of uniting. It alienates people instead of bringing them together. Extremists do not care about killing hundreds of thousands of people. They have no mercy for any child, woman, old man or a monk in seclusion. They destroy the community’s heritage and civilization as well as everything the Muslim community has accumulated over the ages, including good relations filled with sentiments of appreciation and respect between Muslims, Christians and others. There are many living examples of that, which fill the pages of history, in application of the Quranic verses that call on people to recognize one another, to unite and to work for the betterment of humanity. God Almighty says: “O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other)). Indeed the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous. God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).”

Terrorism has distorted the tolerant message of Islam. The message that is based on balance, moderation, facilitation, respect for conventions and pledges and honouring human beings regardless of colour, nationality or religion. God Almighty says: “We have honoured the children of Adam.”

The remedy for this starts with proper orientation and meaningful dialogue, which only happens by building trust between scholars and youth. This is dependent on calling to God using wisdom and good words and paying attention to religious discourse.

This requires support of moderate voices that represent the tolerant message of Islam and its enlightened form, and to stand by them in resisting this ideology.

Differences between humans are a necessity of human life and a characteristic of human beings. Every human being has the right to engage with others and to be heard by them, even if he or she has a different belief, orientation, ideology or religion. Almighty God says: "Invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious."

Dialogue with someone who has a different opinion should be gentle, and the best methods should be adopted in order to reach a common ground that unites humanity on the basis of goodness and peace.

In Jordan, we realized, many years ago, the enormous price that our nation and people pay on account of the extremism and violence that has infiltrated us through so many avenues. We spoke frankly to the nation and the world about the danger imposed by these deviations and crimes committed in the name of religion. We called for dialogue between followers of the various Islamic sects and followers of other religions, with a view to clarify the image of Islam and to define the objectives of the religion, which are based on moderation, tolerance and compassion. This was embodied in the Amman Message which His Majesty, King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, launched in 2004, A Common Word and the World Interfaith Harmony Week adopted by the United Nations. HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, religious and cultural advisor to His Majesty King Abdullah II, also participated with 126 scholars from around the world in signing a message addressed to the so-called Islamic State. In this message the scholars refuted the doubts on which the proponents of the Islamic State base their actions and showed these to be false and invalid.

While feeling the need for moderate voices in the Arab and Islamic world, we in Jordan are pleased to present to you our experience in this area.

We present our experience of living together as citizens of one country coming from different religions and races. We also present our experience of dialogue and openness with the world as well as our experience of welcoming hundreds of thousands of our displaced brothers and refugees who fled their homes due to the violence and conflict. I wish this experience will be a lamp that lights the dark path that dominates our reality today.

All praise to God, the Lord Almighty.

Speech by H.E. Dr. Ahmad Mohammad Ali Al Madani, the President of the Islamic Development Bank

The Role of Education, Development and Creating Awareness in Combating Fanaticism, Extremism and Violence

I begin in the Name of God, and may blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of God, his family, companions and all those who follow him.

Mr. Secretary General,

Ladies and gentlemen in attendance,

May blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of God and the rest of God's messengers and prophets.

I would like to pay tribute to this noble forum and I congratulate you for having taken on such an important humanitarian concern. The concern over the conflicts and disputes that arise,



sometimes due to trivial reasons, and which then put the intelligence of humanity and the powers that be, including governments, civil society organizations, nations and individuals, through a critical test, deserve no less than the attention of all of us.

I would like to thank the organizers of this forum for inviting me to make a contribution. Please allow me to address you from three standpoints:

The standpoint of a teacher working in the education sector;

The standpoint of a development professional involved in development and economic revival projects for over 40 years; and

The standpoint of a citizen in our global village that has multiple manifestations of diversity and development.

Mr. Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to start by saying that although I am a teacher and although I love this sacred profession, I have not come to deliver a lesson. I have not come to give definite answers to questions posed in this forum. However, I believe it is necessary to pose some questions in order to stimulate thought. Looking for answers to these questions will help your minds and hearts to find a ray of light that will illuminate the dark and rugged tracts and lead us to a correct way to confront the challenges that stand before us: a way to firstly prevent them and then a way to remedy them.

I maintain that the problem we are facing today is in fact a problem of education. Education is the foundation to which we have not given due credit until now. Educational approaches and methods are the hidden laboratory in which we prepare, whether knowingly or unknowingly, a highly explosive mixture. Without proper care, it is not long before we taste the true bitterness of this mixture, especially at a time when the addition of poverty, ignorance and reactionary unbridled excitement can result in an explosion that restricts man's actions as a civil being.

The problem of education and development go hand in hand. If only we could establish an educational system that accommodates those who are marginalized! If only we could turn the educational system into fertile ground where universal values are grown, not a place where minds are loaded with information calling for discrimination and division! If only we could provide decent living conditions for the millions of unemployed, who failed or dropped out of school, and for those who never had the chance to attend formal schooling! If only we could defuse many of the social tensions and strains that we usually let seethe and thicken in secret until they become a blazing inferno and we find ourselves unable to do what we once could.

Mr. Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

From my standpoint as a development professional, I myself have seen, over a period of four decades, living examples of the impact – both negative and positive - of education on human behaviour. Let me give you an example from the Islamic Development Bank's (IDB) experience with some of our African Member States in early 2000. This experience had a distinct impact on two countries – Chad and Niger – which took part in it. Other neighbouring countries are beginning to now adopt the same approach, having been affected by the consequences of stagnation such as the emergence of extremist and other movements.

Bridging the gap between the traditional educational system and the contemporary educational system in Chad and Niger has been useful in avoiding a clash between the two systems, each of which was leading those who adopted it in a direction that could result in conflict and in each one closing up on itself.

IDB realized at a relatively early stage that the persistence of the current situation in the prevailing education scene increases social division and precipitates uncontrollable reactions. Thus, IDB collaborated with a few countries to bridge the gap between the two systems through an educational model that would provide the population with all the learning and educational tools they need and that would bring their children values, skills and united hearts. We have seen that this has had a positive impact that attracted many other countries that also requested support to follow the same approach after some of them had succumbed to violence. The importance of education is not hidden from any person of reason.

Glorified is God, the Great. We have another story in which the field of development was an arena for harmony, peaceful action and mutual benefit. It is the story of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) of Palestine that won the Economic Innovation Award from the Arab Thought Forum (ATF), chaired by Prince Khalid Al Faisal, for its brilliant use of Islamic financing instruments. YMCA worked with the Al Aqsa Fund in a program to finance small projects for the benefit of poor and marginalized Muslims and Christians in Palestine. YMCA was a pioneer in the application of modes of Islamic finance for small projects. It enabled graduates from institutes, vocational training centers and industrial schools to restore and develop their human, natural and financial capital, as they were able to change course away from poverty and overcome the barriers of competition. In fact, some of them became major players in the market.

Mr. Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I, from my standpoint as a citizen in our global village, having in mind many social cases of vulnerability, believe that there is a third way forward, other than education, to build the forts of peace in people's minds. This third way, which requires immediate action, deals with the urgent treatment of existing problems from multiple dimensions arising from multiple causes. The cultural and intellectual dimensions must receive greater attention because they are the deepest in impact and have the most far-reaching effects. In this context, we have to take action today to pay special attention

to the provision of education for children in Syria, Iraq and all other conflict zones. With education, we can build another world that will enable these children to climb out of the pits of conflict and its consequences, up to to the higher levels of harmony and a peaceful non-destructive life.

In this way, we must develop education curricula as well as our practices in public life, our markets and government offices on the basis of prevention of the risks of conflict, in order to build forts of peace in people's minds instead of digging war trenches in the recesses of their hearts. It is not only peace that I mean. I also mean love, brotherhood, cooperation and all other moral values necessary for the construction of human civilization that cannot be obtain by the sword but only by the pen and by appropriate words and fitting ideas that kindle human sentiments in the hearts of people, especially the disadvantaged, the marginalized and the oppressed whom we sometimes push, unintentionally or unknowingly, to give up their noblest values and adopt extremism, violence and disregard for others.

Mr. Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me now pose the questions originally promised:

Why don't we manage, with little effort and cost, to avoid major problems whose solution will cost us a lot in terms of blood, lives and disabilities as well as precious time, let alone the loss of wealth and capabilities we will have to suffer, and the infrastructure, human relations and human values, which, if we had maintained, would have led us to a wonderful life?

Why do we drown in our attempts to treat the disease after it has progressed to become incurable, instead of focusing on preventing the disease when we are healthy?

Why are most efforts for settling conflicts focused on the use of instruments of violence, oppression and destruction, without paying adequate attention to alternatives and additional options? Is it wise, particularly in this case, to solve a problem with something that would complicate it further, without adding a further dose of another medicine that would prevent the spread of the cancerous cells of the epidemics of division and conflict?

Have we properly considered whether what we are pouring on the blazing fire that is cold water or hot oil?

Why do we fall into one trap after another? Why are we bitten over and over again without managing to derive lessons from every bitter experience we go through, so that we can transform the poison into a preventative vaccine, the misfortune into fortune and the curse into a blessing, and avoid being bitten dozens of times by the same problem?

Mr. Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, I would like to call for a deep inspection of the ways to invest in the triangle of education, creating awareness and development. Drawing the sides of this triangle requires extensive mobilization of the efforts of all players. It is undoubtedly a costly investment but the price is small when compared to the cost of the other approach dominating the arena: the approach of violence for violence and extremism for extremism, the approach of extinguishing the fire with oil.

IDB is pleased to present to you its modest experience acquired over a period of more than 40 years in 56 member states and in more than 70 Muslim communities in non-member states.

I greet you and wish you the best of luck.

Thank you and may God's peace, mercy and blessings be with you.

On Behalf of H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General, Speech by H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, UN High Representative

Your
 Eminences,
 Your
 Excellencies,
 Ladies and
 Gentlemen,
 I have the
 utmost
 pleasure to be



here with you today as United Nations High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, the UN entity which is charged with tackling the cultural and religious tensions. Today, the world is looking at us while we are discussing an emerging challenge that poses serious threat to International Peace, Security and Human Development.

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon has invited me to represent the United Nations on his behalf and deliver his remarks to this auspicious gathering, and with great honour hereby I quote:

“I thank His Excellency Secretary General Faisal bin Muaammar and commend the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue for organizing this timely conference.

You come together at a critical time. Religious and cultural diversity are under sustained attack in Iraq and Syria. Communities that have lived and worshipped side by side for centuries are being driven from their homes and subjected to unspeakable brutality.

In too many other parts of the world, religion and faith are being distorted and abused to justify atrocious violence. World religions founded upon peaceful principle are being cynically manipulated by extremists whose actions undermine the very teachings they profess to uphold.

Against this disturbing trend, I welcome the constructive efforts of religious leaders to promote inclusion, forgiveness and equality.

In Iraq, minority communities and others have been the systematic target of Da'esh, which has committed acts which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. I welcome this establishment of an inclusive Iraqi Government and look forward to its efforts to promote national reconciliation while also seeking regional engagement. This is crucial to ending terrorism and the conditions that breed it.

In Syria, international support for a political solution to the bitter conflict is critical if conflict and the sectarian tensions that have grown with it are to be ended.

The Syrian and Iraqi Governments, as well as all armed groups in areas under their effective control, have the moral and legal responsibility to protect all civilians, regardless of their religion or ethnic affiliation.

The United Nations is dedicated to defending freedom of belief, fostering interreligious dialogue and advancing greater understanding among peoples, including through the Alliance of Civilizations initiative. I look forward to working with all partners to establish peace and stability in the region through dialogue and determined action. Thank you for your commitment and please accept my best wishes for a successful conference.”

(End of quote.)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please accept my open invitation for all of you to work hand in hand with the UNAOC, the organization that I am entrusted to lead in service of humanity. I look forward to concrete engagement with your organizations and personally with you, to develop many important initiatives for our collective security and stability.

I sincerely wish you a successful meeting.

Thank you.

Speech by H.E. Dr. Abdullah bin Abdulmuhsen Al Turki Secretary General, Muslim World League

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Compassionate

Gentlemen,

I greet you at this encounter which brings together personalities keen on spreading peace in the world and on extinguishing hotbeds of conflicts and I thank those in



charge of King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, led by the Secretary General His Excellency Brother Faisal Bin Abdulrahman Bin Muammar, for organizing this meeting as part of the distinguished activities undertaken by the Center. These activities are an extension of the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud which laid down the foundations of interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

I also extend profuse thanks to the countries which founded the Center: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Republic of Austria, for promoting dialogue among various groups of human beings of various religious affiliations, cultural formations, and civilization environments. Dialogue naturally calls for seeking partnerships in order to disseminate values and culture.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia accorded great importance to the topic of dialogue and to dissemination of its culture, domestically and globally, and made it a priority in its cultural endeavors. In the area of dialogue, the efforts of the Muslim World League, which is a popular Islamic international organization, sprang from the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, the activities of the World Islamic Dialogue Conference in Makkah Al-Mukarramah, and the Madrid World Conference, to lay down the firm foundations of a successful and sincere dialogue. These conferences

were followed by other encounters, such as the global encounter in New York at the United Nations General Assembly, the Vienna and Geneva encounters, and other.

Gentlemen,

We must stress through this meeting that we counter negative phenomena in our world, particularly violence, terrorism and extremism, and that we are sincere in making dialogue our path to establish a fair code of values to tackle the crises and challenges affecting the human march.

The phenomenon of violence is deeply rooted in history which is replete of accounts of peoples enfeebled by oppressive foreign or local powers, and forced to throw their citizens into the flames of crushing violence in countless numbers.

We are mostly interested in focusing attention on the reasons that contributed to formation of the phenomenon of violence of various forms and manifestations, and on how to address them objectively and impartially.

There are in our contemporary world many reasons that instigate violence in human beings or contribute to the formation of violent orientations. These reasons include injustice and aggression, violation of sanctities and religious symbols, adopting double standards in dealing with prominent issues, global justice influenced by non-objective standards, and the proliferation of the culture of hate and discrimination on the basis of religious or national affiliation.

Religion comes to the limelight when we speak about instigators of violence, and justification of violent behavior and acts. Undoubtedly, religion has a great influence on human beings' behavioral and ethical orientations due to the inner value of religion itself and how it reflects in peoples' perceptions.

Those who show animosity against religion interpret every aggressive behavior as being religious, based on the belief that religion plays a negative part in peoples' lives, and that it imparts them with aggressive and rancorous feelings that can never make peace with others. Therefore, it is believed that religion is the source and one of the main reasons of violence.

Unfortunately, this passive stance towards religion finds evidence which it uses as pretext, such as persecution of the Rohingya in Burma, the horrific massacres against Muslim communities in Central Africa, the treatment of Palestinians by the Israeli occupation forces in Gaza, Jerusalem, and Al-Aqsa Mosque, the sectoral violence in

Syria, Iraq, Yemen and other areas, and the hostile acts practiced by a number of Muslim groups under the name of Islam and Jihad.

This is an unjust perception of the religion revealed by Allah the Almighty through His prophets and messengers to various nations in various eras in time.

Religion according to the understanding of the Muslim culture, and as expressed in the messages of a large number of messengers, was revealed to worship only Allah, and to liberate people from the paganism fabricated by reason of ignorance and myths, purging souls of the ailments of rancor, envy, selfishness, conceit, hate, and of giving in to fanciful whims and restraining aggressiveness that takes over when one feels the absence of discipline.

On the other hand, religion came to disseminate virtues and promote refined ethics, a love of goodness and treating others fairly and kindly, without discrimination. There are in the Holy Quran dozens of texts that stand evidence to this, including verse 90 of Surat Al-Nahl (the Bees) which says: "God enjoins justice, and the doing of good, and generosity towards [one's] fellow-men and He forbids all that is shameful and all that runs counter to reason, as well as envy; [and] He exhorts you [repeatedly] so that you might bear [all this] in mind".

Based on a positive perception of religion, we hope that different religious leaderships would seek to give the religion the standing that befits it and to enable it to perform its true function in individual and collective lives, namely to pave the way for human beings to become more refined and more attached to their Creator in a relationship that constantly becomes more and more mature, charging the soul with spiritual energy that disciplines behavior and crowns the soul with virtue and noble values, and guides human civilization in an ethical and rational direction.

I also call on religious leaders to keep religion from being used to achieve personal ambitions or political purposes or sectoral intentions, and from being transformed into an energy that breeds rancor and animosity and instigates vengeance.

I would like to articulate on this occasion that acts of violence perpetrated under the name of jihad by a number of networks which claim affiliation to Islam have no place in the Muslim religion and do not represent the intellect of the nation and the march of its civilization, the proof being that these acts are decried by the majority, prominent political and religious leaders and that in most cases, this violence is directed against Muslims who are the first victims to fall.

Therefore, we strongly denounce this behavior and see in it a clear deviation from the path and guidance of Islam, and from the intentions of its message which has been revealed to bestow mercy and bring light to human beings.

May Allah the Almighty grant us success in our endeavors.

Vienna Declaration



United Against Violence in the Name of Religion

Under the auspices of the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, high-level representatives of the major world religious and social institutions have gathered to agree on programs and initiatives that contribute to strengthening the unity against violence in the name of religion to support religious and cultural diversity in Iraq and Syria.

Because the multi-religious nature, KAICIID and its diverse board is an example for commitment to preserving religious and cultural diversity, and unequivocally reject all forms of violent actions, especially the ones that are committed in the name of religion. The center strives to foster dialogue and to strengthen the foundations of citizenship. KAICIID desires to enhance the spirit of moderation, and to establish purposeful and sincere dialogue founded upon the principles of coexistence, mutual understanding and cooperation.

Although conflicts in the world over the past two decades in various regions have caused tremendous grief for us, we recognize that the ramifications of this current conflict have dangerously expanded and targeted the followers of every religion-- Muslims, Christians and others. We unanimously denounce these destructive actions

wherever they may occur. We especially condemn the harrowing and treacherous events that have recently occurred in the Middle East, particularly in Iraq and Syria.

We reject violence in all its forms especially the violence perpetuated in the name of religion because we believe escalating violence and destruction ultimately destroy the entire foundation for social cohesion. In the wake of such losses, there have been hundreds of thousands of casualties— innocent men, women, and children—as well as millions of refugees who have fled or have been forcefully uprooted, exposed to injustice, and driven from their homes. The homelands left behind are scarred, as well, because communities are fragmented by violence and war.

As leaders of various religious and faith traditions, we must oppose persecution



inflicted on all the components of the social fabric especially Christians, Yazidis and other religious and ethnic groups such as Turkmen and Shabak in Iraq and Syria. Persecution of people, violating their sanctity as the case of Yazidi women and enslaving the people are ways contrary to

every human conscience. Persecution and execution of people who exercise their basic human right to worship as they choose contradict noble religious ideals, as well as tear the fabric of civilization, nullifying past humanitarian gains. The effort of many religious leaders over the years to establish a shared ethic of peaceful coexistence between all the segments of the Iraqi and Syrian societies, Christians, Muslims, Yazidis, Turkmen and Shabak.

And, because of the exposition of Islam’s teachings, the Muslims’ values, and civilizational role to a mutilation by extremist groups, which manipulate religion in the service of justifying its killing and destruction against Muslims and others and destructing conducts by harming the innocents, defiling states and their sovereignty, demolishing religious shrines and worshipping places, and imposing hegemonic rules and laws over citizens. These actions which stem from strange ideas that are totally incompatible with our cultures and history, contrast with the genuine Islamic

teachings, and destroy the connections, not just between the followers of diverse religions, but also among the followers of the same faith.

Clearly, the region is in a fragile period of history, and the international and regional complexities of these circumstances are not easily understood, nor solved. Perhaps, the first step is to listen to the appeal of the displaced, the orphans, the widows, and the bereaved. We have gathered today as religious authorities from the Arab countries and the world, in the presence of high level governmental, intergovernmental, and civil society officials to affirm the common bond of the right of every human to follow one's own faith without fear of death or destruction. We raise a joint plea to the powerful and almighty God to strengthen us to shoulder our responsibility at this moment in history. In the shadow of these difficult circumstances, we remain sincere in our convictions, true to our religious teachings and mindful of our humanitarian values.



We gather together to listen to each other, and to think together about possibilities for cooperation to transform the crisis. It is through dialogue and the strengthening of our mutual values of citizenship, that the windows of hope and aspiration will be opened.

We must tear down the barriers of fear, holding grudges and injustice, which divide people and eliminate their dreams and hopes of peace.

We gather together to declare in a unanimous voice, and to abide by the following principles and initiatives:

1- The Principles:

1- We commit ourselves to adopt dialogue as the primary and most potent for resolving conflicts and disagreements, and to support initiatives and institutions that consider dialogue the best method for constructing national peace, coexistence and promotion of common citizenship.

2- We explicitly and completely condemn the serious violation of human rights in Iraq and Syria. We share the indignation of those who have suffer these grave injustices

and arbitrary abuse. Regardless a person's chosen religious tradition, they are entitled to be treated humanely and with dignity. Unchecked mass murder and bloody conflict are correctly categorized as crimes against humanity. We also reject and denounce supporting or sponsoring terrorism. We appeal to the world's leaders and governments, the League of Arab States, the Conference of Islamic Cooperation and the UN Security Council to intervene with the appropriate methods to stop these crimes and to end the conflicts that are destructive to people and to civilization alike. Nothing justifies violating civilians or threatening their lives and livelihood.

3- We declare our solidarity with all who are oppressed due to these events, especially those who have been uprooted and displaced from their homes and homelands. We call upon relevant political powers and international community to spare no effort to restore these people to their cities and villages, and to return their houses and normal living conditions. Further, we call upon all countries who are involved in some way with this struggle, together with the international community and its international organizations to find a rapid and appropriate solution to the issue of refugees in Iraq and Syria. We call upon the world to help countries in which the current situation is threatening stability and creating a crisis in securing the necessary resources for the entire population to survive.

4- Together we repudiate all exploitation of religion in political conflict and the usurpation of religious symbols by extremists used as a means for segregation and a cause for injustice and oppression. At every official spiritual and public level, we reject the fractured teaching and defamation of values within Islam, especially by those who claim Islamic ruler-ship in Iraq and Syria and their followers. We invite all people of faith and good will to condemn these practices and to stand united against these tactics.

5- We assert that every religious, ethnic, cultural or linguistic heritage is an irreplaceable and an inherent part of the Arab culture, rooted in its history, and contributes to the vibrancy and diversity of the



fabric of those communities. We also affirm that each person is vital to the future of these countries as they coexist equally with the same rights and duties to create solidarity between the Muslims and the Christians in the Middle East. Therefore, we call for the preservation of this diversity in the Arabic societies, which has been our legacy for several millennia. Diversity is both a cultural prerogative and an authentic source that reflects the different elements comprising the national identity. We proclaim the imperative need for Christians, Muslims, and other cultural and religious components to become a cohesive unit in Arab societies.



Muslims and Christians.

6- Building upon the past experience of Christian-Muslim coexistence, despite all of the disturbances, relapses and imperfect conduct throughout history, we affirm that this very coexistence is one of the main pillars of the Arab civilization, and serves as evidence of the mutually beneficial relationship between

7- We call for all people to honor--without hesitation or reservation--the human rights and freedoms of every people group. We request special attention be given to freedom of belief and freedom of practicing religious rites, because these are prerequisites to protecting freedom diversity and promoting dialogue. We also stress the necessity of adopting the concept of joint citizenship, which embraces diversity and deems it foundational to executing justice and peace within societies. Peace and

justice cannot be attained without regard for the rule of law and governing bodies. In addition, the role of religious institutions, in collaboration with other societal institutions, are necessary for developing citizenship by means of defining the qualities of citizenship and spreading positive values.

8- Firmly clinging to hope despite the difficulties we are facing, we must not despair

or cease from the work of peace-building, and arriving at an appropriate mutual understanding between the followers of diverse religions. We appeal to all people of faith and good will, striving to build a more



cooperative and peaceful world, to adopt these commitments and to work with us jointly toward achieving this goal.

Recommendations

General Recommendations

- Immediate call to end violence in the name of religion;
- Encourage religious leaders to condemn all violence against others, be it within their tradition or outside, whether majorities or minorities, and to respect their rights;
- Focus on Citizenship, in education and social cohesion;
- Improve national policies, legal frameworks, infrastructure, personal encounters, etc. vis-à-vis majorities/minorities, youth, women, local communities, religious scholars;
- Introduce more dialogue oriented projects proactively;
- Focus on the relationship between religions and states, separation versus harmonization needs further discussion;
- Support displaced people and refugees including reintegration in their homes.



Social Cohesion

- Encourage law and policy makers in majority Muslim countries to strengthen legal rules against violence in the name of religion;
- Counteract poverty and unemployment as main factors for extremism (economic growth is part of the solution);
- Work on developing good self-critical tools and methods in religions, interpretations of religious texts;
- Call for all international and religious organizations to help in the crisis of the Yazidi minorities in particular.

Media

- Create positive campaigns to counter extremist campaigns. Send positive messages to support mainstream voices;
- Establish media relations and trainings regarding the image of the other;
- Invest in youth as messengers for peace;
- Build a grassroots network of youth; youth to youth;
- Make existing information digestible through social media, which is the best way to reach youth.

Education

- Revise principles of education curricula and review curricula on religion (e.g. create religious diversity guide to world faiths);
- Reform educational systems with regard to the image of the other and interreligious relations;
- Design a formal framework for dialogue and exchange, by using religious texts that endorse dialogue;
- Include religious leaders in the creation of curricula, strengthening citizenship and supporting socio-cultural transformation;
- Train curriculum developers along with teachers and educators to include the idea of dialogue;
- Expand exchange of programmes in education and across communities.

Recommended Actions

- Collect, study, acknowledge and promote success stories of interreligious and peace initiatives;
- Introduce IRD education and training to students of religions including developing interreligious dialogue curricula;
- Train religious leaders to disseminate the values of diversity and citizenship;
- Establish a network of local religious leaders who believe in diversity and pluralism;
- Provide a social media platform to increase important moderate voices;
- Provide a training for a large number of youth, and empower them on social media;
- Form a regional follow up committee to enact the recommendations.

KAICIID Initiatives

Preventing Atrocities

- KAICIID is collaborating with the Office of the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide to provide religious leaders the means to help predict and prevent atrocity crimes. The project will be launched at a conference in the first half of 2015.

Empowering Religious Leaders and Youth to Reach Broader Audiences and Advocate Pluralism

- KAICIID is empowering youth leaders to help this new generation preserve pluralism and religious and cultural diversity in future. For instance, in partnership with the UN's Special Envoy on Youth, and with the Right Start Foundation International, we will train youth leaders in dialogue and action in Spring 2015. These youth leaders will then be able to train their peers to use interreligious dialogue to support pluralism in their communities. At the same time, the training will strengthen young journalists' and media activists' ability to reach a broader audience with messages that support pluralism.
- Young people engage their world through social media. KAICIID is training youth leaders and religious leaders to better amplify their social media outreach to advocate plurality. KAICIID also worked with UNESCO to pilot media literacy training in 2014, and will expand both programmes in 2015.



Educators Preserve Plurality through Interreligious Education

- Educators are also crucial partners for KAICIID since they instill in a new generation a culture that will value and preserve social cohesion and dialogue. Together with the Adyan Foundation, a Lebanese NGO that fosters interreligious understanding and social engagement, as well as with other regional partners, KAICIID will convene a conference in April 2015 to support interreligious and intercultural education in the Middle East.

Arabic Religious Institutions Network to Support Social Cohesion

- KAICIID is building a network of Arabic Muslim and Christian religious institutions, universities, and civil society organizations in cooperation with Diyar Consortium and the Global Center for Justice and Humanity.
- KAICIID is also working with ISESCO, the OIC, and Arabic civil society organizations to integrate interreligious dialogue and pluralism in university programmes.



18 November Sessions

Session 2 Diversity in Crisis: Analysis from the Region and Implications for Action

GOAL: Understand regional perspectives on the current state of the crisis and implications for responses.

The objective of the session was to reflect on the nature of the crises and to address the policy failures. It meant to emphasize: the dynamics of violence and incitement involving religion; the resources of indigenous and faith-based approaches in preserving coexistence in the region; and the new needed strategic orientations for faith-based organizations and civil society in the region. The opening speakers provided some analysis for the situation in the region and managed to identify several problem areas that contributed to the crisis and/or its escalation – their analysis was complemented by questions and input remarks from the participants.

There was great emphasis on the importance of supporting all minorities in the region – as all are facing difficulties, especially Yazidis and women in particular. However, the participants felt reluctant to use the terminology “minority-majority”. They emphasized that the relationship in the region should be based upon common citizenship – and “building a common identity”. Some participants stated: “we are all part of the problem” ... “there are even more Muslims dying from terrorism”. Participants stated that the roots of the problem are a mixture of social, economic, political and educational reasons that are primarily related to the weakness of the state.

The latter point contributed to a longer discussion, regarding the separation of religion and state versus a harmonious relationship between the two. The participants did not come to an agreement, although those in support of the harmonious duality said that this relationship does not contradict the civil state concept – the topic was left open for further future discussions. Other elements mentioned that contribute to the escalation of conflict included media, as well as international influence and support. Participants agreed that security and military solutions will complicate the situation even further. Concerning media, they suggested greater investment in the

constructive role that media could play – some participants suggested that KAICIID should develop a Media Observatory project.

“Take actions to counter the misinterpretation through religious leaders and education reform.”

On the role of religion, the participants admitted that both religion and religious texts are employed and used for violence, exclusion and political mobilization. However, the problem lies in the interpretation of religious texts rather than

the text itself. Therefore, there is a need for reviewing the interpretations. Participants further emphasized that greater self-evaluation and more action through religious leaders and education reform should be taken to counter the misinterpretations – a greater focus on moderate religious discourse is needed.

On education, especially religious education, the participants stated that it is part of the problem and needs serious reform. They emphasized that the reform should include two main areas: interpretation of religious texts and interreligious education itself – “theology students should learn about other religions”. More educational exchange programmes across religions are needed and should be implemented. Participants recommended the production of a curriculum for interreligious education and citizenship.

Other recommendations included: a greater focus on the legal framework that protects diversity and common citizenship; more investment in interreligious and community-building activities and projects; urgent support

“Theology students should learn about other religions.”

to help displaced people and support their safe return to their homes; religious institutions should take a more active and practical role in promoting common citizenship and countering extremist discourse; and a greater focus on success stories from the region. There is a lot of good work that is happening on the ground by the participants of this conference and others in the region. Such positive initiatives should be highlighted and promoted – “to focus on the filled part of the cup”.

Session 3.1: Social Cohesion through Dialogue and Peacebuilding

GOAL: Generate recommendations and action announcements to pave the way for future collaborations, to improve the effectiveness and scope of social cohesion activities in the region.

The session started with the presentation of the agenda, the goals and the outcome

“Religion is a gift of God to humanity, we should accept this gift as an aid through our lives.”

of discussions. The moderator summarized the speech of every speaker highlighting the most important points addressed. These points are as follows:

- There is an urgent need to reevaluate our educational curricula at all levels from primary to post - secondary and include/integrate the concept of social cohesion.
- Poverty and unemployment are among those factors responsible for Daesh’s expanding membership. Being aware of the important role they play, and including economic growth must be part of the solution.
- A mass media tools to promote diversity, dialogue and peace could be part of an effective solution; for example a global TV channel exclusively broadcasting programs against violence and extremism.
- It is essential to encourage law and policy makers in Muslim countries to think about establishing legal rules against violence in the name of religion.
- There is an urge to unify erudite voices of Muslim thinkers to give one voice to different existing fatwas and declarations.
- Emphasizing on the importance and the role of youth in all activities directly or indirectly related to dialogue especially interreligious dialogue is a must.
- We need to admit that there is a lack of sufficient emphasis on diversity and social cohesion in the works of Muslim thinkers and scholars.
- A special committee should be formed to defend the right of Christians to co-exist among Muslims, and there should be more international conferences focusing on that topic.

- To achieve social cohesion and peaceful living among each other, people should go back to shared human values and implement them in all aspects of our social life.
- There is an urgent call for all international and religious organizations to help with the crisis of the Yazidi minority in Iraq. Yazidi refugees live in inhumane conditions in their camps, especially with winter approaching, and are in desperate need of all/any kind of help. *“Giving the right education to the youth is like planting a seed that will bear the fruit of peace for the future.”*
- There is also a call for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Syria to help return all Yazidi women and children who have been kidnapped and sold.
- Organizations working in the field of dialogue and promotion of peace (e.g. KAICIID) should collect and document examples of religious communities helping others from outside their communities in need (e.g. Muslims helping Christians). These examples should be promoted among local and international religious communities.
- Muslims need to accept the necessity of critics in any dialogue and work on developing effective self-criticizing tools and methods.

Session 3.2: Social Media and Communication

GOAL: Identify actions and potential areas of cooperation in which participants will address the consequences of violence in the region through their social media and communications activities.

“Most of today’s youth discover extremism through the internet.”

The session opened with a summary of the current status of social media as a tool for engaging youth and combatting extremism. Participants were asked to focus on initiatives, challenges and recommendations related to social media. A major challenge immediately identified included the existence of a fertile online space that propagates violent ideas and is not restricted by borders. This space is occupied by an isolated and frustrated youth that is vulnerable to extremism.

At the opening the challenge caused by the generational divide was highlighted: the most violent ideas come from youth, while those working to counter radical ideologies are significantly older.

Among the first recommendations was a call for youth trainings, conducted by religious groups, to equip young people with the tools and information to counter extremist ideas with a positive message.

A further suggestion centered on addressing the discourse of violence on social media. Also discussed, was the need to establish monitoring that tracks hate speech across all media platforms – an action that can only be successfully undertaken in partnership with the media themselves. Participants agreed that hate speech needed to be tackled on a case-by case basis – not through the wholesale banning of websites.

Alternative, user-generated messaging, delivered by influential, credible messengers, is needed to counter hate speech (using like-for-like content that mirrors what the extremists are using e.g. [Abdullah X](#)).

“One reason why the social media are so important is that they provide individuals a forum on which to find ideas that may not be acceptable in the social environment.”

There was a call for a redefined role of religion and guidance for youth on how to use the Internet as a vessel into which to channel their energies – particularly youth who feel persecuted or marginalized by authority.

The session participants agreed that while there were a number of networks already in existence, these needed to be organized in order to magnify and better leverage their influence. These networks should not be administered by government or religious authorities, but by the youth themselves.

There was a call to unpack the contents of the open letter by 126 Sunni authorities, (issued in September 2014, condemning the actions and ideologies of the Islamic State) and for this information to be shared via social media.

The meeting concluded with a repetition of the overarching themes: the importance of placing the spotlight on the youth as the messenger, as much as on the message itself; and the need to coordinate existing, fragmented efforts by

youth (with limited older generation intervention) to amplify the voices of the moderate on the Internet.

Session 3.3: Citizenship and Interreligious Education

GOAL: To identify challenges of citizenship and interreligious education and potential for exchange and dialogue promoting reconciliation and peaceful coexistence in post-conflict Syria and Northern Iraq.

Participants in the session reviewed and discussed the current challenges such as *“Education is the highest priority in fighting violence and extremism.”* the lack of religious education curricula and the problem of interpretation of Islamic Education according to the lecturers’ inclination and also the abuse of religious symbols. They also discussed the concept of citizenship and the challenges in its application. These include the existent loopholes in the constitutions and laws and the lack of specialized studies reducing the gap between citizenship and religion. The participants therefore agreed there is a need to create a “Civilizing Cultural Project” in the region that addresses Education and Citizenship and recommending reviewing strategies for education, curriculum development, teacher training and the introduction of inter-religious dialogue curriculum to counter sectarianism. They also

“Education has to focus on common ground of all the communities we belong to.”

“A formal framework for dialogue is needed that is developed by using religious texts that reinforce dialogue.”

stressed the consecration of the concept of citizenship on the basis of diversity rather than limiting it to forms of nationalism uplifting certain groups in the society. They also recommended the creation of effective initiatives backed up by strong political will and participation of civil society based on inclusiveness especially with regards to women and youth. They also noted the need to establish a formal framework for religious dialogue using common religious texts that impose dialogue and the importance of the effective role to be played by a well fed and guided media to support dialogue.

SESSION 4: Recommendations, Commitments, Conclusions to the Working Meeting

In this session, spokespersons from the three earlier breakout groups, provided feedback on their groups' discussions and suggested recommendations and action points. The moderators facilitated the discussions and the rapporteurs compiled the recommendations and action points that were agreed upon by the participants.

During the discussion, the participants emphasized how crucial it is to stand up against violence and extremism and to take advantage of all scientific institutions and laws in order to stop violence in the name of God. In other words, violence in the name of religion is to be rejected by all religions - Islam and others. They agreed on the importance of pluralism and religions' diversity in the societies of the Region. They pointed out that education and citizenship are important in the context of supporting religious and cultural diversity in Iraq and Syria. They called for the reevaluation of education curricula in the Region, in order to raise awareness about terrorism, peace and coexistence. A number of participants agreed that the recommendations of this conference should comprise scholars' contributions from abroad. They called for scholars from around the world to condemn the Islamic State (IS), in order to have an impact on youth and make them realize that IS is not related to Islam. They referred to the joint effort of Sunni leaders that denounced the IS as a positive example of joint efforts to condemn and reject violence. However, the participants asked for concrete action and agreed that general discussions are necessary but insufficient to achieve the final goal. They confirmed that practical measures need to be implemented in the Region.

Moreover, some of the participants stressed that political debate should be strengthened and influenced with the guidance of international organizations. A network of organizations and institutions that should discuss how to provide assistance to the region could be established. They called on international organizations to criminalize any form of financing terrorist organizations. They asked for another meeting to be organized, where NGOs, international organizations, donors, religious institutions and other members of civil society would participate in order to find a way to practically implement the recommendations of this Conference. They specified that issues such as corruption and wrong interpretation of religion are social challenges that should be tackled.

A fraction of participants called for action in order to help all Yazidi victims, especially women and children who have been kidnapped and sold. They agreed that the violence in Iraq and Syria was conducted against all layers and members of society.

Participants agreed that stories about people from different religions helping each other in challenging times need to be collected and shared. These stories are seeds to rebuild trust among different communities in the Region. They called for KAICIID to consider taking the lead role in these activities. Several of the participants suggested forming a committee to follow up on the Conference. KAICIID could form a working group in charge of reviewing the curricula, establishing a network of local religious leaders who are in favor of the right interpretation of religious texts and who are willing to work with neighbors and share common challenges. Finally, they agreed that positive messages from the religious leaders of the region should be disseminated to the wider public.

November 19 Sessions

Panel 1: Social Cohesion, Diversity and Coexistence

Moderator: Prof. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Senior Special Advisor, KAICIID Dialogue Centre



The goal of this panel was to determine paths toward social cohesion, preservation of diversity and coexistence of the different groups in the Iraq and Syria region. Panellists drew attention to who the regional actors are and

how they are addressing the consequences of violence in the region. The members of the panel discussed what kind of projects, programmes and services are currently available in the region and the challenges that they face. This identification process was part of a greater goal to outline the overall picture in order to develop meaningful recommendations toward a post-conflict peace and reconciliation process and move toward a celebration of diversity over generations.

The panel consisted of the following speakers: H.E. Abdel-Latif Derian (Grand Mufti of Lebanon), H.B. Patriarch Gregory III Laham (Melkite Greek Catholic Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, and Alexandria and Jerusalem), H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mutlaq (Member, Supreme Religious Council; President, Board of Directors of King Abdul Aziz Center for National Dialogue of Saudi Arabia), Sayyid Ali Al-Hakeem (Director, Al-Hakim foundation, Lebanon), H.E. Sheikh Mahmoud Abdulaziz Al Anni (Head, Association of Iraqi Muslim Scholars), Mir Breen Tahseen (Re. of His Sublime Highness Mir Tahsin Saied Beg, the Head of the Yazidi Community), and H.E. Mr. Adama Dieng (Under-Secretary General, Special Adviser, Secretary General on the Prevention of Genocide).

The panellists spoke wholeheartedly about the importance of coexistence, highlighting the fact that the different groups in the region have lived together for over 1000 years. The speakers emphasized the mutual desire of the groups in the region to coexist and the need for Arab states to cooperate and act to intervene in the region.

It was mentioned that close coordination among countries within the Arab League does not exist and that cooperation among states in the Arab League and the Gulf states is integral for creating meaningful intervention.

Several recommendations revolved around youth. Several panellists mentioned the importance of youth and the role of socio-economic problems in drawing youth toward extremism. It is important to address these issues by establishing job



opportunities for youth. Sheikh Al-Aani recommended that career seminars be established to foster skill development and that some programmes currently exist for Sunni Muslims, as well as for Yazidis, but that youth programmes have to go much further. Patriarch Laham expressed the need for youth programmes to focus on socio-economic issues, religious education to deter extremism, centres for youth to deal with post-traumatic stress, as well as dialogue programmes to alleviate tensions between groups and reintegrate youth who initially turned towards extremism but have since left extremist groups. They should not be alienated but instead should be helped.

Overall the speakers felt that not enough was being done by religious leaders in the region to counter the movement towards extremism. The Grand Mufti of Lebanon expressed the need to reform religious institutions, especially the messages conveyed to youth. Religious institutions' role should serve pluralism. Sheik Al-Mutlaq discussed the responsibility of religious leaders in building and preserving empathy and compassion for fellow human beings in the minds of individuals, especially the youth. Adama Dieng reiterated the role of religious leaders in creating and preserving empathy for fellow human beings, emphasizing the need for positive messages within religions and the need to build dialogue among groups.

Overall the panel determined that some programmes exist in the region with a focus on youth and government programmes to combat extremism, but that there is little cooperation among states, as well as organizations towards this effort. UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng invited the Austrian government

to increase their support for KAICIID in the Centre's efforts to promote dialogue, especially regarding the conflict-ridden Iraq and Syria region.

Panel 2: Role of Religious Institutions and Civil Society in Building Peace

Moderator: Sam Rizk, Programme Advisor, United Nations Development Programme



The objective of this panel was to identify the extent to which the narrative of violence in the name of religion can be reversed and reclaimed by religious institutions and civil society through media and social media activities. Moreover, the panellists discussed the different approaches to strengthen collective action in order to counter and overcome messages of hate, while still respecting freedom of expression and religious diversity. In addition, a discourse was held on possible methods to create room for dialogue between regional actors.

The panel consisted of the following speakers: H.E. Sheikh Dr. Shawki Ibrahim Allam (Grand Mufti of Egypt), His Eminence Archbishop Shahan Sarkassian (Archbishop of Aleppo, Rep. of H. H. Catholocos Aram I Keshishian), H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Habbash (Palestine Chief Religious Justice), H.E. Metropolitan Isaac Barakat (Metropolitan of Germany and Central Europe, Rum Orthodox Church), Mrs. Antonella Caruso (Director of Middle East and West Asia Division, UN Department of Political Affairs), Sheikh Sami Abil-Mona (Head, Culture and Dialogue Committee, Druze Council).

First and foremost, the panellists unanimously rejected the exercise of violence in the name of religion and identified extremism as a global evil that has to be countered with a global strategy. They agreed that the international community needs to unify its efforts to counter the terrorist threats, to find solutions to overcome these problems and to ultimately work together to promote peace and support diversity.

Furthermore, the necessity to tackle the root causes of terror and violence was identified as a long term solution that is needed now more than ever. Intercultural and interreligious dialogue therefore has to be promoted through social media in order to reach the youth and to build trust within the younger generations.

It was further stated that it should be of highest importance for religious institutions to promote social cohesion and education to face common threats against society and communities. Moreover, the appeal for actions to prioritize social cohesion in order to strengthen social ties was expressed. The panel also called for peace, understanding and coexistence.

Archbishop Sarkassian expressed the need for dialogue to move beyond an intellectual path towards the aim of mutual understanding to deepen the sense of togetherness. He expressed the fact that extremism is not a regional but a global concern.

In touching on some examples of tangible programmes, the Grand Mufti of Egypt described youth programmes taking place in Egypt to counteract extremist ideas. One programme brought together 500 youth in dialogue discussing Islam as a religion for peace and development, not destruction. Another programme is the launch of a social-media campaign and a website answering questions about ISIS.

Antonella Caruso of the UN Department of Political Affairs reminded the audience of the need to tackle root causes of terror and violence and that these causes can result in mistrust and doubt in a state's ability to protect its citizens. She emphasized civil society's role in building trust, fostering the education of youth and preserving cultural heritage. Sheikh Abil-Mona built on this idea by recommending the use of social media to promote culture and education, as well as deter hatred.

The panellists felt that although some programmes have been established, more needed to be done by religious institutions and civil society to build peace and social cohesion. These programmes should be more wide-reaching than the Iraq and Syria region, since extremism is a global problem. Above all, dialogue and social media were emphasized as key tools for a peaceful coexistence.

Panel 3 Role of Religion and Education in Countering Violence

Moderator: Rev. Prof. Fadi Daou, Chairman of Adyan

The objective of this panel was to identify the role of religion and education in countering violence and contributing to peace in the Arab region. The panellists discussed the different approaches to strengthening



education programmes and projects in the region in order to counter the distorted messages of religion that are shared by extremists, especially among youth. In addition, a discourse was held on possible methods to establish new, or enhance existing cooperation among regional actors with a focus on education.

The panel consisted of the following speakers: H.E. Sheikh Abdul Karim Khasawneh, Grand Mufti of Jordan; H.E. Dr. Abbas Shouman; H.E. Bishop Nasser Gemayel, Bishop of Notre Dame du Liban de Paris, Maronite Church; H.E. Mrs. Bahia Al Hariri, President, Al Hariri Foundation; Rev. Dr. Safouat Al Baiyadi, President, Protestant Community of Egypt; Sheikh Abdallah bin Mahfudh bin Bayyah, President, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies; H.E. Bishop Mor Dionysius Isa Gurbuz, Patriarchal Vicar of Switzerland and Austria, Syrian Orthodox Church

The panellists stressed that offering education to young people is the first step to preventing war in the future. President of the Hariri Foundation, Bahia al Hariri stressed that rebuilding schools and promoting education is the only path towards coexistence and reintegration into society for the youth of Iraq and Syria. Intercultural and interreligious dialogue therefore has to be promoted through education in order to reach the youth and to build trust within the communities. The participants discussed the concepts of religion, and agreed that peace needs to be enshrined as one of the

highest principles. They agreed that terrorism has diverted the peaceful message of Islam. Sheikh Abdallah bin Mahfudh bin Bayyah expressed how educating and training youth to become messengers of peace can further alleviate radicalization. In this regard, the participants concurred that education is a solution to countering fundamentalists' misuse of religion in the Arab region.

They agreed that dialogue is the best method for reaching an understanding among



different religions and achieving common peace. They stressed that extremists misrepresent religious rules, they create new ones that are not recognized and use unacceptable means under false religious

pretexts. To counter these problems, religious leaders also have a role to play in the education process. Bishop Nasser Gemayel pointed out that religious leaders can train and support teachers in explaining basic principles of religion. Their role can extend to work on social moderation by cooperating with governments and decision makers to develop better policies in education and the creation of employment opportunities to combat unemployment.

Finally, the panellists reached an agreement that promoting dialogue and education is of highest importance for the societies that are facing violence and social challenges. The appeal for actions to prioritize education in order to strengthen social ties and provide a better future were re-affirmed. The panel called for the immediate cessation of war, reconstruction of the communities from the Region and the creation of incentives to support educational processes.

18 November Programme

UNITED AGAINST VIOLENCE IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

SUPPORTING RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

International Conference Vienna, Austria

PROGRAMME

NOVEMBER 17: ARRIVAL DAY

NOVEMBER 18: CLOSED WORKING MEETINGS

Location: Hilton Stadtpark

-
- SESSION 1 Introductions – Room: Klimt I-II
-

9:00—9:10

Official welcome and framing the meeting

H.E. Mr. Faisal Bin Abdulrahman Bin Muaammar, KAICIID Secretary General

Dr. Mohammad Al Sammak, KAICIID Board Member

9:10—9:20

Self introductions

9:20—9:30

What does KAICIID do? How can partners work with KAICIID in these fields?

- *Social Cohesion*
- Peacebuilding Initiative
- Peace mapping
- Dialogue training
- Multi-religious Collaboration (MCC)
- *Social Media and Communication*
- Media Programme (Social Media training for dialogue practitioners, MediaWise training for religious leaders)

- *Interreligious Education including exchange and dialogue*
- Interreligious Education Programme: policy maker support, knowledge dissemination, curriculum and assessment tools
- Online course in Interreligious Dialogue

SESSION 2 Diversity in Crisis: Analysis from the Region and Implications for Action – Room: Klimt I-II

GOAL: Understand regional perspectives on the current state of the crisis and implications for responses.

Discussion

The moderated plenary discussion aims to present reflections on the nature of the crises and to address the policy failures. This discussion will highlight

- the dynamics of violence and incitement involving religion,
- the resources of indigenous and faith-based approaches in preserving coexistence in the region,
- new needed strategic orientations for faith-based organizations and civil society work in the region in regard to recent developments.

Discussion of each organization’s work falls mainly in the breakout sessions.

Questions for discussion:

1. What strategies are actors in the region focusing to counter the dynamics of violence and religious or sectarian exclusion?
2. Where are the priorities and capacity gaps for faith-based organizations to work on the re-establishment of diversity and peace post-conflict?
3. What are the challenges to cooperation among faith-based and other international organizations?

11:15—11:45 COFFEE BREAK – Gallery Foyer

**SESSION 3 Dialogue Addressing the Consequences of Violence in the Region:
 Three Action Areas – Room: Klimt I-II**

- 11:45—13:30

Breakout sessions

3.1 Social Cohesion through Dialogue and Peacebuilding – Room: Berg

Goal: Generate recommendations and action announcements to pave the way for future collaborations, to improve the effectiveness and scope of social cohesion activities in the region.

Questions to be addressed:

1. What are existing resources and initiatives that support social cohesion in your community?
2. What are the gaps and challenges in addressing social cohesion and diversity in your society?
3. What recommendations do you have for actors working on these issues, including international organizations, interreligious and religious organizations?

3.2 Social Media and Communication – Room: Zweig

Goal: Identify actions and potential areas of cooperation in which participants will address the consequences of violence in the region through their social media and communications activities.

Questions to be addressed:

1. What are the examples of successful social media practice in the region and their impact?
2. What does an institution need to become active in social media to counter the discourse of violence and exclusion?
3. What recommendations do you have for individuals and institutions to increase their visibility and voice?

3.3 Citizenship and Interreligious Education – Room: Schnitzler

Breakout Session on Citizenship and Interreligious Education: Integrating Exchange and Dialogue

Goal: To identify challenges of citizenship and interreligious education and potential for exchange and dialogue promoting reconciliation and peaceful coexistence in post-conflict Syria and Northern Iraq.

Questions:

1. What are current models of interreligious education emerging in the region? How do they incorporate dialogue and exchange?
2. What are priorities and needs in formal education, and non-formal education including online resources and tools?
3. What recommendations do you have for collaboration in this field?

13:30–15:00 LUNCH BREAK Buffet-style Networking – Gallery Foyer

SESSION 4 Recommendations, Commitments, Conclusions to the

- **Working Meeting** – Room: Klimt I-II

15:00–17:00

Spokespersons give feedback on each breakout group discussion, suggested recommendations and actions points.

1. What are the common concrete recommendations?
2. Action: What can we do together?

18:00

Transfer to KAICIID Headquarters – Lobby Ground Floor

18:30

Presentation at the Hall of Dialogue: Recommendations of the Day

- Welcome from H.E. Mr. Faisal Bin Abdulrahman Bin Muaammar,
KAICIID Secretary General
- Highlighted Recommendations of the Day
- Comments by Metropolitan Emmanuel Adamakis, Exarch,
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and KAICIID Board Member

19:15

Informal Reception – KAICIID First Floor

20:30

Transfer back to Hotel

19 November Agenda

UNITED AGAINST VIOLENCE IN THE NAME OF RELIGION SUPPORTING
 RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN IRAQ AND SYRIA

International Conference

Vienna, Austria

PROGRAMME

NOVEMBER 19: PUBLIC SESSIONS

Location: Hilton Stadtpark

8:30 Opening, Recommendations, Action Commitments – Park Congress I-II

Welcome from H.E. Mr. Faisal Bin Abdulrahman Bin Muaammar, KAICIID Secretary General Council of Parties Ministerial Representatives

- H.E. Dr. Abdullah bin Abdulmuhsen Al Turki, Secretary General, Muslim World League
- H.B. Patriarch Raphael I Louis Sako, Patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church
- Rev. Father Miguel Ayuso, KAICIID Board of Directors
- On behalf of the United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations
- H.E. Dr. Ahmad Mohammad Ali Al Madani, the President of the Islamic Development Bank

RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTION ANNOUNCEMENTS Policy recommendations and action announcements regarding implementable strategies for social cohesion, dialogue, social media, peacebuilding, ending abuse of religion, promoting a culture of dialogue, inter- religious education, respect of difference and diversity management.

KAICIID COMMITMENT KAICIID announces its own set of programmatic actions and partnerships for 2015 to advance the objectives of the Conference.

MC invites all Religious Leaders who wish to join in the photo to proceed to the platform.

PANEL 1 Social Cohesion, Diversity and Coexistence – Park Congress I-II

10:00 – 11:30

How are regional actors addressing the consequences of violence in the region? What kinds of projects, programmes and services are being offered, and what are the existing challenges?

To what extent are religious organizations and policy makers cooperating to strengthen social cohesion and offer relief to those affected by the conflict? How can we begin to work toward a post-conflict peace and reconciliation process? How do we get future generations to celebrate diversity?

Moderated Session

- **H.E. Abdel-Latif Derian**, Grand Mufti of Lebanon
- **H.B. Patriarch Gregory III Laham**, Melkite Greek Catholic Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, and Alexandria and Jerusalem
- **H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Al-Mutlaq**, Member, Supreme Religious Council; President, Board of Directors of King Abdul Aziz Center for National Dialogue of Saudi Arabia
- **Sayyid Ali Al-Hakeem**, Director, Al-Hakim foundation, Lebanon
- **H.E. Sheikh Mahmoud Abdulaziz Al Anni**, Head, Association of Iraqi Muslim Scholars
- **Mir Breen Tahseen**, Re. of His Sublime Highness Mir Tahsin Saied Beg, the Head of the Yazidi Community
- **H.E. Mr. Adama Dieng**, Under-Secretary General, Special Adviser, Secretary General on the Prevention of Genocide

11:30—12:00 COFFEE BREAK – Prefunction Area

PANEL 2 Role of Religious Institutions and Civil Society in Building Peace

– Park Congress I-II

12:00 – 13:30

Communication and social media are a contested space in the conflict, where ideas and messages rather than missiles are the weapons. To what extent can the narrative of violence in the name of religions be reversed and reclaimed by religious institutions and civil society, including through effective communication? How can we strengthen collective action to counter and overcome messages of hate, while still respecting freedom of expression and religious diversity? How can we create room for dialogue among regional actors?

Moderated by Dr. Samuel Rizk, Programme Advisor, Regional Bureau for Arab States UNDP

- **H.E. Sheikh Dr. Shawki Ibrahim Allam**, Grand Mufti of Egypt
- **His Eminence Archbishop Shahan Sarkassian**, Archbishop of Aleppo, Rep. of H. H. Catholocos Aram I Keshishian
- **H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Habbash**, Palestine Chief Religious Justice
- **H.E. Metropolitan Isaac Barakat**, Metropolitan of Germany and Central Europe, Rum Orthodox Church
- **Mrs. Antonella Caruso**, Director of Middle East and West Asia Division, UN Department of Political Affairs
- **Sheikh Sami Abil-Mona**, Head, Culture and Dialogue Committee, Druze Council

13:30—14:30 LUNCH – Park Congress II

PANEL 3 Role of Religion and Education in Countering Violence

– Park Congress I-II

14:30 – 16:00

The conflict threatens the very existence of education that promotes dialogue and interreligious understanding, and thus undermines opportunities for an entire generation to peacefully coexist. How can we preserve interreligious education within Iraq and Syria, as well as among refugees and IDPs? To what extent are religious leaders responsible for encouraging dialogue with Others? In a post-conflict environment, how do we secure the development of education that is sensitive to dialogue and diversity?

Moderated by Rev. Dr. Fadi Daou, Chairman, Adyan

- H.E. Sheikh Abdul Karim Khasawneh, Grand Mufti of Jordan
- H.E. Dr. Abbas Shouman, Deputy, Al Azhar
- H.E. Bishop Nasser Gemayel, Bishop of Notre Dame du Liban de Paris, Maronite Church
- H.E. Mrs. Bahia Al Hariri, President, Al Hariri Foundation
- Rev. Dr. Safouat Al Baiyadi, President, Protestant Community of Egypt
- Sheikh Abdallah bin Mahfudh bin Bayyah, President, Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies
- H.E. Bishop Mor Dionysius Isa Gurbuz, Patriarchal Vicar of Switzerland and Austria, Syrian Orthodox Church

16:30 Closing – Park Congress I-II

CONFERENCE STATEMENT

CLOSING REMARKS AND DEDICATION – KAICIID BOARD MEMBERS