

International Interreligious Affairs monthly highlights, January 2010

David Rosen

USA – New York and Provo

Following the AJC Board of Governors meeting I flew on to Utah to deliver the Truman Madsen memorial lecture at Brigham Young University in Provo. The late Professor Truman Madsen had been a leading Mormon theologian and scholar who had also been Director of the Jerusalem Center of BYU where I had been on the faculty. I had enjoyed a very special personal friendship with him as I continue to do with his family and associates.

The lecture, attended by leadership of the university and the church and many of my former students as well as former colleagues, was to a full house in the auditorium at BYU's Wheatley Institution (of which Professor Madsen was the first director) on the subject of Religion and Peacemaking in the Middle East and received local media coverage (see:-

<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/705358620/Rabbi-Religion-key-to-Mideast-peace.html>).

Rome

I went on to Rome for two events.

Firstly I had been invited (together with my four colleagues of the permanent delegation of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel for dialogue with the Holy See) to attend the historic visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the Great Synagogue, where we were seated on the dais next to the Holy Ark, behind the Pope and the chief Rabbi, together with our Catholic counterparts on the Bilateral Commission (see below.)

My report on the significance of this event went up on the AJC website (see:- <http://www.ajc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=ijlTI2PHKoG&b=1531915&ct=7821995> .)

The other event was the ninth meeting of the Bilateral Commission of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and the Holy See. This took place on the following two days, hosted by the Vatican, and focused on Jewish and Catholic teachings concerning the environment (see:-

http://212.77.1.245/news_services/bulletin/news/24992.php?index=24992&lang=po : http://www.catholicweb.com/media_index.cfm?fuseaction=view_article&partnerid=24&article_id=4263)