

## Monthly Highlights

July 2013

### *International Interreligious Affairs*

#### Sarajevo

The international Muslim-Jewish Conference (<http://www.mjconference.de/>) brings together some hundred young Muslims and Jews from around the world who prepare, run and staff the conference and its follow up. The conference (which has become so successful that the organizers have to decline far more applications to attend than they accept) was held this year in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. This Muslim country, the municipality of Sarajevo, the local Muslim and Jewish leadership, all enthusiastically supported an extremely successful and moving conference.

I serve on the Advisory Board of the MJC and this year I attended the conference and addressed the opening event in the historic renewed Sarajevo library, together inter alia with the Grand Mufti, Husein Kavazovic'. I also participated in a plenary with the country's President Bakir Izetbegović



#### Dublin

2013 has seen an in Irish initiative to bring as many people with Irish antecedents and connections back to visit the country in what is termed "The Gathering".

The little Jewish community of Ireland held its own series of events, bringing many Jews of Irish extraction and association to Ireland, during the last week of the month of July.

This included a gala event addressed by the Irish Minister of Law and Defence, Alan Shatter, who is a prominent member of the Jewish community; and Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, my successor as Chief Rabbi of Ireland and Chief Rabbi elect of the British Empire (as it is still called anachronistically.)

I was invited to come to Ireland during this week and in addition to attending a gala concert with the President of Ireland Higgins (who I have known since my tenure in Ireland thirty years ago) who addressed the gathering, I spoke at a very special Shabbat dinner following the Shabbat evening services hosted by the Jewish community and which were attended by all the Christian Primates of Ireland: Cardinal Sean Brady, the Catholic Primate of All Ireland ; Archbishop Charles Brown, the Apostolic Nuncio (Vatican Ambassador) in Ireland; Archbishop Richard Clarke, the Anglican primate of All Ireland; Archbishop Michael Jackson, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin; Rev. John Finlay, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; and Rev. Ken Lindsay, Moderator of the Methodist Church in Ireland. This was the first time in history that the heads of all the churches in Ireland had attended services and been hosted by the Irish Jewish community.