

**International Interreligious Affairs, monthly highlights November 2009**  
**David Rosen**

**Athens, Nov.10-12**

I participated in the seventh biennial consultation of Jewry and the Orthodox Churches that took place this month in Athens under the auspices of IJCIC and the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate, with the generous support of the Greek government. The consultation, attended by Orthodox Christian representatives from around the Orthodox world and Jewish delegates from IJCIC (from the US, Israel and Europe) focused on the subject of religious and ethical perspectives on the economic and environmental crises. In addition to all the official greetings from religious and state authorities that opened the conference, the gathering was greeted by Israel's Ambassador to Greece, Mr. Ali Yahya, Israel's highest ranking Arab diplomat. The opening keynote address was given by Justice Lord Daniel Brennan of the UK and chairman of the Caux Businessmen's Round Table. The consultation also addressed other current bilateral issues and was followed by meetings with the Greek Prime Minister and the Archbishop of Greece. The Greek Jewish community and Ambassador Yahya hosted the concluding dinner.

**London, Nov.12**

From Athens I went on to London where I had been invited by the Tony Blair Faith foundation to share the podium at the Royal Society of Arts with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams. The subject of the event was "Faith and development" and primarily addressed the relationship between religion, its teachings and global social services on the one hand, and the secular development world on the other.

**New Zealand, Nov.24-26**

AJC's Australian partner, AIJAC facilitated my participation at the Parliament of the World Religions in Melbourne in December and also set up a program of meetings, lectures and interviews in New Zealand and Australia. I was in New Zealand still in November, first in Auckland where the mayor held a reception for me followed by a closed interfaith dialogue. An official welcome was given by the Maori leadership at Deraki Marae; and in the evening I gave a lecture at the University of Auckland. In Wellington the Attorney General and Minister Chris Finlayson held a dinner in my honor and I had meetings with government and opposition figures. In the evening I addressed a well attended meeting of the Wellington Council of Christians and Jews chaired by the city's Catholic primate, John Dew.