



Monthly Highlights

November 2013

International Interreligious Affairs

Nov.10-12. Jordan, Dead Sea

The Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME) convened a multi-faith conference in Jordan at the Dead Sea, to bring together religious leaders, civic and political figures with environmental activists, to promote advocacy for the rehabilitation of the Jordan River and Valley which have experienced such large scale degradation that their future is in peril. As the religious Traditions advocate environmental responsibility and as the Jordan River is part of the religious legacy of the Abrahamic Traditions, this event enlisted religious leadership from the Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities in Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Territories who issued a joint declaration accordingly.

I was privileged to be the Jewish keynote speaker at the opening session.

See: <http://www.jpost.com/Features/Front-Lines/Environment-Different-faiths-come-together-in-support-of-the-Jordan-River-332641>

Nov. 17-22, Vienna

17-19, KAICIID Global Forum on multi-faith education, "Images of the Other"

The King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Interfaith Center (KAICIID) was established in Vienna a year ago by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia together with the states of Austria and Spain and supported by the Vatican. KAICIID has a Board of Directors of nine, representing the five major world religions and I serve as the Jewish representative. KAICIID's first major project since engaging senior staff has been a series of regional conferences on inter-faith education; on how "the other" is presented in the class room. These have taken place in Europe, India, Africa and Latin America. The culmination of these was an international conference on "Images of the Other" attended by Ministers of education and educational policy authorities from some dozen countries as well as educationalists and activists in interreligious education from around the world.

See: <http://www.kaiciid.org/en/press/statements/kaiciid-global-forum-puts-dialogue-on-agenda.html>

My participation in addition to the conference involved meetings with HRH Prince Faisal, Minister of Education of Saudi Arabia; HRH Prince Abdul Aziz, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia; Ministers of Education of Spain, Austria, Lebanon, Pakistan, Mauritania, Ethiopia; the Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew; Secretary General of

the World Council of Churches Olav Fykse-Tveit; Sheikh Abdullah Ben Bayyah of Mauritania/ Saudi Arabia; the Grand Mufti of Lebanon; the former Grand Mufti of Sarajevo Dr. Mustafa Ceric; President Nichiko Niwano of Japan; and Swami Chidanand Saraswati of India; as well as with the other members of the Board of Directors and the staff of KAICIID.



HRH Prince Faisal of Saudi Arabia and David Rosen joined by Rabbi Jeremy Lawrence of Sydney Australia

See: <http://www.news.va/en/news/kaiciid-global-interfaith-forum-goes-into-second-d> ; <http://www.thejc.com/news/world-news/113578/saudi-interfaith-forum-the-world-has-never-looked-more-malleable%E2%80%99> ; <http://www.arabnews.com/news/479791>

I was asked by KAICIID to write a piece for the Huffington Post on the conference.
See: http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/rabbi-david-rosen/kaiciid-religion_b_4295961.html

20-22, World Assembly of Religion for Peace

Religions for Peace (aka the World Conference of Religions for Peace) is the all-encompassing world interfaith body with regional chapters in the world's continents and local chapters in some ninety countries (see www.religionsforpeace.org .)

Approximately every five years RfP has a World Assembly on a global theme attended by delegates from all its national chapters together with an array of religious leaders, international figures, and other key-note speakers.

At the Assembly, the officers of the organization are elected. I have served as an International President of RfP and was re-elected to this position.

AJC has a particularly close relationship with Religions for Peace, not only through my own person, but as AJC was a founder of the Israeli chapter (the ICCI) and AJC's Representative in Rome and liaison to the Holy See, Lisa Palmieri Billig, is a past President of the Italian chapter and a leader of the European section of the organization.

For this Ninth World Assembly, RfP partnered with KAICIID as the major sponsor and thus the assembly was held in Vienna following the KAICIID Global Forum.

The theme of the Assembly was "Welcoming the Other" and it thus followed on organically from the KAICIID event. I was honoured to be the Jewish speaker at the first session and shared the platform inter alia with Sheikh Abdullah Ibn Bayyah of Mauritania and Saudi Arabia President of the Global Center for Muslim Renewal and Guidance - one of the most esteemed enlightened Muslim leaders of our time, respected by the mainstream Muslim world including less enlightened opponents.

ReligionsforPeaceUSA @rfpusa

Sheikh Bayyah of Saudi Arabia w/ Chief Rabbi David Rosen @ #RfPAssembly #interfaith #dialogue pic.twitter.com/2vQzhJTRW3

<http://www.rfp.org/sites/default/files/publications/23%20November%20Newsletter.pdf>

<http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/inquiries-and-interviews/detail/articolo/30351/>

Media

This month the major Spanish daily La Razon published an interview with me on Jewish-Catholic relations.

http://www.larazon.es/detalle_normal/noticias/4281537/los-judios-necesitan-sentir-la-solidaridad-de-los-catolicos#.UqWLD9xpnz4

This was republished a week later by the official Vatican publication L'Osservatore Romano.