



Monthly Highlights

May-June 2016

International Interreligious Affairs

May

Cambridge, England

Following the release of the latest document of the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with Jewry, "The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable" (issued on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of *Nostra Aetate*), a new joint theological commission was established by the Woolf Institute at Cambridge University together with the Commission and I was invited to be part of it. The first meeting hosted by the Woolf Institute at Westminster College May 17/18, focused on the above mentioned document as well as the rabbinic declaration "To do the will of our Father in Heaven".



Participants in the Catholic-Jewish theological commission meeting: Prof. Joseph Sievers; Prof. Christian Ruttishauser; Father David Neuhaus; Prof. Ruth Langer; Dr. Ed Kessler; Prof. Elana Procario-Foley; Cardinal Kurt Koch; Rabbi David Rosen; Rabbi Joshua Ahrens; Father Norbert Hofmann; Rabbi Avraham Skorka

Istanbul, Turkey

The first ever World Humanitarian Summit convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki Moon took place in Istanbul May 23/24 and invitations were extended by Ban to a number of religious leaders and representatives of which I was one. A special session on the role on Religious Engagement - The Contributions of Faith Communities to Our Shared Humanity (See more at: <http://www.unfpa.org/events/world-humanitarian-summit#sthash.DWmcB67t.dpuf>) was opened by the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew .



With Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp of Holland , Swami Chidnanadf Sawaswati, and Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati at the session



With Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp; Swami Chidanand Saraswati, Rabbi Isaak Haleva, Chief Rabbi of Turkey ; Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati; Dr.Taj Mohammad and Dr.Azza Karam

See the following report on this theme in which I am quoted:

<https://www.devex.com/news/in-crisis-zones-un-courts-faith-based-charities-88260>

Among the religious representatives present at the summit were the Secretary General of KAICIID Faisal Al Muammar of Saudi Arabia and two other members of the KAICIID Board, Dr, Mohammad Sammak of Lebanon and Metropolitan Emmanuel of the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate. We were invited and hosted by Patriarch Bartholomew at the Ecumenical Patriarchate.



June

New Orleans

Prior to the Global Forum in Washington , I was in New Orleans (June 1st)at the invitation of the Jewish Federation to speak at a special event with the Archdiocese on the subject of Jewish Catholic relations, past present and future. My visit included an extensive meeting with Archbishop Gregory Aymond.

See: <http://clarionherald.info/clarion/index.php/news/latest-news/155-breaking-news/5661-the-state-of-catholic-jewish-relations-is-improving>

Cincinnati

From New Orleans to Cincinnati (June 2nd) to speak (on The current state of Christianity in the Holy Land) at the AJC Regional Office's National Human Relations Award Dinner (honoring John T. (Tad) Lawrence III.)

Washington DC

- On the eve of the Global Forum at the initiative of the Asia Pacific Institute I spoke at the Indonesian Embassy to the US as part of the AJC API delegation hosted by Ambassador Budi Bowoleksono.

In the wake of this visit, I was invited by Ambassador David Merrill, President of the US-Indonesia Society (USINDO) to be part of the newly established US/Indonesian Council on Religion and Pluralism endorsed in Washington last October, by President Jokowi and President Obama as an innovative bilateral mechanism designed to promote pluralism and tolerance, and cooperation in these areas between the two countries. As I will not be able to attend the inaugural conference of the Council in August in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Robert Silverman, AJC's new US Director of Jewish-Muslim Relations will be attending in my lieu and will represent AJC accordingly.

- The AJC Global Forum held two Interreligious "university" sessions. The first on "Religious Responses to the Plight of the Persecuted: Religious Minorities in the Middle East" which I moderated and was introduced by David Inlander, AJC Chair of the Interreligious Affairs Commission. It featured Vian Dakhil, the Yazidi member of the Iraqi Parliament; Dr. Tarek Elgawhary, Director of Co-exist and of the Religious Studies Programs at WORDE; and Monsignor John Kozar, President of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association.

The second session titled "America: The Gateway to Muslim-Jewish Relations" included Rabia Chaudry, Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at USIP; Imam Yahya Hendi, Muslim Chaplain at Georgetown University; and Robert Silverman; and was moderated by Rabbi Noam Marans.

Vienna

The Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union, <http://www.fundamentalrightsforum.eu/>, held its major convention on human rights in Europe to which I had been invited to speak on the panel titled “ **The common space between religious traditions and human rights** “

See reports from the FRA posted on the KAICIID website:

<http://www.kaiciid.org/news-events/news/chief-rabbi-rosen-speaks-secularreligious-cooperation-fundamental-rights-forum>

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