International Conference
on
“Religious Freedom in Democratic Societies”

Cordoba, May 2 - 4, 2010

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1 CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

- Dates: May 2-4 2010
- Venue: Palacio de Congresos de Córdoba, Spain
- Theme: Religious Freedom in Democratic Societies
- Hosts: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior of Spain
- Sponsors: Spanish Government and UN Alliance of Civilizations

Our program will be open with a cocktail reception offered by the Cordoba Mayor in The Alcazar Gardens in the evening of Sunday May 2nd. This will be a good opportunity for delegates and experts to meet in a unique setting.

In the morning of May 3rd, we have two plenary sessions, the official opening and a plenary session with a round table followed by an interactive debate. These two sessions will be open to special guests and the press.

The Expert section of the Conference restricted to official delegates and experts invited begins with a working lunch followed, in the afternoon, by four panel’s sessions working simultaneously in different rooms.

Our cultural proposal for the evening is a visit to the Cathedral-former Mosque.

On Tuesday May 4th the program starts with a wrap-up session followed by a plenary session where the rapporteurs will present the main outcomes of each panel to the Conference before the closing ceremony.
2 CONCEPT PAPER

Democracy and rule of law provide the ideal political framework for exercising freedom of religion and conscience, for the exercise of faith and pluralism of creeds. Religion is a valuable complement to democratic society, because of its commitment to ethical values, role in social cohesion, and cultural dimension. A good example of this can be found in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which recognises in its Preamble that Europe's cultural, religious, and humanist heritage is an inspiration for the universal values of inviolable and inalienable rights of the individual, freedom, democracy, equality, and rule of law.

More specifically, in Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty, the status of churches and religious associations or communities is respected under national law in each Member State, and in its third paragraph the EU assumes the commitment to maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with these churches. The Cordoba Conference aims to contribute to the development of this framework for dialogue with the participation of religious leaders, together with representatives of society, believers and non-believers, in a debate on the religious arena in our societies.

The growing cultural and religious diversity of Western societies, as a result of migratory movements and the effects of globalisation, demands that we initiate a process of reflexion on coexistence, both within our own societies and in our relations with other societies and countries. Fear of the transformation of national identities generates tensions and provokes unease, defensiveness and attitudes of resistance to the integration of other cultural and religious traditions. Debates arising from the wearing of Islamic headscarves, the building of minarets, or issues involving freedom of expression, for example, are followed in our societies with growing interest, both by politicians and religious leaders, as well as by the citizens of our societies in general.

Delving deeper into rule of law and the principles and common values on which our democratic societies are based is the key to overcoming approaches that emphasise what divides us. A better understanding of our society and its diversity is essential to avoiding religious discrimination in its different forms, counteracting prejudice and mistrust, and building inclusive and open societies able to contribute to accepting diversity as a source of enrichment, and not of division and conflict.

At the same time, recognition of the rights of members of religious or cultural minorities sets us squarely before a moral philosophic debate that should be marked by civic prudence when defining who we are and what our model of coexistence is, without its implying a process of exclusion. Religious identities cannot, in any case, constitute a
protection that justifies exceptions or alterations to the general democratic norms. We have to approach this challenge reflecting on the ethical and political values upon which we want to base such integration. This is why it is so important to have an education that favours integration and delves deeper into the basic values and principles of democratic societies. In this sense, the Cordoba Conference aims to pay special attention to the need to ensure the effective exercise of religious freedom, which includes the right to profess a religion or creed, to not have one, or to change one's religion, as well as the right to express this belief, alone or in community with others, in public or in private, through teaching, practice, worship, and observance.

Other fundamental rights directly related to religious freedom, such as freedom of opinion and of expression, equality between men and women, and those regarding religious education, will be the object of particular attention, in order to be able to successfully tackle the challenge of integration, strengthening the concepts of citizenship and democratic participation, and of equal rights and opportunities. Ensuring social cohesion and preventing radical attitudes and religious extremism will also be given special consideration.

Political institutions and governments are increasingly aware of the role that reciprocal tolerance between religions can play in esteem between cultures, and cooperation and peace in international relations. Here, the EU has shown its firm commitment to defend freedom of religion and belief in its external action, as well, and aims to be a key actor in combating every form of religious discrimination or intolerance. How to achieve this goal, and to combat such attitudes as Christianophobia, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, as well as the necessary articulation of a position on the idea of defamation of religions, will be other issues to be discussed during the debates.

Moreover, the EU, its Member States and the Alliance of Civilizations are following with great interest the different interfaith dialogue initiatives that have been launched in recent years, and their potential contribution to mutual understanding and to finding common ground upon which to build more harmonious relations between individuals and communities. Such an approach contributes to overcoming mistrust, favours reconciliation in this area, and makes it possible to develop one of the main positive aspects of every religious confession.

The Alliance of Civilizations, as a platform for dialogue and cooperation and a catalyst for concrete projects and initiatives, offers an ideal framework for bringing positions closer together and overcoming divisions based on religious and cultural differences. As an action-oriented initiative, it focuses its activities on four priority areas: education, youth, the media and migration. Therefore, the Cordoba Conference is an exercise that aims to offer specific results that can be translated into initiatives and projects for action, related to, among other areas, education for diversity and transmitting intercultural competence.
PROGRAMME

Sunday May 2\textsuperscript{nd}

Arrival of Delegations and Experts
Accreditation at the hotels AC Cordoba Palacio and Cordoba Center

19.30 Shuttle transfer from the hotels to The Alcazar Gardens
20:00-22:00 Reception offered by Cordoba Municipality in The Alcazar Gardens
22.15 Shuttle transfer from The Alcazar Gardens to the hotels

Monday May 3\textsuperscript{rd}

09.15 Shuttle transfer from the hotels to Palacio de Congresos
09:30-09.45 Arrival to Palacio de Congresos de Córdoba

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plenary sessions</th>
<th>Language: Spanish-English- French</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:00</td>
<td>Official opening (Salon de Actos)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00-12:30</td>
<td>Plenary Session</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Do democracies need to rethink about religious pluralism?&quot;</td>
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<td>12:30</td>
<td>Family Photo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reception</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00</td>
<td>Press conference (Sala Julio Romero de Torres)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:30</td>
<td>Cultural program and lunch for delegates</td>
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<tr>
<th>Experts' sessions</th>
<th>Language English</th>
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<tr>
<td>14:00-15:00</td>
<td>Working lunch for experts</td>
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15:00-16:45  Thematic sessions: four panels working simultaneously
- Panel 1: “Religious pluralism in democratic societies”
- Panel 2 “The role of religious leaders in the promotion of a culture of peace”
- Panel 3 “Prevention of religious radicalisation and extremism”
- Panel 4 “Cooperation for the promotion of religious freedom”
16:45-17:00  Coffee break
17:00-18:45  Continuation of working sessions
19:00-20:00  Cultural Program
20.15  Shuttle transfer from Palacio de Congresos to the hotels
Free Evening

Tuesday May 4th
08:30  Shuttle transfer from the hotels to Palacio de Congresos
9:00-10:30  Panels wrap-up sessions
10:30-11:00  Coffee break
11:00-12:00  Plenary session: presentation of Panel conclusions by Rapporteurs (Salon de Actos)
Closing Ceremony
12:00-13:00  Cocktail
13:30  Shuttle transfer from Palacio de Congresos to the hotels
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3  PLENARY SESSION

After the official opening, the plenary session with the title “Do democracies need to rethink about religious pluralism?” consists of a Round table with a 5 to 7 minutes presentation made by each panellist and an interactive debate with the audience – official delegates, experts, special guests, religious leaders and journalists.

Experts participating in the plenary:
1. Andrew Baker, Director, International Jewish Affairs American-Jewish Committee and Personal Representative OSCE, USA
2. Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Director General Education, Culture and Heritage, Council of Europe, and AoC Focal Point.
3. Gilles De Kerchove, Counter-Terrorism Coordinator of the EU
4. Hervé Hasquin, Chairman of the Board of Administration, Centre pour l’égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, Belgium
5. Ömür Orhum, Advisor, Secretary General of the Islamic Conference, former Representative of the OSCE against Islamophobia, Turkey
6. Olivier Roy, Professor, European University Institute, France
7. William Vendley, Secretary General Religions for Peace

Moderator: Shasha Havlicek, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, UK

4 WORKING SESSIONS

Thematic sessions: four panels working simultaneously.

Panel I “Religious Pluralism in Democratic Societies”

The relation between the exercise of freedom of religion and worship and the management of the public space in democratic societies will be considered bearing in mind the growing religious pluralism in our countries. This Panel will include interchange of national experiences. Reflections and of new proposals will be debated in order to allow a greater knowledge of each other.

Panel segments
1.1. Democracy, citizenship and religion
1.2. The role of religious organisations in the public arena
1.3. Management of religious and cultural diversity
1.4. Discrimination and intolerance due to religion or creed

Speaker profiles
- Ahmet Hadi Adanali, Advisor, Prime Ministry, Turkey
- Patricia Bezunartea Barrio, Head of Area for Research and Development, Fundación Pluralismo y Convivencia, Spain
The co-existence of numerous Churches, religious groups and communities in present-day democratic societies, confers on their leaders a renewed responsibility in promoting a culture of peace and peaceful coexistence, as well as in social cohesion. This Panel will address the issue of the role of religious leaders in current society; their importance in the transmission of values underpinning peaceful co-existence; their training; their representation; and the action expected from the public authorities in relation to them; as well as education on cultural and religious diversity.
Panel segments:
2.1. Religious leaders and culture of peace
2.2. Training of religious ministers
2.3. Teaching religions and teacher training
2.4. Religious leaders and youth

Speakers profiles:
– Juan Ferreiro, Deputy General Director of Coordination and Religious Freedom Promotion, Ministry of Justice, Spain.
– Finola Flanagan, Vicepresident, Venisse Commission
– Bertrand Gaume, Chef du Bureau, Bureau Central des Cultes, France
– Gabriel Goltz, President-Representant, Human Rights Commission, Germany
– Shasha Havlicek, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, UK
– Oliver Henhapel, Bundesministerium Für Unterrricht, Kunst und Kultur, Austria
– Daniel Lindvall, Project Manager Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality, Sweden
– Frerich Görts, Liaison to the European Union Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
– Bernabé López, Professor, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain
– Jaketerina Macuka, Head of the Board of Religious Affairs, Latvia
– Michaela Moravckova, Director Institute for State-Church Relations, Slovakia
– Ahmad Nazim Representative of the Rede Aga Khan
– Abdul Wahil Pedersen, Foreign Relations Manager Muslim Council of Denmark
– Carmen Pellicer, Federación Española de Religiosos de Enseñanza, Spain
– Iosif Pop, Metropolita Archbishop, Romanian Orthodox Metropolita for Western and Southern Europe, Romania
– Laurent Touvet, Director for Public Liberties and Legal Affairs, State Counsellor, France
– Marc Tysebaert  Adviseur generaal, Belgium

Panel III “Preventing Radicalisation and Religious Extremism”
The fight against religious radicalisation and extremism is a priority action field for public authorities in plural societies. The main Focus of this Panel’s analysis will be to improve the levels of interchange of information and to attain a greater understanding of the factors leading to polarisation. The initiatives carried out by the AOC in the fields of Youth, Education, Migrations, and Media, will serve as a base for the debate of this panel.”

Panel segments
3.1. Youth: Processes of socialisation and interrelation
3.2. Education: Intercultural training and competences for the prevention of radicalism
3.3. Media: The message and treatment of information
3.4. Migrations: Integration, acceptance, and respect for religious beliefs

Speakers profiles:
- Merete Bilde, Adviser of Policy Unit, Council of the European Union
- Nat Dawbarn, Deputy Director RICU, Home Office, UK
- Gilles De Kerchove, Counter-Terrorism Coordinator of the EU
- Jean Pierre Devos, Coordinator COPRA, Federal Police, Belgium
- José Fernández Duarte, Comisario Principal, Chairman of the Terrorism Working Group, National Police, Ministry of Interior, Spain
- Rokhsana Fiaz, Director, European Network of Experts on Radicalisation
- Alfonso Illescas Riaño, Deputy Director, Counter-Terrorism National Center, Ministry of Interior, Spain
- Maja Jurcic, Advisor, Ministry of Interior, Germany
- Mark Bang Kjeldgaard, Advisor, Ministry of Integration, Denmark
- Matjaz Kovačič, Ambassador and AoC Focal Point, MFA, Slovenia
- Manuel Navarrete Paniagua, Head of Area, International Information Service of Guardia Civil, Ministry of Interior, Spain
- Nearkos Pallas, Ambassador in Madrid, Cyprus
- Manuel Rodríguez García-Risco, Advisor, Secretary of State of the Minister of Interior, Spain
- Yvonne Alexandra Schmidt, Professor, Institute of the International Law and International Relations, Austria
- Orestes Suarez Antón, Advisor, Cabinet of the Minister of Interior, Spain
- Juan Toharia, President Metroscopia, Spain
Joao Ventura, Head of Counter-Terrorist Unit, Lisbon Judiciary Police, Portugal

Panel IV “Cooperation for the Promotion of Religious Freedom”

The promotion of freedom of religion and beliefs, as well as the fight against religious intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief is a priority both for the EU and for the Alliance of Civilizations. The main goals of this Panel is to identify and share good practices in order to promote human rights, tolerance, gender equality and education on cultural and religious diversity.

Panel segments
4.1. Promotion of Religious freedom: Dialogue and cooperation with other societies
4.2. Current assessment and future perspectives for ongoing interfaith dialogue initiatives
4.3. Freedom of Religion and the AOC: Cross glance.
4.4. Religious diversity: What are the challenges?

Speakers profiles:
- Mustafa Akyol, journalist, Turkey
- Andrew Baker, Director, International Jewish Affairs American-Jewish Committee and Personal Representative OSCE, USA
- Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Director General Education, Culture and Heritage, Council of Europe, and AoC Focal Point
- Máximo Cajal, Ambassador and Former AoC National Coordinator, Spain
- Lluís Maria de Puig, former President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe
- Silvia Escobar, Ambassador at large for Human Rights, MFA, Spain
- Vebjørn L. Horsfjord, Secretary General, European Council of Religious Leaders
- Denis Huber, Director, North - South Center, Council of Europe
- Jacobo Israel Garzón, President, Jewish Confederation of Madrid, Spain
- Justo Lacunza, former Director, Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies, PISAI, Spain
- Juana López, International Department Director, Spanish Federation of Provinces and Municipalities, Spain
- Joseph Maïlla, Director, Pôle de Religions, Quai d’Orsay, France
- Ömür Orhun, Advisor, Secretary General of the Islamic Conference, former Representative of the OSCE against Islamophobia, Turkey
- Tariq Ramadan, Professor, European Muslim Network, Swiss Confederation
- Ilari Rantakari, Ambassador, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland
- Gerardo Ruiz-Rico, Prof. Constitutional Law, Universidad Jaen/Granada, Spain
- Heidrun Tempel, Ambassador-at-large for the Dialogue among Cultures and AoC Focal Point, Germany
- William Vendley, Secretary General, Religions for Peace

5 ORGANIZATION

Transportation to and from Cordoba

Delegations will arrive at the following airport and train stations:

- Madrid Barajas Airport
  Tel.: + 34 902 404 704

  AVE high-speed train station – Puerta de Atocha, Madrid
  Glorieta Carlos V s/n
  Tel.: +34 902 240 202

  AVE high speed train station – Córdoba
  Glorieta de las Tres Culturas, s/n
  Tel.: +34 902 240 202

Transfers in Cordoba

The Spanish Presidency will provide group transportation for delegates and experts for all transfers in the official programme between the mentioned hotels and the meeting venues.
Hotels

Participants will be mainly hosted in two hotels:

AC Córdoba Palacio
Paseo de la Victoria, s/n
Tel.: +34 957 760 452
Web: [www.ac-hoteles.com](http://www.ac-hoteles.com)

*Distance: about 10 minutes walk to the Palacio de Congresos and to the train station.*

Hotel Cordoba Center
Ph: +34 902 202 345
Web: [www.hotelescenter.es/cordoba/default-en.html](http://www.hotelescenter.es/cordoba/default-en.html)
Email: mgperez@hotelescenter.com

*Distance: 5 minutes walk from the train station and 20 minutes walk to Palacio de Congresos.*

Organization, logistics and liaison officers coordination

For any question regarding the organization and logistics of the Conference, the contact persons are:

- Mr. Francisco-Javier Cantero: +34 660 48 47 89, [fjavier.cantero@maec.es](mailto:fjavier.cantero@maec.es).
- Mrs. Marta Pérez: +34.913 799 624, [colaboradores.mms@maec.es](mailto:colaboradores.mms@maec.es)

Participants will be assigned liaison officers for the duration of the Conference, from arrival in Córdoba to departure.

Liaison officers will be responsible for distributing accreditations and providing information on the programme and related activities, as well as resolving any logistical matters which may arise.

Names and contact numbers of the liaison officers assigned will be provided together with the accreditation.
Accreditations

Accreditations will be distributed to each participant by the liaison officer prior to the meetings. Last-minute accreditations can be collected at the desk set up in the Palacio de Congresos, beginning at 8:30 on Monday, May 3rd.

Work stations

Work stations for delegations and experts will be available on the upper floor of the Palacio de Congresos. The work stations will be equipped with Internet-connected computers and printers.

6 USEFUL INFORMATION

Cordoba: cultural insight

The Córdoba Cathedral-former Mosque, considered the most important Islamic monument in the Western world, is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating works of art on the planet. Its veritable forest of columns, its two-toned archways and its stunning decoration, alongside Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque touches added in the Christian cathedral built inside the original mosque, create a one-of-a-kind architectural structure.

In addition to the famous Mosque-Cathedral, Córdoba is home to numerous other important monuments and buildings. A leisurely stroll through the city's old quarter takes visitors by the Alcázar de los Reyes Cristianos (the Fortress of the Christian Monarchs), with its stunning gardens, Arabic baths and the Mosaic Room, exhibiting the fabulous collection of Roman mosaics. Further along, in the narrow streets of the old Jewish Quarter, the lovely plasterwork of the city's Synagogue awaits. The Medina Azahara archaeological complex, the Córdoba style courtyards of the Viana Palace and the Posada del Potro, mentioned in the legendary literary work Don Quixote, are also well worth a visit.

While keeping its magnificent past very much alive, Córdoba is at the same time an innovative city and a focal point for culture and leisure. Perfectly adapted to the needs of today’s world, the city offers modern infrastructure and services and a broad selection of hotels. Córdoba History meets the modern age in the heart of the Andalusia region, in the city of Córdoba. This thousand-year old centre, declared a UN World Heritage Site, is a living legacy of the many cultures that once made Córdoba their home. Córdoba boasts the unique claim of having been the capital of the Hispania Ulterior region of the Roman Empire and the capital of the Islamic Umayyad Caliphate. This splendour also extended to the intellectual world, as Córdoba was a hub for knowledge and study, producing famed thinkers such as Seneca, Averroes and Maimonides. Fore more info, see: www.spain.info
Climate
Spring in Córdoba is mild, with an average temperature of 25ºC and infrequent precipitation.

Useful telephone numbers
General emergency: 112
National police: 091
Local police: 092
National information: 11818
International information: 11825
International operator: 1408

AIRPORT
Córdoba airport:
Tel.: +34 957 214 100
Customer services: +34 902 404 704

Train station
Train station – AVE-RENFE
Glorieta de las Tres Culturas, s/n
Tel.: +34 902 240 202
Traveller Information
Tel.: +34 902 320 320

Central bus station
Glorieta de las Tres Culturas, s/n
Tel.: +34 957 404 040
Taxis
Radio Taxi: +34 957 764 444

Car hire
Atesa: +34 957 475 979
Avis: +34 957 401 445
Europcar: +34 957 403 480
Hertz: +34 957 402 061

Tourist information offices
Municipal Tourism Office
C/ Rey Heredia, 22
Tel.: +34 957 201 774
Fax: +34 957 200 159
Information hotline
Tel. +34 957 49 99 00

Pharmacy 24 hours
Avda. de América, 3
Tel.: +34 957 472 095

EMBASSIES OF EU MEMBER STATES AND EU CANDIDATE COUNTRIES IN MADRID

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e-mail: embajadachipre@telefónica.net

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Tel.: +34 914 238 000  
e-mail: eu-es-docu@ec.europa.eu
Final Note: all information regarding the meeting will be posted several days in advance on the website of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation: www.alianzadecivilizaciones.maec.es