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## Brussels plays home to conference on religious coexistence

8 December 2007 - Issue : 759

Bringing representatives from different faiths together on one platform, an "International Conference on Interfaith Dialogue towards Global Peace" unanimously passed a resolution last week "Brussels Peace Declaration on Religious Coexistence" at Peace Embassy Brussels, Belgium. Announcing the formation of a Permanent Committee for Inter-faith cooperation, comprising religious scholar's representatives of different Faiths and Communities, NGOs and media, the conference discussed inter-faith harmony, conflict resolution combating extremism, intolerance, hatred and violence in the name of religion. Reiterating their desire to promote and protect peace, justice, human rights, equality, genuine brotherhood, tolerance and friendly interaction among cultures and religions need to cultivated, promoted and nurtured to help create an environment conducive to building peace and harmony within communities and peoples, two organisations Universal Peace Federation (UPF) Belgium and European think tank Institute of Peace and Development (INSPAD) Belgium jointly affirmed that they will work together to these goals. Muhammad Tahir Director Welfare Education Fauji Foundation based in Pakistan told audience in his keynote address that all religions "gave us one message of peace, harmony, love and compassion." He explained Islamic history and tolerance in other religions, and said that there are a number of basic principles and moral values that govern our dealings with other nations. Philippe Jacques Chairman UPF said in his welcoming remarks, "We are one family under God, we have to promote understanding and tolerance between all faith and religions." UPF will continue these efforts in future with INSPAD, he added. Amin ul Haq President INSPAD appreciated the valuable efforts and role of United Nations, UNESCO and UPF for the promotion of Inter-faith, Inter-cultural Dialogue and religious coexistence. He said, "We reaffirmed our commitment to oppose, prevent and combat terrorism and extremism in all its forms and manifestations and we also condemned the instrumental use symbols and religious, cultural or ethnical values to generate conflicts, feed wars or to justify terrorism." Willy Fautre Director HRWF appreciated the efforts aiming at promoting tolerance and respect between various faiths around the world while Bashy Quraishy Chairman ENAR Denmark said that this is a right time for reflection for Jewish and Muslim communities. He said that EU already established a Jewish- Muslim Dialogue Forum in Europe. Farhat Jabeen, a Muslim scholar said, "Globalisation brings us the beauty of dialogue and interaction between various religions and cultures but because of misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it will also become the source of conflicts, tensions, struggles and polarisation." Nasir Zaidi Professor Bonn University Germany said, "Dialogue is need of the time, misunderstanding between religions and cultures are developing rapidly. We must accept and respect all religions and cultures." Ingmar Jurgen Metthezing (Buddhist Monk) Holland said, "We saw war culture many places, mediation techniques can change into positive and peaceful thoughts." Joginder Singh, Sikh Gurdwara Vilvord, Brussels said, "Sikhism stands for human liberty, gender equality, fraternity, universalism, freedom of conscience, social justice and dynamic power." Tahir Tabassum, Executive Director INSPAD said that prophets and messengers of all faiths and religions give us the teachings of peace, stability and integrity.

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The Jewish Muslim Dialogue Forum referred to in the 8 December article 'Brussels plays home to conference on religious coexistence' is actually the European Platform for Jewish Muslim Co-operation.

Officially launched on 27 November 2007 at the European Parliament in Brussels, the Platform was established in recognition of the need to move beyond dialogue to co-operation, to show solidarity and to build trust between Jewish and Muslim communities in Europe. It aims to support and empower grassroots dialogue and co-operation initiatives while providing a forum to showcase good practice at a European level.

A key moment of the launch event was the official opening for signature of the Declaration in Support of Jewish-Muslim Co operation. Open to all, regardless of religious or cultural background, the Declaration pledges support for Jews and Muslims 'committed to foster positive intercultural, interreligious and inter-ethnic relations

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based on mutual acceptance, respect and understanding’.

Open to new members and countries, the Co-operation Platform is currently facilitated by CEJI – A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe with the guidance of a joint Jewish Muslim Steering Group, made up of twelve representatives of Jewish and Muslim organisations from six European countries.

For further details about the Platform go to <http://www.ceji.org/dialogue>

Posted by **Katy Nicholson - CEJI A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe Brussels, Belgium** on **Tuesday December 11, 2007 , 16:22 GMT**

<p><b>Notebook</b></p> <p><b>Cheap money comes - but how cheap?</b></p> <p>The European Central Bank left its basic interest rate unchanged last week, despite the fact inflation showed its ugly face in November, with a flash estimate by Eurostat at 3.1 percent. At this point, it... <a href="#">[more]</a></p>
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I saw the detail of a conference on Inter-faith Dialogue in Brussels last week, Its a great efforts and needs of the time.

Many religions have too much conflicts and problems with each others, its right time to start Dialogues between faiths and cultures. I want to appreciated the initiatives of UPF and INSPAD organisations in this issue.

Posted by **Sardar Abdul Shahid Brussels, Belgium** on **Saturday December 8, 2007 , 17:19 GMT**

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