

Final Statement of the Fifth Round of Interreligious Dialogue between the Center for Interreligious Dialogue and Civilization of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization and the Commission for the Dialogue with Muslims of the Swiss Bishops' Conference Tehran August 27, 2017

Ration and heart founded study of the Holy Scriptures and Traditions and fair minded and emphatic dialogue as a source to prevent extremism or radicalism

In continuation of the constructive dialogues between the Center for Interreligious Dialogue and Civilization (CID) of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) and the Commission for the Dialogue with Muslims (CDM) of the Swiss Bishops' Conference (SBC) which was initially launched in 2005, the Swiss delegation, headed by His Excellency Bishop Alain de Raemy, accepted the invitation of His Excellency Dr. Abouzar Ibrahimi Torkaman, President of the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) and travelled to Iran from August 26 to 28, 2017. Within the framework of this trip, the Fifth Round of Interreligious Dialogue was held on August 27, 2017 in Tehran, discussing the following theme: "Grounds for extremism and radicalism in Muslim and Christian Communities challenges and solutions". The delegation also visited the cities of Isfahan and Yazd.

Members of the Iranian Delegation:

His Excellency, Dr. Abouzar Ebrahimi Torkaman, President, Islamic Culture & Relations Organization (ICRO)

His Excellency, Hoj-ol-Islam Mahmoud Mohammadi Araghi, Member Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution

Hoj-ol-Islam Dr. Abduhossein Khosrowpanah, President, Iranian Institute of Philosophy

Hoj-ol-Islam Dr. Mohsen Alviri, Professor, Imam Bagher (A.S.) University

Hoj-ol-Islam Dr. Mohammed Mehdi Taskhiri, General Director of the Centre for Interreligious Dialogue and Civilization (CID)

Mrs. Haydeh Ramazan Rostamabadi, Abrahamic Religious Section, Centre for Interreligious Dialogue and Civilizations (CID)

Members of the Swiss Delegation:

His Excellency Mons. Alain de Raemy, Auxiliary Bishop of the diocese of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg.

His Excellency Dr. Erwin Tanner-Tiziani, Secretary General of the Swiss Bishops' Conference.

Dr. Farhad Afshar, President of the Muslim umbrella organization "KIOS" (Coordination of Islamic Organizations Switzerland).

Rev. Father Dr. Stephan Leimgruber, Priest of the Diocese of Basle, since 2014, when he was as professor for religious education studies and didactics at the University of Munich conferred emeritus status, spiritual at the theological college of the diocese of Basle.

His Excellency Dr. Francis Piccand, Senior Policy Advisor at the Federal Department for Foreign Affairs.

Mr. Roberto Simona, Regional Director and Research Manager for Islam and Christian Minorities at "Aid to the Church in Need".

Rev. Father Roman Stäger, Priest and member of the Missionaries of Africa, former Professor at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies in Rome.

By means of lectures and debates the two partners discussed in a frank, open minded atmosphere and on cordial terms and agreed finally on the following points:

- The studies of religion does not only concern our mind but also affect our heart and must be rooted in the daily life of the believers and have to conduce them to a better understanding of their own religion and the religion of others in order to live in peaceful coexistence.
- Being heedless regarding faith and excluding rationality in faith are the main factors behind religious violence and extremism.
- Violence and extremism are in contradiction to the essence of both Islam and Christianity and must be prevented and fought by all means, namely by teaching believers, training religious leaders and promoting interreligious dialogue.
- The sacred texts of Islam and Christianity are capable of creating a culture of peaceful coexistence and rescuing the human society from crises such as insecurity and religious extremism.
- Religion, in particular Islam and Christianity, play a special role in promoting security, peace for humankind which is inflicted with violence, extremism and ignorance of spirituality.

The Commission for the Dialogue with Muslims (CDM) of the Swiss Bishops' Conference (SBC) thanked the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) for their warm hospitality.

The Center for Interreligious Dialogue and Civilization of the ICRO and CDM decided to hold their next, 6th Round of Interreligious Dialogue, in 2019 in Fribourg/Switzerland, whose details will be finalized in a preparatory meeting in 2018 in Switzerland.

H. E. Dr. Abouzar Ebrahimi Torkaman
President of the ICRO

H. E. Mons. Alain de Raemy
President of the CDM

Dr. Mohammed Mehdi Taskhiri
General Director of the CID

Dr. Erwin Tanner-Tiziani
General Secretary of the SBC

Tehran, August 31, 2017 - 9 Shahrivar 1396