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Final Declaration of the Colloquium in Rome of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (R.I.I.F.S.)

The Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (P.C.I.D.), Vatican City, and the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (R.I.I.F.S.), Amman, Jordan, held their fourth colloquium in Rome from Tuesday 3rd to 4th May 2016.

The theme chosen was "Shared values in social and political life: Christian and Muslim perspectives".

The theme was studied through three subthemes: 1) "Citizens and believers: Christian and Muslim perspectives", presented respectively by Fr. Prof. Mohan Doss, S.V.D. (India) and Prof. Ahmed Abaddi, Morocco; 2) "Our shared values and respective particularities", by Prof. Wajih Kanso, Lebanon and by Fr. Prof. Salim Daccache, S.J., Lebanon; 3) "Reaching out for the needy and the vulnerable: A common concern for Christians and Muslims", by Mons. Giovanni Pietro Dal Toso, the Vatican, and by Dr. Hani El-Banna, UK.

H.Em. Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, President of the P.C.I.D., presided over the Catholic delegation, and H.R.H. Prince El Hassan bin Talal, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of R.I.I.F.S., headed the Muslim delegation.

The Catholic delegation comprised also:

H.E. Bishop Miguel Ayuso, M.C.C.J, Secretary, P.C.I.D.
Mons. Khaled Akasheh, Bureau Chief for Islam, P.C.I.D.
H.E. Jean-Paul Vesco, O.P., Bishop of Oran
H.E. Mrs Anne Leahy, Ambassador emerita of Canada to the Holy See
Dr. Anan Al-Kass Yousif, Iraq
Mrs. Ruth Susan Wangeci Maina, Kenya
Eng. Riad Sargi, Syria
Mr. Michael Utama Purnama, Indonesia.

The Muslim delegation comprised also:

Dr. Fareed Yaqoob Yusuf Mubarak AlMuftah, Bahrain
 Dr. Amer El Hafi, Jordan
 Dr. Oussama Mohamed Nabil, Egypt
 Dr. Hassan Nadhem, Iraq
 Dr. Majeda Omar, Director of R.I.I.F.S., Jordan
 Dr. Nayla Tabbara, Lebanon.

The participants appreciated much the papers and discussed them in a spirit of openness and in an atmosphere of great cordiality.

Both delegations were received this morning by H.H. Pope Francis. They were moved by his words: "Dialogue is going out of ourselves, with a word to hear the word of the other. The two words meet, two thoughts meet. It is the first step of a journey. Following this meeting of the word, hearts meet and begin a dialogue of friendship which ends with holding hands. Word, hearts, hands. It's simple! A little child knows how to do it."

At the end of the colloquium, the participants proposed the following:

1. We share beliefs and moral values. Our commonalities are much more than our particularities, and they constitute a solid basis peacefully and fruitfully living together, also with persons of good will who do not profess a particular religion.
2. We believe in the humanizing and civilizing role of our religions, when their followers adhere to their principles of worshipping God and loving and caring for the other.
3. We believe that God bestowed upon every person dignity and inalienable rights. They are His gifts that should be recognized, guaranteed and protected by law.
4. We pledge our solidarity with our brothers and sisters in humanity who are in any kind of need regardless of their ethnic, religious or cultural background.
5. Our help to the poor and the needy should be offered out of compassion and for the sake of God's favour. It should never be used to proselytise.
6. We believe that the youth represent not only the future of humanity. They are also an important part of its present. They have the right to proper education that prepares them to be good citizens respectful of diversity.
7. Our world, our "common home", is going through many complicated crises and needs the steady efforts of its inhabitants to make it a suitable place where we can live together peacefully, sharing the resources of the universe, mindful of future generations.
8. We express our proximity and solidarity with all those who suffer, especially from violence and armed conflict. Respect for international law, dialogue, justice, mercy, compassion are values and adequate means to achieve peace and harmony.

The P.C.I.D. and the R.I.I.F.S, grateful to Almighty God for their fruitful collaboration, decided to continue it, meeting within a year to prepare for the V colloquium.

From the Vatican, 4 May 2016

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