
Council of Europe: conference on inter-religious dialogue. Mr Giacomelli (ambassador), “dialogue is necessary element in pluralistic and democratic societies”

(Strasbourg) “The Council of Europe acts to facilitate intercultural and inter-religious dialogue as a necessary element in all pluralistic and democratic societies”. This was stated by Ambassador Michele Giacomelli, who spoke on behalf of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Europe (CoE) at the opening, today in Strasbourg, of the international conference on “Inter-religious dialogue on religion and peace, religion and human rights”. The Italian Presidency thereby gives new impetus to the tradition of the Council - which brings together 46 Member States - of dialogue between religious communities in the old continent. “Fighting together against intolerance, hate speech and all forms of extremism” is the mission of the CoE in this area, as indicated by Mr Giacomelli. “There is a need to promote mutual respect, dialogue, and mutual understanding – this is what clearly emerges from the initiative”. The Italian Ambassador to the Council of Europe expressed support for the continuation of these conferences. CoE Deputy Secretary General Bjorn Berge said he was “grateful to the Italian Presidency for such an opportunity for meeting and dialogue”. Work continued – partially behind closed doors – at the Palais de l’Europe with speeches by the leaders of the great religions (Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, Anglicans, Jews, Muslims) and Christian confessions from different countries.

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