

# DICID | Doha International Center For Interfaith Dialogue

## The 9th Doha Interfaith Conference

DICID Participated at the  
**4th Annual Forum of the United Nations  
Alliance of Civilizations**

DICID Participates at  
**Interdisciplinary  
Conference in Rome**



# Dear Readers

We welcome you to our seventh periodic bulletin which is issued by the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue. Today the Arab and Islamic world witnesses unique historical phase, that cannot be ignored by the world. These changes and events form new pillars of a new society. And despite all these difficulties that are facing the Arab and Islamic world, we truly hope for presence and continuity of dialogue and mutual respect with others, not forgetting a mutual spirit of humanity among followers of all faiths, in order to secure a better future for the whole world.

Dear reader, in this issue I invite you to read some of activities of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue in the past few months, including the 9th Doha Interfaith Conference, our participation at the Rome Conference and the Alliance of Civilizations' Forum that was organized in Doha. Also, do not miss reading the article about our new issue of Religions magazine.

**Hamdi Blekich**  
Head of Public Relations - DICID

## Our Mission

**W**e strive for constructive dialogue between followers of different faiths towards better understanding and harnessing of distinct religious principles and teachings to the benefit of all humanity, on the basis of mutual respect and acknowledgement of differences and through cooperation with related individuals and organizations.

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*Doha  
International  
Center for  
Interfaith Dialogue*



24-26 OCTOBER, 2011, DOHA-QATAR ٢٠ أكتوبر ٢٠١١



# The 9th Doha Interfaith Conference

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The Ninth Doha Interfaith Conference was organized in Doha between 24-26 October, 2011 with a call to the religious leaders to use the social media to promote dialogue and better understanding between different religious communities and develop a global code of conduct to prevent their misuse.

The three-day conference has brought together prominent lead-

ers and scholars from three world religions, Islam, Christianity and Judaism, who will be discussing a wide range of issues, under the title "Social Media and Interfaith Dialogue- a New Relationship."

The event is organised by the Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID) in collaboration with the Qatar University.

In his opening address, the Minister of Justice, H E Hassan bin Abdullah Al Ghanem, urged to develop the positive aspects of social media and stressed the need for a code of conduct for social networking sites to prevent any insults to religious beliefs and personalities.

"By organising the previous eight conferences we have confirmed that we look at the interfaith dialogue as a means for communication and exploring the other in order to reach sublime objectives that improve the status of the human being and respect his dignity, not at the futile dialogue which only leads to more dissension and differences," said the Minister.

"Dialogue among the followers of the divine religions is practical and real, aiming at coexistence of peoples in dignity, equality, peace and security" he added.

Al Ghanem said that social media



has both negative and positive aspects. Societies are required to develop the positive aspects and regulate them, and to minimise the impact of the negative aspects.

He reminded that if such means weren't capable of cherishing dialogue and acknowledging the existence of others they could be transformed into means of hatred and racism as was the case in some countries.

Highlighting the significance of media in general, Mustafa Cerić, Grand Mufti of Bosnia, said that media had a major role in producing or removing the fear which leads to intolerance and violence.

"Generally, the media in the West has had an indifferent or ignorant approach towards religion as such whereas the media in the Muslim World has a promotional and defensive coverage of it," said Cerić.

"Obviously the faith of Islam has been the main focus of the Muslim media. Due to recent events such as September 11, the Afghan and Iraq wars, Islam has become the main focus in the western media as well.

"This fact has increased the defen-

sive trend in the media of the Muslim world whereas the media in the West has displayed the double ignorance about the nature of the faith of Islam and the nature of the complexity of Muslim societies," he added.

In a video speech, Portugal President Jorge de Sampaio said that social trust was more important than social media in bridging relations between societies.

"Over the last months, we have witnessed social change in many areas of the world but nowhere has it had such an impact in our perceptions of the world and the "other" as in the case of the so-called "Arab Spring"... Some have called such mobilisations Twitter or Facebook revolutions, but in doing so they have in many ways forgotten that before social media there is social trust. I mean, trust between people that technology just helps to consolidate," said Sampaio.

"It's true that we can always choose to hate the "other", but it's increasingly difficult to do so, when the other "enters" our living room through our television screens — and I would add particularly if the broadcasts reach us through the values of free speech... Trust is the

fundamental dimension that enhances the possibility of fruitful communication, towards the building of better societies," he added.

DICID Chairman Dr Ibrahim Saleh Al Naimi said the theme of the conference was inspired by the large role social media played in the recent revolutions in the Middle-East. He added that the Arab Spring was the biggest proof of the importance of social media.

He suggested the conference can come up with a global charter of honour with regard to the healthy and positive uses of social media so that it can enhance communication between religions.

Former Egyptian Mufti Dr Nasr Farid Wasil, Archbishop Patrick Altam Kelly from the UK, Rabbi Henry Sobel from Brazil also addressed the opening session.





## 9th Doha Interfaith Conference Declaration

With the events and expectations of the Arab Spring fresh in every one's minds, over 242 participants from over 60 countries on six continents – Jews, Christians and Muslims – met at the Doha Sheraton Hotel from the Ninth Doha Interfaith Conference from 24 to 26 October, 2011. They acknowledged the generous hospitality of HH Shaikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani and of the State and people of Qatar, and paid tribute to the organizers of the conference, the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Qatar University. The Minister of Justice, HE Mr. Hassan Bin Abdulla Al-Ghanim, at the

opening session of the conference welcomed the participants and spoke for the need to make and to follow up concrete recommendations in the theme of the conference 'Social Media and Inter-Religious Dialogue: A New Relationship'.

The Conference addressed five main themes:

1. 'The Emergence of Communication Technology, History and Development',
2. 'The Benefits of Using Social Media in Interfaith Dialogue',
3. 'Reflection of the use of the Social Media on the Communities',
4. 'The Pros and Cons of the Social Communication in Serving Interfaith Dialogue issues',
5. 'Developing Religious Framework and Ethical Regulations to protect Societies from Misuse of Social Networking Tools'.

The Plenary sessions were comple-

mented by workshops on theory and use of social media at introductory and intermediate levels, and strengthened the contribution of young people made at many points during the conference as they take the responsibility to build a world with more justice and peace.

1. Building on previous Doha conference, we call on Religious and education Authorities to encourage a climate of trust, truthfulness, freedom and mutual respect among people of different religions.

2. Building on the concerns of the present Ninth Doha Interfaith Conference we call on men and women of all generations to explore ways to use social media for genuine communication and consequent cooperation.

3. We call especially on young people to bring forward their concerns and visions for improved understanding and collaboration in many fields – social, personal and spiritual.

4. The conference urges DICID to develop codes of conduct and suggestions for responsible use of social media, in order to implement authentic dialogue and cooperation, and to communicate these codes and suggestions to different religious Authorities as widely as possible, such as the UN and UNESCO.

5. We encourage DICID to develop a forum using electronic social media in order to enhance interfaith dialogue to local, regional and international levels.

6. We invite DICID to develop further effective communication with religious authorities and with women and men of good faith all over the world that will result in respect of religion and its symbols and prevent misuse of social media.



Signing Memorandum of Understanding between DICID & WOOLF Institute - Cambridge University



Group photo of the participants

# Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue Participated at the 4th Annual Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

A powerful network of Heads of States, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, NGOs, civil society representatives, the youth, foundations, media, academia and the corporate sector met in Doha December 11-13, 2011. The forum brought together OVER 2500 participants. This fourth UNAOC Forum saw participation of thousands of people including 400 young leaders who gave recommendations on cross-cultural and inter-religious understanding issues.

The First Lady H. H. Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser, attended the opening ceremony and joined by H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, the Secretary General of the United Nations, a representative of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, co- Chair of the AoC, H.E. Mr. Manuel Chavez, Vice President for Territorial Policies and Minister of Territorial

Policies and Public Administrations of Spain, H.E. Mr. Heinz Fischer, President of Austria, in his capacity as host of the 5th AoC Forum, H.E. Mr. Michel Temer, Vice President of Brazil, in his capacity as representative of the country which hosted the 3rd AoC Forum, H.E. Mr. Jorge Sampaio, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and former President of Portugal and by H.E. Mr. Christian Wulff the President of Germany.

Following the official opening of the Forum, there was a discussion on the dialogue between culture and development that was followed by the signing by H.H. Sheikha Moza the Memorandum of understanding with UNESCO. The first day session was divided into breakout sessions and actions network sessions dedicated to intercultural

dialogue and its link with development policies.

The question of Education and the role of women in modern societies was one of the main issues on the forum's agenda; the Forum designed as a turning point by HH Sheikha Moza was also held at her initiative as a member of the High Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). President Jorge Sampaio described the forum as the Ds event: It will be based on the four "Ds": «dialogue, dignity, democracy and development». It has underlined the necessity of integrating cultural factors and key values, such as trust and tolerance and fostering the development of cooperation and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The Alliance of Civilizations, created in





2005, is an initiative of former General Secretary of the United Nations Kofi Annan and the governments of Spain and Turkey. It has a mission for improving the quality of dialogue between nations and peoples of different cultures and religions. The UNAOC benefits from the support of "group of friends". A community of more than 130 member countries and international organizations including Qatar which has always played an important role through the involvement of H. H. Sheikha Moza.

DICID was represented at the forum through Prof. Aisha Yousef Al-Mannai, Dean of College of Sharia & Islamic Studies, Qatar University who spoke about the importance of religion in any inter-civilizational dialogue in a plenary session. Professor Patrick Laude of Georgetown University also represented DICID in a lab session on the importance of reviving the true spirit of religion in order to take part in any dialogue with the others. These sessions were very well attended.

DICID also distributed their publications through an exhibition booth at the conference. The booth was the best attended booth in the conference and

all our books and newsletters were picked up the very first day. The visitors to this booth appreciated the work of

DICID and were very impressed that an organization like ours with an international scope was based in Doha.





# DICID Participates at Interdisciplinary Conference in Rome

DICID was represented by Dr. Hassan AbdulRahim Al-Sayed, a member of the board of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue at a two-day conference on "Sharing Sacred Space: Legal, Theological, And Sociological Perspectives", that was held between 14-15 December, 2011 in Rome, Italy.

There were papers presented on different aspects of Sacred Space from theological and philosophical to sociological and political and issues related to the legality of Sacred Space and religious conflict over such spaces were also discussed.

There were papers also on the histori-

cal examples on sharing Sacred Space and discussion about such spaces in religious law. Participants from many countries attended the event including from US, Italy, UK, Netherlands, Turkey, Israel and France.

# DICID Participates at the International Conference on Jerusalem



Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue participated at the International Conference for Jerusalem which was held on February 26th and 27th at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Doha, with more than 400 participants from 50 countries and organizations.

The International Conference on Jerusalem was called for by the Arab League and will be hosted by the state of Qatar on February 26th and 27th 2012, with the Secretariat General of the Arab League and the Permanent Committee for Organizing Conferences of the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs as co-organizers.

The conference revolved around four major themes:

- Jerusalem and international law
- Jerusalem and History
- Jerusalem, colonization and Israeli violations
- Jerusalem and the civil society

The theme related to Jerusalem and international law dealt with situation of Jerusalem according to international law before the occupation, situation of Jerusalem after the Israeli occupation, Jerusalem's population reality and future under the occupation and Holy places' status according to international law.

Israel as an occupying force is bound by international conventions and usages as regards its administration of the holy city. The le-

gality of each of its acts impacting the demographics, urbanism, holy places, etc... of Jerusalem should be scrutinized and challenged and met with legal means wherever the deed breaches international conventions and usages.

It's necessary to stress that Israel's acts are temporary and shall entail no legal precedent or fait accompli situation. In particular, the violations aimed at rewriting history, counterfeiting facts and obliterating the Arab identity should be considered absolutely null and void according to the international legitimacy.

In this regard, it should be reminded that the international community did not give international legitimacy to the Israeli violations at whatever stage, the lack of success in preventing Israel from continuing such violations cannot imply recognition of their legitimacy.

This legal defense should be backed by Arab political and economic development plans aimed at countering the effects of the Israeli illegal practices within the city.

This theme about Jerusalem and History reviewed the succeeding periods of Jerusalem's rich History. It aimed at pointing out the weaknesses of the Jewish historical arguments backing their claims to the holy city. Of paramount importance is the disclosure of Israel's deeds at falsifying History and ar-

cheology by means of destruction, omission, modification and fabrication of historical and archeological facts. By contrast, an emphasis should be put on the overwhelming set of evidence spread across the city showing its rooted past as an inalienable part of Palestine and a holy place for the divine religions.

The theme 'Jerusalem, colonization and Israeli violations' listed the Israeli violations and illegal practices that have been taking place in Jerusalem since the beginning of its occupation; colonization of occupied land, requisitions of land and property, displacement of population by means of pressure, harassment, falsification, violence, and even plain deportation, destruction of propriety, desecration of religious precincts and discrimination in favor of the Jewish population.



# Doha Declaration Issued by the International Conference on Jerusalem State of Qatar - Doha, 26-27/2/2012

The International Conference on Jerusalem was held at Doha, Capital of the State of Qatar 26-27/2/2012 in implementation of Resolution 503 dated 28/3/2010, of the 22nd Arab Summit "Sirt Summit" billed as "Jerusalem Summit". The International Conference on Jerusalem convened under the auspices of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of Qatar. The Conference was also attended by HE Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, Head of State of Palestine, HE Dr. Nabil El Arabi, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, and Excellencies the Arab ministers of foreign affairs. Additionally, a number of prominent figures also took part in the Conference featuring heads of international and regional organizations and agencies, human rights organizations and unions, religious figures, thinkers, legal, political and history professionals demonstrating a large historical gathering from around the world in solidarity with the Palestinian people in Al Quds, regarding their legitimate rights and fundamental principles well established therefore,

In support to Al Quds, vowing to pursue further for supporting its steadfastness and persistence of its people in standing up against the Judaization of this sempiternal city, the city of tolerance, religions' coexistence and civilizations commingling throughout time until the end of the occupation,

Having conducted an insightful study of the current situation of the city as well as the major challenges confronting its Arab identity coupled with Judaization threats, including the forced eviction of its population, sustainable and progressive measures involving the destruction of its Islamic and Chris-

tian sanctities, and obliterating its history and human heritage, Reiterating our commitment to the legitimacy resolutions, international conventions and agreements, adhering to the noble principles contained in the UN Charter pertaining to the International Law and Humanitarian International Law for the purpose of restoring Al Quds as a city where peace, security, freedom and justice prevail, and stressing that Al Quds is the permanent capital of the State of Palestine,

- We, hereby, extend a salute in great respect and reverence to the Palestinian people in Al Quds for their steadfastness and resistance to all Israeli violations committed against this city, its sanctities, history and heritage,

- We, hereby, welcome the call of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar, for making Al Quds and its freedom a focal point for all Palestinians as well as a stimulus for completing conciliation and bringing division to an end,

- We commend and support the proposal made by His Highness for resorting to the Security Council in order to obtain a resolution entailing setting up an international committee to examine all measures taken by Israel since 1967 occupation in Arab Al Quds intended to eradicate its Islamic and Arab features,

- We, happily receive, His Highness call for developing a comprehensive and extended strategy on the different sectors and projects needed for Al Quds, Qatar is ready to contribute all its resources to achieving the said strategy as well as putting it into force,

- We, hereby, reiterate that forced eviction of Al Quds population by means of the Judaization plans, denying the right, obliterating the history and heritage, usurping land, and confiscating properties are violations of the International Law and Humanitarian International Law. Therefore, we are calling upon the international powers that are silent about Israeli violations to assume their responsibilities and oblige Israel for implementing all international resolutions relevant to Al Quds. Additionally, we are calling upon all relevant agencies of the UN to assume their responsibility towards Al Quds and its population, ensuring their enjoyment of their city, complete civic, economic, and social rights, preserving its sanctities, historical landmarks and human heritage,

- We, hereby, call upon the Swiss Government, depositary state of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to hasten calling for the resumption of the Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 in enforcement to the UN General Assembly Resolutions thereto. It is intended to take the necessary measures for bringing the Israeli violations to an end, protecting Al Quds, its people and sanctities.

- We, hereby, express deep concern towards the ongoing Israeli work of digging and excavations in the blessed Al Aqsa in the old city. Such acts seriously affect the City's unique characteristic at the religious, cultural, historical and demographic levels. They also contradict the UNESCO and UN resolutions relevant to the occupied city as well as the principles of International Law, especially, the Hague Convention for the Protection of



#### Cultural Properties of 1954.

- We, hereby, demand free people worldwide to defend Al Quds, support its population and sanctities as this is deemed a humanitarian and civilizational obligation and duty. It is also considered a right imposed by virtue of the principles of International Law as well as provisions of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, and the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Properties in the Event of Armed Conflict of 1954, 1972 Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Historical Heritage, in addition to the international legitimacy resolutions regarding Al Quds status as an occupied city, and the relevant UNESCO resolutions.

- We, hereby, call upon the Israeli authorities to put an end to the unilateral policies, and measures of imposing the status quo in Al Quds including the immediate stopping of all settlement activities, remov-

ing the Israeli West Bank Barrier in accordance with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), preserving Islamic and Christian sanctities, securing the accessibility thereto, and refraining from changing the city's geographic, political and demographic status for the purpose of implementing its Judaization plans.

- We, hereby, call upon the UNESCO to preserve the occupied Al Quds cultural heritage based on its resolutions thereunto, enforcing the eighth clause of its Executive Council resolution 35x/49, R. xc (amended 185xc/14 and 185xc/52) calling for the appointment of one or more prominent and permanent experts whose headquarters would be East Al Quds in order to regularly report on all aspects related to the educational, cultural, and population situation in Al Quds.

- We appreciate the efforts of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

geared towards supporting the Endowments in Al Quds, the role of His Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein in supporting Al Quds, protecting sanctities and persistence of Maqdeseen (inhabitants of Al Quds), especially, the endeavors exerted in UNESCO for the purpose of obtaining consensus resolution obliging Israel to refrain from taking unilateral measures aimed at changing the road features of Moghrabi Gate.

- In conclusion, we extend our thanks to the State of Qatar, the Emir, Government and people, for hosting this Conference, providing all possible means that would ensure its success, demonstrating support and standing by Al Quds and its steadfast people against the Israeli occupation as well as the continuous plans for Judaizing the City.

# DICID and Qatar Red Crescent Drive to Help Philippines Typhoon-Hit



The Qatar Red Crescent (QRC) has launched a campaign to mobilise QR8.5mn as part of its humanitarian efforts to help victims of the recent typhoon that wreaked havoc in the northern and eastern regions of Mindanao island in the Philippines.

Close to 1,100 people were killed and almost the same number injured in the storm, which was one of the largest natural disasters to hit the southeast Asian country in the last two decades. The heavy rains and strong winds led to catastrophic flooding and deadly landslides affecting more than 211,500 people.

The typhoon destroyed more than 7,720 homes and caused extensive damage to nearly 25,000 buildings.

The Doha International Centre for Interfaith Dialogue (Dicid) in cooperation with the QRC and the Philippines embassy in Qatar, is on

a mission to raise financial and material assistance for victims of the disaster.

At a briefing, the parties reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the target through liberal assistance from local communities.

The campaign 'From Qatar to the Philippines' aims to highlight the damage caused by the disaster in order to mobilise voluntary contributions in cash and kind for providing continued support to QRC's disaster relief activities.

QRC executive director, Saleh al-Mohannadi, expressed hope that the society could meet the requirements of at least 5,000 families affected by the disaster.

"Already \$100,000 has been allocated to support our urgent interventions to provide emergency relief and our teams are currently through their mission, distributing

food and non-food items, providing shelter, health-care services and clean water to the victims," he said.

The QRC is also planning to send a special medical unit in co-operation with the Philippines Red Cross to continue providing life-saving medical care, al-Mohannadi revealed.

Dicid chairman Dr Ibrahim al Naimi said his centre is seeking to be a role model in achieving peaceful co-existence between followers of different religions. "Strengthening the solidarity between religions is more required these days than ever before. It is high time practical steps are made to save human societies," he said.

The Philippines Ambassador, Crescente Relacion, appreciated the humanitarian efforts being made by Qatar to help the disaster-hit in his country. "We at the Philippines embassy offer all possible facilities

for the success of the campaign as we convey our gratitude to QRC, which is providing relief services in the affected areas in co-operation with the Philippines National Red

Cross.”  
The envoy added that his mission is extremely pleased to work with the DICID to achieve the targets in the shortest possible time. Rela-

tion said the embassy was already collecting immediate relief materials for the victims.



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To donate on line : [www.qrcs.org.qa](http://www.qrcs.org.qa)





## DICID is Hosting a Student Delegation from the University of Bethlehem

The Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue hosted a delegation of students of Bethlehem University as a part of its annual events and activities, to consolidate the relations and interdependence among the youth of the Arab followers of divine religions and to promote peaceful coexistence and mutual respect. The student delegation included a number of Bethlehem University students from among followers of Islamic and Christian faiths with the head of delegation and assistants.

The delegation and DICID officials held a number of scientific, cultural, and recreational visits and activities. Their program started with effective participation in the International Conference for the Defense of Jerusalem, which took place in implementation of the decision of the Supreme Council of the League of Arab States, and was

hosted by Qatar in Doha between 26-27Feb. 2012, and organized by the Secretariat General of the League of Arab States and the Permanent Committee for Organizing Conferences, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The participation of student delegation was effective and productive, being the first time for these students to have the opportunity to attend a global conference on the city of Jerusalem at this high level of international representation. They had the opportunity to attend all meetings of the Conference, which had a positive reflection on their sense that their Arab and Islamic countries are mainly concerned with the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants.

The students also participated in a seminar held by Al-Jazeera Mubashir and showed mature opin-

ions reflecting their deep interest to improve the situation in Palestine; and called on all parties to unite and protect the city of Jerusalem from the occupiers.

They also participated in the Doha Debates program. The Doha Debates is a unique program of its kind in the Arab world, designed specifically for the discussion of conflicting views and arguments on urgent political topics and issues in the region.

In the framework of the visit, the students visited Georgetown University, the Faculty of Islamic Studies and Al-Fakhoora foundation, an extensively international student movement led by young people believing in the ability to create a better future for themselves and their communities. The Al-Fakhoora campaign activists aim to advocate and ensure the promotion of





freedom of education for Palestinian students in Gaza and West Bank. Mr. Farooq Burney, director of the institution, welcomed the visiting student delegation and gave them a detailed explanation of projects and activities of the Foundation, and invited guests to participate in expanding Al-Fakhoora activities, which presently focus on the cities of Gaza and Ramallah.

Cultural visits included a visit to the Museum of Islamic Art, Qatar Islamic Cultural Center, Museum of Sheikh Faisal bin Jassim Al-Thani, in the city of Shahaniya, where students expressed their admiration for holdings of the museum, of relics and rare and precious masterpieces.

Of course, no visiting delegation of the city of Doha could overlook to visit Al Jazeera Channel, which has become a media edifice in the region. The students met with those working in Al-Jazeera and saw its facilities.

The delegation also visited Qatar University and participated in the activities of the Cultural Village organized by students of the University of Qatar, where they met with students and held many conversa-

tions about the situation in Palestine in general and Jerusalem in particular. The student delegation felt the great compassion the Qatar University students have for their cause, and their willingness to continue to communicate with them to create activities by means of social networking. HE Muneer Ghannam, the Ambassador of Palestine to Qatar, also hosted the students.

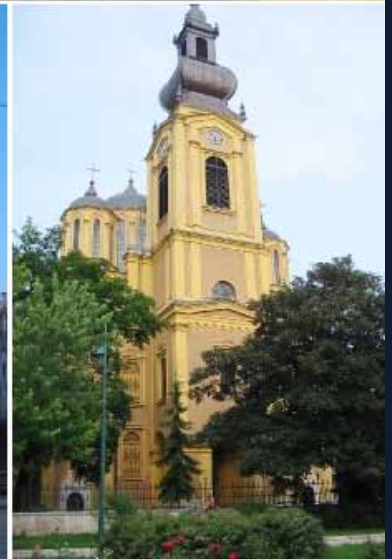
At the end of the visit, Dr. Ibrahim Saleh Al-Naimi, Chairman of DICID met with the visiting delegation in the final session at the headquarters of the Centre, at the presence of some members of the Board of Directors, and there was a dialogue about this new experience and its positive impact on these students.

The center administrators stressed on the importance of continuing these student meetings and visits of Palestinian youth to the Arab countries. The visiting delegation, in turn, appreciated the hospitality and warm reception they met in the State of Qatar and strongly admired the greatest architectural renaissance and development in the State of Qatar, under the bounteous sponsorship of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani Emir of Qatar, to whom they

thanked and showed gratitude for this opportunity to meet with their fellow students and officials in the State of Qatar.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Prof. Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi, DICID's president, thanked the permanent Committee for Organizing Conferences, led by H.E. Sheikh Ahmed Bin Mohammed Bin Jabor Al-Thani, Assistant Foreign Minister for International Cooperation, and the Permanent Committee Chairman, and HE Mr. Abdulla Fakhro, Executive Director of the Committee for the participation in sponsoring this visit and urged to carry out such activities with student delegations of other countries to enhance communication between Arab and Muslim youth.





## ***DICID Participation at 1st Interfaith Dialogue Conference in Bosnia and Herzegovina***

The Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue is participating at the First Interfaith Dialogue Conference of South-East Europe. The conference, titled "The role of education in promoting peace and tolerance in South-East Europe" will be held between 20-22 of May, 2012 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Participants from the Balkan countries will present a number of papers dealing with education and its relationship to dialogue between religions. A DICID delegation will represent the center during the conference, with a number of pa-

pers including a paper on "The role of education in promoting interfaith dialogue," by Dr. Ibrahim al-Naimi, Chairman of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, "The importance of the curriculum of religious education" which will be provided by Dr. Aisha Al-Mannai member of the International Advisory Board of the center and a paper entitled "Exchange of curriculum in building a balanced society," will be presented by Dr. Yousef Mahmoud Al-Siddiqi. The conference aims to build bridges of communication be-

tween the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue and the Balkans and Eastern Europe. DICID has signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Sarajevo last year, setting up activities in the field of interfaith dialogue, including the establishment of conferences, seminars, workshops, joint research, exchange of visits and sharing experiences in the field of interfaith dialogue between the Center and the University.

# Welcome to Our New Issue of Religions

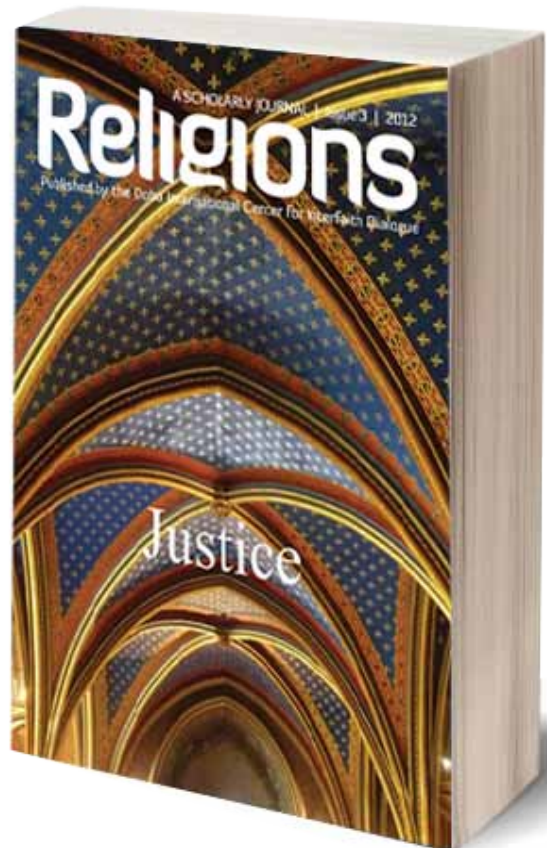
Justice is an essential dimension of religious teachings and religious consciousness. In fact it could be argued that religion, in its central inspiration, is nothing else than the realization of justice. The Gospel of Matthew teaches "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his justice and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6 :33). This is an unambiguous indication that justice is primary in the religious search since it flows, or should flow, from the search for God. The Greek word used for justice is in this passage *dikaiosyne*, which is akin to righteousness and, through its connection to *dike*, the human reality of law and justice that is born from divine justice.

In Islam, justice stems from the discernment of the *shahādah*, and the consequent ability to give all realities, all human and non-human beings, their respective due, and sometimes more, in mercy and love. The just are both wise and generous, they embrace both intelligence and love. Their justice is first of all objectivity, or the ability to make abstraction of one's interests, and consequently charity vis-à-vis others that stems from our unity in humanness through the divine "imprint" of our theomorphic nature, and manifests itself in the forms that are most consonant with our respective vocations, destinies and circumstances. The Quran beautifully expresses this conjunction of objectivity and love in one of its most poignant calls for justice: **"O ye who believe! Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity (*qawwāmīn li-llāh shuhudāha bi-l-qist*), and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly (*allā ta'dalū*). Deal justly (*a'dilū*), that is nearer to your duty (*li-l-taqwa*). Observe your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is informed of what ye do". (Al-Maida:8).**

Justice is truth in action. It presupposes an ability to be objective about oneself, and objective about others. It therefore presupposes a degree of command over one's egocentric impulses, as well as, by extension, over one's sentimental identification with a particular group, culture or nation. Justice is an ability to transcend oneself to recognize the right of others. To the extent that religion teaches the ways of transcending oneself it is also all about justice.

Today justice is almost entirely identified with social justice, which is only one of its manifestations. Religions preach justice for all, and particularly for the weak, but they also stress -- and that is what distinguishes them most clearly from merely humanistic ethics, that social forms of injustice do not only nor primarily result from external factors, or structures, but from the fundamental inner injustice that gives rise to, and sustains, these very structures and factors. Justice starts at home, in the heart that chooses and loves the true.

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