

Communiqué

At the dawn of a new era a group of Muslim and Christian scholars coming from different parts of the world met in Vienna from October 19–23, 2000, to discuss the possibilities for a closer cooperation in face of the urgent questions humanity is facing on our way into the future. This “Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table” emerged as a continuation of the “Vienna Dialogue Process” initiated in 1993. It is an initiative which seeks to find new ways of cooperating and living together among the different cultures and religious communities.

The participants of the “Round Table”, from their Christian and Islamic perspectives, agreed on the following:

I. Points of Concern

1. Injustice and inequality in the distribution of resources and the access to full and equal opportunity in civil society at the national and international levels.
2. Religious misperceptions and prejudice leading to rising discrimination and intolerance.
3. Crisis of general human values and the necessity to rediscover them out of the rich religious heritage of mankind to meet the new challenges of our times.
4. Increasing hostility, conflict, and violence between various groups and communities in the name of religion.
5. Failure of domestic and international institutions and organizations to effectively enforce the laws to secure religious liberty and equality to all individuals, groups, and communities.

II. Plan of Action

1. To engage in inter-religious dialogue as an indispensable tool of promoting cooperation, joint action, and reconciliation.
2. To promote universal education reinforced by moral and ethical values of our respective religions by emphasizing human dignity and mutual respect for each other’s faith with due recognition of the richness and diversity of religions and cultures.
3. To promote religious reconciliation and study ways and means of conflict resolution.

4. To encourage the media to play a more positive role in promoting understanding through fairness and moderation in coverage.
5. To establish a 15-member working group to be known as “Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table” and a 5-member Steering Committee in order to address the concerns and to pursue the action plan stated above.

In the morning of October 23 the above stated Communiqué was drafted by a redactional committee of the Round Table. In the final meeting of the Conference, which took place the same afternoon, this draft was presented to the plenary, discussed, and, including the modi suggested by the plenary, promulgated unanimously.