



President Peres met with an interfaith delegation from Argentina which included Muslim, Jewish and Christian faith leaders

28.02.2014 | JCR

"The leaders of all religions should stand against the killing of innocents, against terrorism."

The President of the State of Israel, Shimon Peres, met with a delegation of faith leaders from Argentina who are here as part of an interfaith trip to Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan. The delegation includes Muslim, Christian and Jewish leaders who are engaged in interfaith dialogue and they will conclude their visit with a meeting with Pope Francis in the Vatican.

President Peres welcomed the delegation to Israel and said, "I'm very glad to see the faiths working together. These three faiths working together shows religious brotherhood in your country. There are many countries where we have Muslims, Jews and Christians living together and they should work together to support peace as one group. Peace is the uniting message of religions and it has a great influence because nowadays peace is built on trust not force. We have to have peace among people not only governments. I don't see any contradiction between science and religion, they are complimentary. You have a very important role to play because science which is the major economic factor, like religion doesn't have borders and is dependent on the spirit and quality of people. The new pope has shown that spirit and values are more important than possessions; he returned religion into a spirit rather than an organization, a faith more than a church. I hope that your togetherness will spread all over the world."

President Peres addressed the situation in the Middle East and said, "Terror is destroying countries and mainly the Arab countries in this region, there is terrible bloodshed. Some of them are using the name of religion to justify their actions. The leaders of all religions should stand against the killing of innocents, against terrorism. Terrorists kill everybody indiscriminately. We should make a loud and clear call from all religions against killing innocent people. It's against the Koran, the Torah and against the New Testament."

The representatives of the three faiths thanked President Peres for his welcome and said, "This group was created under the auspices of Pope Francis when he served as Archbishop of Buenos Aires. The idea was to create an interfaith dialogue group intended to be a place of discussion and action. Interfaith dialogue is crucial in a global world. This visit has an importance in world politics. Our statement from Jerusalem - the 'Jerusalem Commitment' - contains principles which we believe can be universally accepted by all as a path to peace. We are from civil society with different political ideals but we feel that our religious leadership can contribute to international relations and statesmanship."

Luis Grynwald of the Jewish community in Buenos Aires presented President Peres with a Mate (a symbolic Argentinian cup) on behalf of the delegation and said, "This is an Argentinian symbol. Everyone drinks from the same cup - Jews, Muslims, Christians and all citizens of the country. It's a symbol that we can live in peace, in Argentina, in Israel and all over the world."

{newsItem.description->f.format.html()}