



# 40 Years of Dialogue: Reflections and Future Perspectives

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**A joint declaration of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) and the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations With the Jews. It was released at the end of its 21st meeting in Paris, March 2, 2011.**

The conference, titled "40 Years of Dialogue: Reflections and Future Perspectives" addressed the past, present and future of Catholic-Jewish dialogue in its international settings. The event began with a review of the 40-year history of the ILC, which was begun in 1970. For the current conference, delegates came from the United States, Europe, Israel, Australia, Latin America and Africa. The conference highlighted the positive relationship that began with the Second Vatican Council and the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate* (the declaration on the relationship of the Church to non-Christian Religions) in 1965.

The ILC sponsored a special three-day pre-conference called the "Emerging Leadership Delegation", which brought together young people from both faith communities to discuss the challenges of the future and to help expand the dialogue to involve more young people around the world. These delegates were invited to participate fully in the ILC plenary sessions where their insights and fresh ideas contributed positively to the proceedings.

A principal outcome of the conference was the deepening of personal relationships and of a shared desire to confront together the enormous challenges facing Catholics and Jews in a world in rapid and unpredictable transformation. Also acknowledged was a common religious duty to help relieve the global consequences of poverty, injustice, discrimination and the denial of universal human rights. Participants were especially sensitive to the call of the younger generation for true freedom and full participation in their societies.

The conference acknowledged contemporaneous events taking place in parts of Northern Africa and the Middle East where millions of human beings are expressing their thirst for dignity and freedom. In many parts of the world, minorities, especially religious minorities, are discriminated against, threatened by unjust restrictions of their religious liberty, and even subjected to persecution and murder. Speakers expressed a profound sadness at repeated instances of violence or terrorism "in the name of God", including the increased attacks against Christians, and calls for the destruction of the State of Israel. The conference deplores every act of violence perpetrated in the name of religion as a complete corruption of the very nature of a genuine relationship with God.

The ILC committed itself to the next phase of its journey pledging to work for a peaceful future for the people in the Middle East region and the world, outreach to Jewish-Christian dialogue groups in Europe and Latin America, collaboration on social and ethical issues, and supporting the next generation of young leaders so they can build on the historic achievements of the last four decades. The participants are deeply convinced of the importance of encouraging good relations between Christians and Jews at every level and in all situations as a paradigm for other dialogues.

**Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews**

International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC)

*The constituent bodies of IJCIC are:*

American Jewish Committee

Anti-Defamation League

Bnai Brith International

Central Conference of American Rabbis

Israel Jewish Council for Interreligious Relations

Orthodox Union

Rabbinical Assembly

Rabbinical Council of America

Union of Reform Judaism

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

World Jewish Congress

Source: [American Jewish Committee](#)

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