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BUDAPEST, Hungary - Some 60 Lutheran and Jewish representatives from 15 countries gathered at the Manreza Conference Center near Budapest, Hungary, 9-13 September 2001 to discuss the theme 'Antisemitism and Anti-Judaism Today.' The conference was halted for a time due to news of the terrorist attacks in the U.S.A.. In a unanimous resolution, participants strongly condemned the attacks as 'a crime against humanity.' The statement mourned the loss of victims and expressed sympathy to the families affected and to the American people.

Participants in the consultation included representatives from Lutheran churches around the world together with Jewish dialogue partners from their respective countries. They came together to assess the status of Christian-Jewish relations in their areas and to explore the directions in which responses to antisemitism and anti-Judaism could move. North and South America, Eastern and Western Europe, Australia, South Africa, and the Middle East were represented.

The conference 'was marked by a spirit of mutual respect' and contributed toward mutual enrichment, said Dr. Wolfgang Greive, study secretary for Theology and the Church in the Lutheran World Federation. A Jewish participant likened the meeting to 'a family experience.'

The meeting was a forum aimed at focusing on re-emerging and new forms of antisemitism and anti-Judaism. These include the proliferation of antisemitic hate sites on the Internet, desecration of Jewish cemeteries, and neo-Nazi movements. Participants encouraged Lutheran World Federation member churches to produce more materials that counter anti-Judaism in the church's theology and liturgy.

Participants also expressed deep concern about the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and the sufferings of both Israelis and Palestinians, including members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan. They urged the State of Israel and the Palestinian leadership to seek all possible ways to end the violence and to resume negotiations seeking agreement between the two peoples.

The conference included lectures from a biblical and theological standpoint by Rabbi Leon Klenicki of the U.S.A. and Prof. Wolfgang Kraus of the University of Koblenz, Germany. In addition to the Lutheran-Jewish teams from the various countries, participants included representatives of the World Jewish Congress, the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, the International Council of Christians and Jews, and the Vatican’s Commission on Religious Relations with the Jews.

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