



Danish-Arab Dialogue Conference 2012

The Copenhagen Commitment *of Muslims and Christians*

Copenhagen, 28 September 2012

A Committed Partnership between Muslims and Christians

25-28 September 2012, Muslims and Christians from Denmark met with Christians and Muslims from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. This was the second part of the dual Danish-Arab Dialogue Conference for Muslim and Christian leaders and scholars. Both conferences were organized by the Contact Group for Muslims and Christians – a joint initiative by The National Council of Churches in Denmark and The Muslim Council of Denmark – in partnership with The Arab Group for Muslim-Christian Dialogueⁱ.

This dialogue was initiated at a conference in Beirut 1-3 May 2012, where the participants adopted a common statement on issues of faith in God, ethics, religious freedom and the role of religions across continents with a promise of commitment to promote a culture of tolerance and equity.

In Copenhagen, we went a step further addressing the key question “How can we move beyond words towards a committed partnership between Muslims and Christians?” We discussed relations between people of different confessions in our local contexts and the necessity of appreciating one another and advocating the interests and the rights of each other.

With examples from both Europe and the Arab world we looked at how it would be possible to benefit from best practices; we shared experiences of partnerships between Muslims and Christians that have paved the way for religious inclusion and the sense of common values and goals.

The conference affirmed that dialogue is crucial to strengthen cooperation and to enhance mutual respect. With a common voice across cultural and religious differences, we committed ourselves to the following:

1. To reaffirm the statement of the conference in Beirut 1-3 May 2012.
2. To share scriptural wisdom across religions through joint study projects and activities.
3. To give youth opportunities to interact through sporting events, camps, cultural activities etc. with the purpose of strengthening and growing mutual respect and understanding.
4. To demonstrate solidarity when faith communities are oppressed and marginalized.
5. To address problems facing both Christians and Muslims such as mutual ignorance, hostile imagery, hate crimes, "Islamophobia" as well as "Westophobia", fear of the other and attacks on holy sites and figures and to encourage a discourse of mutual respect with sincerity.
6. To support each other's efforts to develop our religious facilities such as building mosques and churches. In Copenhagen we specifically support the endeavors of the Muslim Council of Denmark towards the building of a grand mosque.
7. To promote a culture of using the freedom of expression which is a sacred principle of the human rights - in a responsible way and to reject using freedom of expression with the sole purpose of insulting creeds and symbols of faith.
8. To advocate for equal rights and opportunities for faith communities.
9. To contribute in shaping the future of our societies based on mutual respect, citizenship and human rights, particularly at this specific time of political change in the Arab world.
10. To work with the media to give more space to a fair and balanced coverage of religious matters and to promote religious inclusivity.
11. To follow up on the progress of this committed partnership.

See our website www.dialogue2012.org

ⁱ The conference expressed its appreciation to the Foreign Ministry of Denmark for its support for this conference.