

Macedonian President in Rome: We Have to Create Cohabitation in Order to Have World Peace



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Macedonia's President Gjorge Ivanov. Photo: Radovan Vujovic

The goal of the religious dialogue for which we stand is respect, not overcoming the differences, because the aim of the dialogue is to help us live with our deepest religious differences, without neglecting or surpassing those differences.

This is the message conveyed by the Macedonian President Gjorge Ivanov in Rome on Wednesday, where he participates at the 7th high level meeting organized by the Nizami Ganjavi International Center and the Italian Association for International Organizations - Initiative for Global Dialogue in a Multipolar World.

Prior to his address at the conference dubbed 'Response to Radicalization and Extremism through Inter-religious Dialogue', Ivanov held a meeting with the President of the Italian Senate, Pietro Grasso, his cabinet said in a press release.

The Macedonian head of state pointed in his speech that in order to achieve world peace, we must first create cohabitation, i.e. mutual respect and acceptance of differences. Ivanov said that we should get to know each other more and respect the different through a sincere dialogue.

"Instead of moving toward greater openness, toward promotion of human rights and freedoms, in the second decade of the 21st century, we went two steps back. In fear and closure, which bring even deeper divisions and greater fear, united Europe today has more walls than divided Europe during the Cold War," Ivanov pointed.

According to the Macedonian president, the reasons for this situation are abuse of religion, double standards, ignoring the international law and global anti-order.

Ivanov stressed that instead of attempting to fit the different religions in a single frame that we have constructed ourselves, it is far better to leave the space for freedom of expression of the differences, in which we would build mutual trust, as equal in line with the rights and the obligations.

"In Macedonia, we have a centuries-old cohabitation between the Christians, the Muslims and the Jews. And that did not make the Christians less Christians, the Muslims less Muslims, nor the Jews less Jews. On the contrary, they became richer with that experience," Ivanov highlighted and noted the activities being taken in Macedonia in terms of improving the religious dialogue regionally and internationally.

In that sense, the President reminded that this year Macedonia will host the 4th World Conference on Inter-religious and Inter-civilization Dialogue.

Ivanov will also be awarded with a special recognition by the co-chairs of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center, Vaira Vike-Freiberga and Ismail Serageldin.

Tags: President Gjorge Ivanov, Nizami Ganjavi International Center, Association for International Organizations - Initiative for Global Dialogue in a Multipolar World, Pietro Grasso, Dialogue, respect, differences, cohabitation

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