

# Vatican Recruits Youth to Foster Jewish-Christian Relations

## Liaison Committee Meeting Begins With Next Generation Event

PARIS, MARCH 3, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The Vatican's committee on relations with the Jews and its Jewish counterpart concluded their 21st meeting Wednesday in Paris. But before the "dialogue experts" set to work, a three-day pre-conference brought together young Jews and young Christians to talk about continuing their friendship in the future.

The International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) and the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations With the Jews released a joint declaration to conclude their four-day meeting. The theme was "40 Years of Dialogue: Reflections and Future Perspectives," meaning the youth participation was particularly appropriate.

"The conference highlighted the positive relationship that began with the Second Vatican Council and the [1965] promulgation of 'Nostra Aetate' -- the declaration on the relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions," the communiqué stated.

The young people's pre-conference naturally looked toward challenges for the future. Participants also considered how to extend dialogue to involve more young people now.

The youth were then invited to participate in the plenary sessions, where, the communiqué affirmed, "their insights and fresh ideas contributed positively to the proceedings."

### United front

The joint declaration noted that the Jewish and Christian representatives were able to deepen personal relationships and "a shared desire to confront together the enormous challenges facing Catholics and Jews in a world in rapid and unpredictable transformation."

They also presented a united front to deplore "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 conference participants spoke of the conflicts under way in north Africa and ongoing struggles in the Middle East.

"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 communiqué stated.

The conference ended with a joint commitment to "the next phase of its journey," the communiqué noted. "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."

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