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Cardinal Tauran Addresses Christian-Hindu Gathering in India

Stresses That Religions Must Be Channels of Peace

PUNE, India, NOV. 9, 2011 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- Though India has been the site of violent anti-Christian persecution, the leader of the Vatican's interreligious dialogue council is reminding Indians that religion must be a channel of peace and unity.

Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran on Tuesday addressed a group of 40 Catholic and 30 Hindu religious leaders gathered in Pune for a four-day meeting on "Enhancing Hindu-Christian relations and collaboration for justice, peace and harmony."

UCANews reported on the cardinal's address, in which he noted that "unfortunately there has been a tendency among some with vested interests to create distrust ... between communities in the name of religion."

The Vatican official urged people to turn their backs on those using religion to spread hate, and instead, to uphold unity and peace.

If the followers of religion collaborate, they can promote a culture of solidarity that will defeat divisive forces, he affirmed.

Cardinal Tauran also emphasized that Hinduism and Christianity share values and visions.

Genuine relationships, he added, respect differences "no matter what they are."

The cardinal hailed the meeting as a "sign of hope" to recognize what is "true, good and holy" in each other's religions.

Bishop Thomas Dabre of Poona, a member of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, noted that India is a multi-cultural and multi-religious society where interreligious dialogue should become a way of life.

Christians are a small minority in India (2.3%), where the vast majority of the population is Hindu (80.5%) and a larger minority is Muslim (13.4%).

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