

Beirut, Vienna, 18th May 2015

MEETING IN BEIRUT CONTINUES COOPERATION WITH CHRISTIAN, MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN ARAB REGION

KAICIID Secretary General: “We are implementing programs on social cohesion to support religious and cultural diversity in Syria and Iraq, and implementing the recommendations from the conference “United Against Violence in the Name of Religion,” held in Vienna in November 2014.”

At a meeting in the Lebanese capital, KAICIID brought together Islamic and Christian religious leaders from Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Lebanon in addition to representatives from the Yazidi community in Iraq. The participants were representing the religious institutions and communities who met in Vienna, Austria at the international conference, “United Against Violence in the Name of Religion: Supporting Religious and Cultural Diversity in Iraq and Syria” in November 2014.

KAICIID Secretary General, Faisal bin Muaammar explained that the purpose of this follow-up meeting was to revisit the recommendations from the conference, and to present the implementation of these recommendations in concrete projects.

Bin Muaammar noted that specialized KAICIID-supported programs to support social cohesion and to support education related to religious, cultural, and media diversity in Iraq and Syria were discussed. During the meeting, KAICIID’s cooperation with international and regional institutions like UNDP, UNESCO, and the UN Office for the Prevention of Genocide were also presented. Participating religious leaders also proposed special projects to encourage knowledge-sharing and cooperation in the promotion of dialogue understanding, and mutual collaboration on the basis of global citizenship.

The participants agreed to continue to work with each other, to counter the violence committed in the name of religion in Syria and Iraq. The participants stressed that this violence targets these nations’ religious, ideological, and cultural cohesion, as well as the diversity that Middle Eastern civilizations were built upon and allows its citizens to coexist safely, respectfully, and collaboratively.

Participating in this conference were experts from the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), the Muslim World League (MWL), a large number of organizations specialized in the field of dialogue such as the Adyan Foundation, and experts representing a number of diverse religious leaders.

KAICIID is an intergovernmental organization mandated to convene and facilitate interreligious and intercultural dialogue. KAICIID’s Founding States are Austria, Saudi



Arabia, Spain and the Holy See, as an observer. KAICIID's work is overseen by a multi-religious Board of Directors, comprising nine high-level religious leaders from five major world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism).

Founded in 2012, KAICIID has held several meetings and conferences that have focused on creating dialogue about shared values among followers of diverse religions and people from different cultures. It has also focused on the primary objectives of global dialogue to strengthen coexistence, cooperation, renounce violence and extremism, and calling for sustained dialogue to pave the way to peace and genuine cooperation between peoples.

KAICIID also oversees continued coordination between religious and various dialogue-based organizations in the Arab region for the purpose of achieving their common goals that promote the principles of coexistence, security, and peace.