



ICCJ 2011 Conference Cracow successful

Rev. Dick Pruiksma, ICCJ General Secretary | 01.09.2011

Some 180 participants gathered from July 3-6 in Cracow Poland, to attend the annual conference of the International Council of Christians and Jews. This conference on ' Religions and Ideologies' was organized in cooperation with the Faculty for International and Political studies of the Cracovian Jagiellonian University.

The list of those who supported this conference would be too long to be published here. But the Polish Council of Christians and Jews and the Center for Dialogue and Prayer in Oswiecim/Auschwitz certainly deserve to be mentioned. Substantial financial support was given by the German Federal Ministry for the Interior and the Renovabis Foundation. Although not every individual and institution can be mentioned here, let there be no doubt ICCJ and the conference participants feel most grateful to all of them.

In due time a full conference report will be published. But now already texts, perhaps even video summaries and podcasts will be published step by step on www.iccj.org. Unfortunately in no way all these reports can fully mirror the experiences the participants had. After an opening session at the conference hotel Qubus we were at Cracow Town Hall among others addressed by the President of the Cracow Region, H.E. Prof. Jacek Majchrowski and the Archbishop of Cracow, H.E. Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz. The Cracovian government then welcomed the conference at an absolutely delicious dinner.

On Monday and Wednesday the plenary sessions were held at the magnificent aula of the Jagiellonian University, the Collegium Novum. The workshops took place in the adjacent building of the Historical Institute of the University. On Monday the conference went on tour in smaller groups. The Monday ended in the Galicia Museum where the Midrash Theatre of Rabbi Tanya Segal fascinated us all. On Wednesday the last program item was a festive dinner after we had several sessions and panels during the afternoon. Of all these sessions the texts and some more material will be published on iccj.org as soon as possible.

Tuesday July 5 2011, will in the ICCJ annals ever be remembered as a very special day. After a moving plenum at the Center for Dialogue and Prayer at Oswiecim, those who never had visited Auschwitz before, had a tour at Auschwitz I, which is now the Auschwitz Museum. Later that afternoon we all gathered at Auschwitz-Birkenau for a commemorative walk, starting at the entrance of the remains of this immense extermination camp. Praying and meditating we walked along the ramp to the monument near the remains of the gas chambers. We all, Jews, Christians and Muslims felt united in prayer when Christians prayed together the Lord's Prayer and Jews said Kaddish. Nobody present that day will ever forget the moment Rabbi Ehud Bandel chanted the remembrance prayer for the victims of the Holocaust.

A memorable conference has come to an end. We learned a lot, we met many old friends and made many new ones. We thank the Almighty for giving us these days in Cracow, Poland.

Editorial remarks

For a lot of lectures and videos of the ICCJ conference see here: [Lectures and Presentations](#)