

# Stockholm Meeting on Interreligious and Cultural Dialogue: “Walk Together”

*Stockholm, October 29<sup>th</sup> 2019.*

*Venue: Sigtunastiftelsen, Manfred Björkquists allé 4, Sigtuna*

*Organized by:*



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**ANSGAR-WERK  
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**Stockholm Meeting  
on Interreligious and Cultural Dialogue:  
"Walk Together"**

**Background**

Within Roman Catholicism, the Second Vatican Council, convened by Pope John XXIII, heightened the consciousness of the Church with regard to other religions. His successor, Pope Paul VI, had the 1964 document "Ecclesiam Suam" as his first encyclical (subtitled "Paths of the Church"), where dialogue was promoted as a new ministry of the Church. At the same time, Pope Paul VI instituted a special department of the Roman Curia for relations with people of other religions. Originally known as the "Secretariat for Non-Christians", in 1988 it was renamed "Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue". In 2018, Pope Francis said that "bonds of solidarity" show how "dialogue among members of different religions is a necessary condition for contributing to peace in the world".

The Catholic Church was established in Sweden by Saint Ansgar in Birka, in 829. Since then, for 1190 years, the Catholic Church has contributed to the building and development of the Swedish society. One example of the compromise between the Catholic Church and the Swedish society was the creation of the University of Uppsala, founded by the Catholic Archbishop Jakob Ulvsson in 1477, becoming thus the first university in Sweden and in any of the Nordic countries. The Lutheran Reformation was introduced in Sweden in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, and the commemoration of the Reformation in 2016 brought Pope Francis to Lund, where an ecumenical service was held in the cathedral.

**Concept Note**

The Chair of International Relations and Diplomacy of the European Institute of International Studies, at the initiative of the Cardinal of Sweden and with participation the EU Commission, has organized the *Stockholm International Conference on Interreligious and Cultural Dialogue: "Walk together"*.

The meeting will gather religious leaders, policy makers, members of the academia as well as representatives of the youth who will provide theoretical and practical inputs to the discussions.

While the primary geographical focus will be Europe (and Sweden as a case) participants will compare existing global practices and success stories in the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue for peace and social coherence.

The idea that differences in culture and religion are causes of social confrontation and conflict is unfortunately still assumed in large social sectors. This idea, associated in

recent years with immigration, have led or contributed to the growth of deplorable phenomena of contempt, xenophobia and hatred in Europe.

The idea that differences in religion or in culture are necessary causes of conflict cannot be accepted as a general principle or as inevitable in practice. It is urgent to eradicate this belief and these practices, first by demonstrating its falsehood, but above all by doing everything necessary to make it impossible.

Early prevention is thus the first instrument in our hands to avoid any kind of confrontation and conflict based on differences in culture or religion. Education based in the value of tolerance is the best instrument in the long run prevention. The sharing experience of success cases, both in prevention and in the solution of conflicts, is an approach of great interest both for learning and as useful reference for practice. But not only good practices, disseminating knowledge about the damages and ravages caused by intolerance and the lack of respect for religious and cultural differences is also part of the education of the public opinion.

In this sense, the proposed meeting will accord great importance to the study of cases that allow at the same time to expand theoretical information and knowledge as well as to extract criteria and guidelines for action.

The participation of young people, in addition to broadening the vision to new generations, is another way to contribute shaping a more hopeful future.

We must do everything in our power to strengthen interreligious and intercultural dialogue as the most effective means of face-to-face meeting to prevent and to resolve any type of disagreement or conflict related to culture or religion.

Through this dialogue it will be possible not only to make clear that no religion can be in itself cause of social conflict or violence, but rather a source of better human understanding.

Thus, the goals of this meeting are:

1. to promote respect, mutual understanding and collaboration among the faithful of the different religions in Sweden and more widely in Europe
2. to enhance the value and practice of the interreligious and intercultural dialogue as a tool for social coherence and peace to impulse interreligious and intercultural dialogue education.



## PROGRAM

08:30 – 9:00	<b>Registration</b>
09:00 – 9:30	<p><b>Inaugural Session</b></p> <p>Cardinal Anders Arborelius ocd, cardinal of Sweden and bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm</p> <p>Patrice Brodeur, professor, senior advisor at KAICIID Centre.</p> <p>Amb. Antonio Nuñez y García-Saúco, president, European Institute of International Studies</p> <p>Moderator: Mario Torres Jarrín, PhD, director, European Institute of International Studies</p>
9:30 – 10.30	<p><b>Panel I: Religious Leaders &amp; Interreligious dialogue: Framing the Conversation</b></p> <p>Rabbi Abraham Skorka, rector Latin American Rabbinical Seminary in Buenos Aires. At present, he serves as visiting university professor at the institute for Jewish-Catholic Relations at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia (United States)</p> <p>Mohamed Abu-Nimer, professor and director, Peacebuilding and Development Institute at the American University (United States)</p> <p>Peter Weiderud, special envoy for Religion in Conflict and Peace Building, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Sweden)</p> <p>Lourdes de Miguel Saez, PhD, professor and dean of the College of Law at the Catholic University of Ávila (Spain)</p> <p>Tomáš Doležal, PhD, The School of International Relations and Diplomacy at Anglo-American University in Prague (Czech Republic)</p> <p>José Antonio Calvo Gómez, PhD, academic director, European Institute of International Studies</p> <p>Moderator: Mario Torres Jarrín, PhD, director, European Institute of International Studies</p>
10:30.10.45	<b>Coffee break</b>

10.45.11.30	<p><b>Panel II: Religious Leaders &amp; Interreligious dialogue: Challenges and Opportunities Globally</b></p> <p>Hassanain Govani, representative of the Shia Muslim Community in Sweden.</p> <p>Imam Salahuddin Barakat, representative of the Sunni Muslim Community in Sweden.</p> <p>Rabbi Ute Steyer, rabbi of the Jewish Community of Stockholm</p> <p>Bishop Eva Brunne, bishop emeritus of the Diocese of Stockholm in the Church of Sweden</p> <p>Cardinal Anders Arborelius ocd, cardinal of Sweden and bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm</p> <p>Moderator: Mario Torres Jarrín, PhD, director, European Institute of International Studies</p>
11.30.12.00	Q&A
12.00-14.00	Lunch
14.00-15.15	<p><b>Panel III: Religious Leaders &amp; Interreligious dialogue: Intergovernmental Cooperation.</b></p> <p><b>Case studies:</b></p> <p><b>The Centre for Inter Faith Dialogue in the Diocese of Stockholm</b> Sofia Nordin (Sweden)</p> <p><b>Inter-American Institute of Interreligious Dialogue</b> Rabbi Daniel Goldman (Argentina)</p> <p><b>KAICIID (King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue), Vienna (Austria)</b> Professor Patrice Brodeur (Austria)</p> <p><b>Scholas Occurrentes Foundation</b> Marta Simoncelli, deputy secretary, Scholas Occurrentes Foundation (Spain)</p> <p><b>Guds Hus (House of God)</b> Carl Dahlbäck, vicar of the parish of Nacka (Church of Sweden)</p> <p>Moderator: Amb. José Beraún, Vice President at European Institute of International Studies</p>
15.00-15.15	Q&A

15.15-15.30	<b>Coffee break</b>
15.30-16.30	<p><b>Panel IV: Youth &amp; Interreligious dialogue in Europe</b></p> <p>Jakob Schwarz, president of the Church of Sweden Youth (Svenska kyrkans Unga)</p> <p>Lovisa Jaruta, representative of the young Catholics in Sweden (Sveriges Unga Katoliker)</p> <p>Yasri Khan, president of the Swedish Muslims for Peace and Justice (Svenska Muslimer för Fred och Rättvisa)</p> <p>Alexander Eisen, representative of young Jews in Sweden</p> <p>Moderator: Javier Sadaba, European Institute of International Studies</p>
16.30-16.45	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
16.45-17.00	<p><b>Conclusions &amp; Closing</b></p> <p>Amb. Antonio Nuñez y García-Saúco, president, European Institute of International Studies</p> <p>Cardinal Anders Arborelius ocd, cardinal of Sweden and bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Stockholm</p>