

**The seventh meeting of the Anglican-Jewish Commission
Wednesday 12 June 2013**

The Anglican-Jewish Commission of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbinate of Israel has issued a declaration from the meeting held at the Haifa Municipality, Israel on 11 and 12 June 2013.

The Commission's mandate provides for the Archbishop of Canterbury and the two Chief Rabbis (from the Ashkenazi and Sephardi communities) to meet each year alternately in England and Jerusalem. It also provides for an annual meeting of a Commission to study agreed themes together and to prepare meetings of the Archbishop and Chief Rabbis in which the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, The Rt Revd Suheil Dawani, also takes part.

**Communiqué of the Seventh Meeting of the Commission of the
Chief Rabbinate of Israel and the Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury**

The seventh meeting of the Anglican-Jewish Commission of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and office of the Archbishop of Canterbury was hosted by the former at the Haifa Municipality, Israel, on 11th and 12th June 2013 / 2nd and 3rd Tamuz 5773.

The Commission's mandate is taken from the provisions of the joint declaration of the Archbishop and the Chief Rabbis made at Lambeth Palace on 6th September 2006 and confirmed at their subsequent meeting in Jerusalem.

The meeting opened with a welcome and greeting by the Chief Rabbi Emeritus of Haifa and Chair of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel's Committee for Interreligious Dialogue, She'ar Yashuv Cohen, who has co-chaired the Anglican-Jewish Commission since its inception. The current chairs of the Commission are Archbishop Michael Jackson and Rabbi Dr Rasson Aroussi.

A message was then read from the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby. The Archbishop expressed his appreciation of both the formal dialogue relationship between his office and that of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, and the regular meetings that enable personal relationships to develop. He was delighted that Rabbi Prof Daniel Sperber, a member of the Commission, had been able to attend his Enthronement service at Canterbury Cathedral on behalf of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel. He also wrote that he was looking forward to meeting with the Chief Rabbis themselves later in the month when he makes his first visit as Archbishop of Canterbury to the Holy Land. In this context, he sent his warm greetings to the Commission and wished them well in their discussions.

The Commission congratulated Dr Clare Amos on the award of her Lambeth DD and her honorary doctorate from Yale Divinity School.

It was significant that the Commission met in Haifa for the first time, as the city is well known for good relations between the different religious communities. The City's mayor, Yona Yahav, had invited the Commission, and hosted its discussions as well as meetings with local religious leaders at the Municipality building. The Commission applauded the warm relationship between the Municipality and the religious leaders.

Haifa, as a centre of scientific excellence, was also an appropriate place for a discussion of the particular theme discussed at this year's gathering, 'Science and Religion'.

Members of the commission were welcomed at the Rambam Health Care Campus and Haifa University where they were taken on tours of both campuses and were addressed by key professionals including Prof Karl Skorecki and Prof Myriam Weyl-Ben Arush. The members were particularly impressed by the way in which cutting edge health care is offered from Rambam across all the different communities in the region including Gaza and neighbouring countries.

Presenting the first paper at the Commission, Rabbi Prof Avraham Steinberg speaking both as a scientist as well as a religious scholar argued that if science and religion are understood properly there should be no contradiction between them. He focused particularly on the question of evolution, and the need to distinguish between the proper claims of scientists which are complementary to religious faith, and what he argued has become a social theory which claims more than science can actually prove and is potentially in conflict with religious belief.

Bishop Michael Ipgrave followed with a paper presenting issues in the dialogue between science and religion from an Anglican Christian perspective. Echoing many of Rabbi Steinberg's points, he explained that, although it was commonly believed that the two had been in conflict with each other since the time of Darwin, in fact scientific and religious truths when rightly understood were complementary to one another.

The commission then shared news and matters of mutual concern. The Jewish delegation expressed their appreciation of the important work of their Anglican colleagues in addressing issues that have arisen in relation to Christian Zionism, particularly through the Anglican Communion's recent report 'Land of Promise?' The Commission expressed their hope that the incoming Chief Rabbis and the Chief Rabbinate Council would continue to support its important ongoing work.

The participants looked forward to their next meeting in 2014.

The Most Revd Michael Jackson

Rabbi Dr Rasson Aroussi

The following are members of the Commission:

Delegation of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel

Rabbi Dr Rasson Arousi

Rabbi Dr David Rosen CBE, KSG

Rabbi Prof Abraham Steinberg

Rabbi Professor Daniel Sperber

Mr Oded Wiener, Director General, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel

Delegation of the Archbishop of Canterbury

The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson

The Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave OBE

Dr Clare Amos

Dr Jane Clements

The Revd Dr Toby Howarth, Secretary for Inter Religious Affairs to the Archbishop of Canterbury