

Communique of the sixth meeting of the Anglican-Jewish Commission Tuesday 31st July 2012

The Anglican-Jewish Commission of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbinate of Israel has issued a declaration from the meeting held at Mansfield College, Oxford, on 31st July and 1st August 2012.

The Commission's mandate provides for the Archbishop of Canterbury and the two Chief Rabbis (from the Ahkenazi 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.



Delegates of the Anglican-Jewish Commission with the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd John Pritchard

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

The sixth meeting of the Anglican-Jewish Commission of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel and office of the Archbishop of Canterbury was hosted by the latter, at Mansfield College Oxford, on 31st July and 1st August 2012 / 12th and 13th Av 5772.

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 the reading of a message from the Archbishop of Canterbury expressing his appreciation of the important ongoing relationship that the Commission

represents and his own warm relationship with the Chief Rabbis of Israel with whom he had met earlier in the year in Jerusalem.

At the opening session the Rt Revd John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford, welcomed the members of the Commission to Oxford in the context of positive local Jewish Christian relations. The members of the Commission sent their wishes for a full and speedy recovery to Rabbi Shear Yashuv Cohen, Chair of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel's Committee for Interreligious Dialogue. The Commission also congratulated the Rt Revd Michael Ipgrave on his appointment as Bishop of Woolwich and Canon Guy Wilkinson (a past Anglican coordinator of the Commission) on his investiture as CBE.

The theme of the Commission's meeting was 'Religion and Democracy' in both traditions. The paper presented by Dr Jane Clements on 'Anglicanism and the Secular State' explored the dynamic between the Kingdom of God and the earthly realm in accordance with the method of scripture interpreted in the light of tradition and reason.

Rabbi Dr Rasson Arousi's presentation explored 'Democracy in Judaism's Political Vision'. He compared contemporary democratic values and practices with Judaism's ideals of governance, participation and accountability of even the highest political authorities to religio-ethical values.

The programme included a visit to the Bodleian Library and a fascinating survey of Medieval Jewish Oxford. Rabbi Prof Avraham Steinberg then delivered a highly illuminating lecture on Jewish Medical Ethics at the Oxford Chabad Society attended by local multi faith audience.

The commission discussed various matters of concern, including the recent Private Member's Motion that related to Israel/Palestine at the Church of England's General Synod. There was acknowledgement that this had caused much distress within the Jewish community in Britain and also within the Christian community as well as in Israel and beyond. At the same time, appreciation was expressed for the efforts of all those who were engaged on the issue to introduce greater understanding and a wider perspective. The Commission discussed steps that could be taken to address the complexities of the challenges raised.

The participants looked forward to their next meeting in 2013.

The Most Revd Michael Jackson Rabbi Dr Rasson Arousi

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

Mrs Clare Amos

Dr Jane Clements

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

The Revd Rana Youab Khan, Archbishop of Canterbury international Inter-religious Dialogues Assistant