

The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development



Konrad Adenauer Stiftung



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Despite Jerusalem Violence, Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Clergy and Seminarians Seed Future with Hope

Faith and Ecology Conference empowered current and emerging faith leaders to be a **powerful vehicle for environmental stewardship**.

Christian, Jewish, and Muslim clergy and seminary students convened around a shared vision of ecological sustainability at the **Faith and Ecology Conference** in Jerusalem on **Wednesday, October 22nd**. The conference educated over 100 clergy, seminary students, and others and provided tools and inspiration to expand faith-based environmental teaching and action.

Speakers included Jerusalem-area priests, rabbis, imams, and a scientist, such as Bishop William Shomali (Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem), Rabbi Yuval Cherlow (Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshivat Hesder Petach Tikva), Dr. Nurit Hashimony Yaffe (Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yafo), and Member of Knesset Rabbi Dov Lipman; interactive workshops, an outdoor session, and a video session featuring pre-recorded addresses from **the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks**. Part of the event was dedicated to generating action plans within each faith community, which resulted in commitments for continued collaboration on the environment.

This event was part of the United Planet Faith & Science Initiative, which brings faith and science leaders together to catalyze shifts in society to address climate change. It is part of a series of events in late 2014 taking place on three continents in New York, Jerusalem, and Lima. The events coincide with UN climate talks and aim to **generate tangible environmental action within faith-based communities**.

In regards to environmental challenges, **Bishop William Shomali said**, “We need to collaborate together--Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and Hindus. **Ecology unites the religions**. If we speak together as religious leaders, our impact is really stronger.”

In the Holy Land, members of the three Abrahamic traditions all share the importance of being stewards of Creation. **Rabbi Michael Melchior, former Member of Knesset** and co-founder of the Knesset environmental caucus, said that “the holy city of Jerusalem sometimes goes astray to points of violence, but really we can

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make it a gate to Heaven. The world really belongs to God, and all of us are temporary residents in this world, which we have been given to take care of.”

The Conference was held at the Mishkenot Sha’ananim Conference Center in Jerusalem, and was co-organized by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development, and the Salesian Pontifical University. To view the event schedule, go to www.interfaithsustain.com. Please direct inquiries to [054-723-4973](tel:054-723-4973) or info@interfaithsustain.com **Photos and video footage are available upon request.**