



In the period October 26 – 28 the World Conference of Inter-religious and Inter-civilization Dialogue was held in Ohrid focused on Contribution of Faith and Culture for Peace, Mutual Respect and Coexistence. The Conference was organized by the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Committee on relations with the faith communities and religious groups as well as faith communities in the Republic of Macedonia.

Staging this World Conference in Macedonia represents continuation of several major regional forums and conferences organized in our country, such as: the Regional Forum of Heads of State 'Dialogue among Civilizations' under the auspices of Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski organized in August 2003 in Ohrid; the Balkan conference 'Balkan Interreligious Dialogue' organized in May 2006 in Ohrid; and the 3rd Regional Conference of Ministers of Culture and Cultural Heritage 'Bridge towards Common Future' organized in November 2006 in Ohrid.

The purpose of the Conference was through exchange of opinions and experience among the representatives of different religions and cultures to show that the dialogue and active commitment can turn the world into dynamic area in which people will affirm the beauty, creative power of differences, cultural exchange, cooperation as well the wealth and potential brought by them.

The Conference was aimed at promoting the Republic of Macedonia as country that nurtures the interreligious dialogue and builds the cooperation between the faith communities in Macedonia with those in the other countries. The target group included 400 participants, faith leaders and clergy from all over the world, representatives of the diplomatic and political corps,

university professors, donors and representatives of the civil society sector.

The Conference was opened with official speeches by the representatives of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, donors and representatives of faith communities. In addition, plenary discussions were organized on the following topics: No real peace among the nation is possible without real peace among religions, Religion in education – its role in transformation of the society and the Contribution of common values in different cultures and religions for the future of mankind. Joint declaration was adopted at the end of the Conference for promotion of dialogue and mutual understanding among religions and civilizations.

Around 400 representatives of international and local faith communities and organizations working in the field of inter-religious dialogue, as well as university professors took part at this event. Three representatives of MCIC as well as one representative from each of MCIC's partner organizations, NCA, DCA and EED attended the conference.

Prior to the conference, on October 18, 2007, the Ministry of Culture addressed MCIC in order to support the conference, by providing technical equipment and audio-visual aids for the conference. MCIC decided to support the conference as it was part of the objectives of the Bridging Religions in Macedonia program, but also because this support would significantly increase the visibility of MCIC as one of the key actors in the field of inter-religious dialogue.

MCIC visibility, as one of the organizations supporting this event, was increased by printing MCIC's logo on the promotional materials, but also by displaying it during the welcoming address together with the other supporters. A person responsible for project implementation from the Ministry of Culture was Elizabeta Kancevska – Milevska, while Dervisha Hadzic – Rahic from MCIC was responsible for implementation and reporting.

Besides MCIC, the conference was financially supported by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, UNESCO, World Islamic League and the World Conference of Religions for Peace. The World Conference on Inter-religious and Inter-civilization Dialogue was organized as part of the Global agenda on dialogue among civilizations, adopted by the UNGA, and of the current Decade of culture of peace.