



Connecting Actions

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Connecting Actions: 25 dialogue organizations met in Paris to share dialogue-based solutions to extremism, ignorance and incitement in uncertain times

From December 6th to 8th, 25 citizen, intercommunal, interfaith and intercultural dialogue organizations came together in Paris for the second “Connecting Actions” symposium. Hailing from 11 countries and working on local, national or European levels, the participants shared their diagnostics of the particular challenges in their national contexts, but also global developments such as the continuing rise of populism, nationalism and extremism. Furthermore, the relevance and value of dialogue projects for addressing those challenges were identified and debated.

The participants concluded that interfaith and intercultural dialogue is to be taken seriously, and understood as key to addressing polarization, extremism and racism. On the basis of this, a clear desire for continuing to exchange best practices and reinforce each other’s work as well as establishing a framework for future collaborations was identified.

Building on the conclusions reached over the first Connecting Actions symposium in November 2016, this year the symposium took an action-oriented approach to the establishing of a Coalition of Dialogue Organizations in Europe through three days of facilitated discussions and workshops in which its identity, values and structure were discussed.

A follow-up conference is planned for the beginning of next year. In addition, an internal, virtual platform was launched to sustain the flow of information, experience and support, further deepen professional relationships and facilitate future collaborations. Several joint initiatives were discussed amongst participating organizations.

“For decades now, forces who divide us along the lines of nationality, religious belief and cultural identity have organized and exchanged knowledge and experience. It is time to do the same. Connecting Actions is a vital step in building innovative networks of cooperation among useful and much needed national and international initiatives” according to Ilja Sichrovsky, Secretary General of the

Muslim Jewish Conference. *“The coalitions that this movement will allow are the best prevention tools for the multiple clashes that riddle our social fabric”*, added Rafael Tyszblat, organiser of the event.

The symposium was convened by Connecting Actions (France), an initiative of the Muslim Jewish Conference (Austria), with the generous help of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the OSCE and the Natan Fund. The following organizations took part:

- Coexister (France)
- 3 Faiths Forum (UK)
- European Union of Jewish Students (Belgium)
- Interfaith Summit (UK)
- Maison du Dialogue et de la Paix (France)
- Together for Sweden (Sweden)
- Salaam Shalom (Germany)
- JUGA- jung, gläubig, aktiv (Germany)
- G3i Groupe- International, Interculturel et Interconvictionnel (France)
- Respect (Switzerland)
- Sharing Perspective Foundation - SPF (Netherlands)
- GFIC- Groupe des Foyers Islamo-Chrétiens (France)
- United Religions Initiatives - URI (International/ Bosnia Herzegovina)
- Dialogue Perspectives (Germany)
- We Act (Denmark)
- Integrationswerkstatt Unkel (Germany)
- Institut HOZES (France)
- Open Skane (Sweden)
- Amanah- The Jewish and Muslim Trust and Faith Project (Sweden)
- Together for Finland- Ad Astra (Finland)
- Interreligiösa Centret (Sweden)
- Initiatives et Changement (France)
- Groupe Inter Religieux pour la Paix 78 (France)