



PONTIFICIO CONSIGLIO  
PER LA PROMOZIONE  
DELL'UNITÀ DEI CRISTIANI

JOINT INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION  
FOR THE THEOLOGICAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN  
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

NINTH PLENARY SESSION  
Belgrade, Serbia, 18-25 September 2006

The ninth meeting of the Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church met in Belgrade, Serbia, from 18-25 September 2006, continuing the work begun in 1980 to seek the restoration of full communion. The Orthodox Church of Serbia generously provided hospitality for the meeting. The official opening took place in the patriarchal chapel of the Serbian Patriarchate in the presence of His Holiness Patriarch Pavle who welcomed the members of the Commission and offered his prayerful support, saying: "...Welcome all of you, to this house of God of our Church and of our people and my home! My humble prayer shall cover your Theological Dialogue of love and truth, for that is why you have gathered here. Of far greater significance, even of sole importance, is that all of you be strengthened by the grace of the Holy Spirit, which rectifies all of our shortcomings and heals all of our weaknesses". The Commission invoked the Holy Spirit on its work. At the first working session in the Sava International Centre, the Co-Presidents H.E. Cardinal Walter Kasper and H.E. Metropolitan John of Pergamon introduced the work of the Commission, and H.E. Metropolitan Jovan of Zagreb welcomed all present on behalf of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Prime Minister of Serbia, Dr Vojislav Kostunica, addressed the Commission, affirming that: "...The Churches of the East and West are setting an extraordinary example by means of their dialogue, and this theological meeting in Belgrade represents a reference point on the way. The greatest gift to contemporary humanity would be to convince people, perhaps first and foremost the political elites, that dialogue has no alternative and that every form of application of force, dictate or imposition of ones own models and solutions-in service of primarily personal interests- destroys the last remaining bridges between confronted peoples and communities, instead of building of peace, confidence, solidarity and cooperation...". He also hosted a reception and dinner for all the participants. The Joint Commission is composed of 30 Orthodox and 30 Roman Catholic members, and is chaired by two Co-Presidents, H.E. Cardinal Walter Kasper and H.E. Metropolitan John of Pergamon (Ecumenical Patriarchate). H.E. Metropolitan Gennadios of Sassima (Ecumenical Patriarchate) and Monsignor Eleuterio Fortino from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, serve as the Joint Commissions Secretaries. The entire Roman Catholic delegation was present in the Belgrade meeting except for two members who were unable to attend. Orthodox members represented the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa, the Patriarchate of Antioch, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, the Patriarchate of Moscow, the Patriarchate of Serbia, the Patriarchate of Romania, the Patriarchate of Georgia, the Church of Cyprus, the Church of Greece, the Church of Poland, the Church of Albania, the Church of Czech Lands and Slovakia and the Church of Finland. The Joint Commission discussed a text entitled: "The Ecclesiological and Canonical Consequences of the Sacramental Nature of the Church: Conciliarity and Authority in the Church", at three levels of the Church's life: local, regional and universal. That text prepared by the Joint Coordinating Committee in Moscow in 1990 was to have been presented at the plenary meeting of the Joint Commission in Freising, Germany, the same year, but was not discussed then or later because events taking place in Eastern Europe at that time obliged the Commission to address the issue of "uniatism" in relation to the ecumenical dialogue. In the present meeting the document prepared in Moscow was carefully examined in a shared spirit of genuine commitment to the search for unity. A Joint Drafting Committee was appointed to revise the text in the light of the many observations and comments made during the discussion on the text. A revised text will be the object of discussion at the next meeting of the Joint Commission which will be hosted by the Roman Catholic Church, next year, 2007. During the week-long meeting the Roman Catholic delegates were present at the Orthodox Divine Liturgy in St. Mark's Church on the Feast of the Nativity of the Mother of God, the Theotokos, and the Orthodox members in a Mass at the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Assumption of the Holy Virgin of Belgrade at the invitation of the Archbishop Stanislav Hocevar. The members of the Commission also had the opportunity to visit the historic Ravanica Monastery. A dinner was offered in the Monastery by H.E. Bishop Ignatij of Branichevo. On Sunday evening the President of Serbia H.E. Boris Tadic hosted a dinner at his residence in honour of the Commission. The meeting of the Joint Commission was marked by a spirit of friendship and trustful collaboration. The members of the Commission

greatly appreciated the generous hospitality of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and they strongly commend the on going work of the dialogue to the prayers of the faithful.

Catholic Members

His Eminence Cardinal Walter Kasper (Co-President)  
His Eminence Cardinal William H. Keeler  
Archbishop of Baltimore  
His Eminence Cardinal Christoph Schonborn, op  
Archbishop of Vienna  
His Eminence Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran  
Librarian and Archivist of S.R.C.  
Most Reverend Oscar Hugh Lipscomb  
Archbishop of Mobile  
Most Reverend Antonio Maria Veglio  
Secretary, Congregation for the Oriental Churches  
Most Reverend Paul Sayah  
Maronite Archbishop of Haifa and Holy Land  
Most Reverend Alfons Nossol  
Archbishop of Opole  
Most Reverend Ioannis Spiteris  
Archbishop of Corfu, Zante and Cefalonia  
Most Reverend Roland Minnerath  
Archbishop of Dijon  
Most Reverend Bruno Forte  
Archbishop of Chieti-Vasto  
Right Reverend Gerard Daucourt  
Bishop of Nanterre  
Right Reverend Kurt Koch  
Bishop of Basel  
Right Reverend Florentin Crihalmeanu  
Bishop of Cluj-Gherla, Romania  
Right Reverend Gerhard Feige  
Bishop of Magdeburg  
Right Reverend Pero Sudar  
Auxiliary Bishop of Sarajevo, Bosnia/Herzegovina  
Right Reverend Brian Farrell  
Secretary, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Vatican City  
Very Reverend Msgr. Piero Coda  
Secretary, Pontificia Accademia di Teologia (unable to come)  
Very Reverend Msgr. Prof. Dr. Iwan Dacko  
President, Institute of Ecumenical Studies Ukrainian Catholic University  
Rev. Prof. Dimitri Salachas  
Pontifical Oriental Institute Pontifical University Urbaniana  
Rev. Prof. Paul McPartlan  
School of Theology and Religious Studies The Catholic University of America  
Rev. Prof. Thomas Pott, osb  
Monastère de L'Exaltation de la Sainte Croix Chevetogne Belgium  
Rev. Fr. Prof. Charles Morerod, op  
Dean, Facoltà di Filosofia Pontificia Università San Tommaso d'Aquino Rome, Italy  
Rev. Fr. Prof. Hector Vail Vilardell, si Rector,  
Pontificio Istituto Orientale Rome, Italy  
Rev. Fr. Frans Bouwen, m.afr.  
Missionnaires d'Afrique [Pères Blancs] Sainte-Anne, Jerusalem Israel  
Dr. Theresia Hainthaler  
Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt Georgen  
Frankfurter Theologische Fakultät  
Frankfurt a. Main Germany  
Prof. Barbara Hallensleben  
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Freiburg Universität Miséricorde Freiburg Switzerland

Prof. Roberto Morozzo della Rocca  
Docente di Storia dell'Europa Orientale Università di Roma III  
Rome Italy

Very Rev. Msgr. Eleuterio E Fortino  
(Co-Secretary) Under-Secretary  
Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity  
Vatican City

Orthodox Representatives  
Ecumenical Patriarchate  
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr John of Pergamon  
Member of the Academy of Athens (Co-President)  
H.E. Bishop Prof. Kallistos of Diokleia  
H.E. Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima (Co-Secretary)  
Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa  
H.E. Metropolitan Petros of the Senior See of Aksum  
Representative of the Patriarch of Alexandria in Athens, Greece  
H.E. Metropolitan Dr Makarios of Kenya and Irinouplis  
Patriarchate of Antioch  
H.E. Metropolitan Dr Pavlos of Aleppo, Alexandretta and Dependencies  
Patriarchate of Jerusalem  
H.E. Archbishop Theofanis of Gerasson  
Prof. Georgios Galitis  
Patriarchate of Moscow  
H.E. Bishop Dr Hilarion of Vienna and Austria  
The Revd Igor Vizhanov  
Department for External Church Relations of Moscow Patriarchate  
Patriarchate of Serbia  
H.E. Bishop Dr Irenej of Backa  
H.E Bishop Dr Ignatij of Branicevo  
Patriarchate of Romania  
H. E. Bishop Dr Petronios of Salajanul  
The Revd Archdeacon Prof. Ioan Ilea Jr.  
Patriarchate of Bulgaria  
H.E. Metropolitan Dometian of Vidin (unable to come)  
Prof. Ivan Zhelev Dimitrov (unable to come)  
Patriarchate of Georgia  
H.E. Metropolitan Theodoros (Tchuadze) of Tao-Klardzeti and Lazikis  
The Revd Prof. Georgios Zviadadze  
Vice Rector of the Theological Academy of Tbilisi  
Church of Cyprus  
H.E. Bishop Dr. Vassillios of Trimithus  
Dr. Andreas Vittis  
Church of Greece  
H.E. Dr. Athanassios of Achaia  
The V. Revd Archimandrite Prof. Dr. Chrysostomos Sawatos  
Church of Poland  
H.E. Archbishop Jeremias of Wroclaw and Szczecin  
Prof. Andrzej Kuzma  
Church of Albania  
H.E. Bishop of Philomilion Elias  
Dr. Nathan Hoppe  
Church of Czech Lands and Slovakia  
The Revd Prof. Dr. Vaclav Jezek  
The V. Revd Archimandrite Georgios Stransky  
Church of Finland  
H.E. Metropolitan Dr Ambrosius of Helsinki  
Church of Estonia (Absent)  
Interpreters

Mrs Vassiliki Chrysanthakopoulou  
Mr Jonathan Markel  
Mrs Evgenia Moutsopoulou  
Mr Alexander Zaphiriou

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