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OFFICIAL REPORT

Document Classification:	PUBLIC OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION
ATTN: THE ROYAL ISLAMIC STRATEGIC STUDIES CENTRE INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK	
Date and Time (US Format):	18th February 2016
• Transmission by :	SYED ZAHID ALI
• Reference Number:	SG/OCC/003/Feb-2016 (OL)
Number of Pages:	8

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FINAL REPORT ON EUCLID'S PARTICIPATION IN AND SUPPORT TO THE UN WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK, WITH A FOCUS ON CREATING AWARENESS FOR "A COMMON WORD"

It is my pleasure and honor to present this report of EUCLID's participation in and support of the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week, which featured events taking place in several locations, between February 1 and 5, 2016.

EUCLID's rationale in this regards is both institutional and experiential: its intergovernmental statutes call for it to offer graduate programs in "in Inter-religious Dialogue" and also for the establishment of the "International Institute for Inter-Religious Diplomacy" as an affiliated institute.¹ Perhaps even more important is the fact that EUCLID represents the living proof that Muslims, Christians, and people of other convictions can work together in harmony and towards a common goal, for the good of humankind.

Monday February 01, 2016

EUCLID's week began on Monday the first of February with an interview of Ambassador Charles Armel Doubane, former Minister and Permanent Representative of the **Central African Republic** to the United Nations, from **Bangui**. This was significant for EUCLID and for the world because this country, which is EUCLID's historic headquarters state², has seen tremendous inter-religious violence, as well as a great effort to overcome inter-religious intolerance. It was especially moving to hear Ambassador Doubane who a Christian mention his adoptive daughter whom he raised in her native Muslim faith. He also mentioned the efforts of the three national religious leaders (Catholic, Protestant and Muslim) to take on a leadership role in healing the wounds.

Details at: <http://interfaith.euclid.int/2016-un-world-interfaith-harmony-week-monday/>

¹ In the United Nations Treaty Series, See EUCLID Statutes, Sections IX and X/6. The institute's work is documented at <http://interfaith.euclid.int>

² (the operational headquarters were relocated to The Gambia in 2013)



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Tuesday February 02, 2016

On the second day of the Week, EUCLID's International Faculty Coordinator, Pr Laurent Cleenewerck, interviewed an American man who spent several years in **Turkey**. The interview was recorded and posted on video, and focuses on the inter-cultural respect.

Details at: <http://interfaith.euclid.int/2016-un-world-interfaith-harmony-week-tuesday/>

Wednesday February 03, 2016

On the third day of the Week, EUCLID and **COMESA-LLPI** jointly organized an event at the COMESA-LLPI headquarters in **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**. This is significant because COMESA-LLPI is a specialized intergovernmental organization current serving 10 Member States (of Christian and Muslim majority populations), and employing a religiously diverse staff. The event focused on creating awareness of the landmark document "A Common Word."





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Details at: <http://interfaith.euclid.int/2016-un-world-interfaith-harmony-week-wednesday-llpi/> and <http://www.comesa-llpi.int/>

On the same day, EUCLID cooperated with **Humboldt State University** (Arcata, California) and **St Innocent Orthodox Church** (Eureka, California) to organize a lecture entitled “Christian-Muslim Dialogue; Finding Common Words?” On this occasion, Pr Laurent Cleenewerck, in his dual capacity as EUCLID faculty and rector of the parish, delivered a lecture presenting his academic paper “Finding Common Words” prepared especially for the Interfaith Harmony Week (included with report documentation).



Details at: <http://interfaith.euclid.int/2016-un-world-interfaith-harmony-week-wednesday-hsu/>



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Thursday February 04, 2016

On the fourth day of the Week, EUCLID cooperated with Dr Glenville Ashby (of the Global Interfaith Council, and EUCLID faculty member) and Dr Jerome Teelucksingh to organize a lecture at the **University of the West Indies** campus, in **Trinidad and Tobago**. The lecture was recorded and included in the event report.

Details at: <http://interfaith.euclid.int/2016-un-world-interfaith-harmony-week-thursday/>

Friday February 05, 2016

On the fifth day of the Week which is the Muslim Day of Prayer, EUCLID organized an event at its headquarters office in The Gambia, West Africa. The Gambia is a Muslim majority country with significant Christian minority, which co-exist in harmony.

(Report continues on the next page with photo and further reporting).



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(The High Table, from Right to Left) Mrs. Maimuna Sidibeh Manneh, Senior Program Officer for Communications at UNESCO-NATCOM office in Banjul; **Mr. James Gomez**, Principal Research Officer at the Ministry for Higher Education Research Science & Technology (MoHERST); **Dr. Abdoulaye Barry** (Lecturer at the University of The Gambia); **Mr. Yankuba Ceessay**, Principal Assistant Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Banjul and also Director of Inter-Governmental Relations for EUCLID University; **Mr. Mohammed Hassan Lom**, Monitoring & Evaluation Consultant for the Climate Change Early Warning Project (Department of Water Resources) and also Director of Admissions & Operations for EUCLID University.

Mr Gomez presented the Christian perspective on interfaith harmony, and was lauded for citing these words from the former Roman Catholic bishop of Banjul Michael J. Cleary: “We have shown in The Gambia that Muslims and Christians can live in close esteem for one another and respect each other’s belief. This country is an example to the rest of the world for freedom of religion and the very happy relationships that exists between those who believe in One God...”



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Mohammed Loum of EUCLID presented a Muslim perspective on the event and EUCLID's commitment to support interfaith harmony.

Several participants shared their experience and noted the importance of such an event, which should be repeated and expanded in the years to come.



Details at: <http://interfaith.euclid.int/2016-un-world-interfaith-harmony-week-friday/>

Concluding Remarks:

On the occasion of this 2016 UN Interfaith Harmony Week, it was an honor to engage academic, intergovernmental and religious institutions and their representatives for these events, with the added satisfaction that 5 countries



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where involved and represented (Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Gambia, Trinidad and Tobago, and United States).

We sincerely hope that these events have shown that Interfaith Harmony is a reality, and that progress can be made at the human, institutional and academic level to foster interfaith harmony in general and Muslim-Christian dialogue in particular.

Last but not least, it is hoped that Pr Cleenewerck's remarkable paper "*Finding Common Words: An Eastern Orthodox academic contribution to "A Common Word," on the occasion of the 6th UN Interfaith Harmony Week*" will serve as a milestone to encourage a renewed level of interaction and dialogue based on the landmark document "A Common Word."

Respectfully presented on behalf of EUCLID.

Sincerely,

/signed/

Syed Zahid Ali
EUCLID Secretary General