## **Media Monitoring Report on the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Dr. Heinz Fischer**

## **Austria and International**

Fischer reiterates support for Abdullah Centre

*In [Die Presse](http://diepresse.com/home/politik/innenpolitik/4917514/Fischer-bekraeftigt-Unterstutzung-fur-AbdullahZentrum?_vl_backlink=/home/index.do) (German – Austria), [ORF News](http://orf.at/stories/2322351/) (German – Austria),* [*Kurier*](http://kurier.at/politik/inland/fischer-bekraeftigt-unterstuetzung-fuer-abdullah-zentrum/178.689.307) *(German – Austria), [MSN Nachrichten](http://www.msn.com/de-at/nachrichten/other/fischer-bekr%C3%A4ftigte-unterst%C3%BCtzung-f%C3%BCr-abdullah-zentrum/ar-BBp21gX) (German – Austria), [Kronen Zeitung](http://www.krone.at/Oesterreich/Abdullah-Zentrum_Fischer_bekraeftigt_Unterstuetzung-Wichtiger_Beitrag-Story-494209) (German – Austria), [Finanzen.at](http://www.finanzen.at/nachrichten/aktien/APA-N-A-C-H-R-I-C-H-T-E-N-Ue-B-E-R-B-L-I-C-K-22-00-Uhr-1001027255) (German – Austria), [Salzburger Nachrichten](http://www.salzburg.com/nachrichten/oesterreich/politik/sn/artikel/fischer-bekraeftigte-unterstuetzung-fuer-abdullah-zentrum-182791/) (German – Austria), [Neues Volksblatt](http://www.volksblatt.at/apa_news/?tx_posapaxmlimport_pinews%5Buid%5D=139014) (German – Austria), [Vorarlberg Online](http://www.vol.at/fischer-bekraeftigte-unterstuetzung-fuer-abdullah-zentrum/apa-1427997834) (German – Austria), [Kleine Zeitung](http://www.kleinezeitung.at/s/politik/innenpolitik/4917516/Fischer-bekraeftigte-Unterstutzung-fur-AbdullahZentrum?_vl_backlink=/s/politik/innenpolitik/index.do) (German – Austria), [Vienna Online](http://www.vienna.at/fischer-bekraeftigte-unterstuetzung-fuer-abdullah-zentrum/apa-1427997834) (German – Austria), [Tiroler Tageszeitung](http://www.tt.com/politik/11075993-91/fischer-bekr%C3%A4ftigt-unterst%C3%BCtzung-f%C3%BCr-abdullah-zentrum.csp) (German – Austria), [Austrian Press Agency](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20160203_OTS0154/bundespraesident-fischer-bekraeftigt-unterstuetzung-fuer-kaiciid),* [*Vienna.at*](http://www.vienna.at/heinz-fischer-bekraeftigt-unterstuetzung-fuer-das-abdullah-zentrum-in-wien/4611932)*,* [*Tagespiegel*](http://news.google.com/news/url?sr=1&sa=t&ct2=us%2F0_0_s_0_0_t&usg=AFQjCNEe7gYlt6eGcWZR3px6uBNA2dBYMA&did=e71ce2d1bec8f307&cid=52779773666100&ei=sIi0VvCbMITo1Aa7463gCQ&rt=STORY&vm=STANDARD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.tagesspiegel.de%2Fadvertorials%2Fots%2Fkaiciid-dialogue-centre-oesterreichischer-bundespraesident-heinz-fischer-erklaert-dass-oesterreich-die-herausforderung-der-fluechtlingsintegration-mittels-dialog-annehmen-muesse%2F12922084.html)*,* [*Kath.net*](http://www.kath.net/news/53872)

Full Article

Federal President Heinz Fischer has reaffirmed his support for controversial dialogue forum KAICIID in a speech at the Abdullah Centre. KAICIID could be a platform “where worries, wishes and problems in the field of human rights and interreligious dialogue are objectively, but openly and clearly addressed,” Fischer told KAICIID representatives on Tuesday night.

The Dialogue Centre is funded by the Saudi Arabian Government, which is charged with serious human rights violations and religious intolerance. Such was the case of blogger Raif Badawi, who was sentenced to 1000 strokes of the cane because he had called for tolerance towards other religious. The Greens have been protesting in front of KAICIID every Friday for a year calling for Badawi’s release. On the occasion of Fischer’s speech, however, they moved their vigil to Tuesday night.

Fisher did not mention Badawi during his speech at the event, and wished KAICIID’s managers every success in their future activities. “The Centre has the potential, through its work, to create a better understanding between religious and thereby to make an important contribution to the development and advancement of human rights”, he stressed in his presentation. Finally, KAICIID is also “the only international organisation to work together with leaders of the world’s five major religions on an equal footing”.

“Responding openly and clearly to problems”

Specifically, it should be “examined to what extent and in what form it [KAICIID] can be a platform where worries, goals and problems in the field of human rights and interreligious dialogue are openly and clearly addressed”. He also mentioned the tensions between Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shi’a Iran, but only concretely criticised the execution of 47 alleged terrorists, including the Shiite preacher Nimr al-Nimr, at the beginning January. These executions have “very much pained him […] as a convinced opponent of the death penalty”. At the same time, he also condemned violent protests against the Saudi embassy in Iran.

In his speech, Fischer stressed the importance of human rights, which should not be relativized when speaking about religious or ideological fanaticism. “My personal belief is that only a religion which preaches peace between people has the right aims”.

Fischer also spoke out in favour of making the integration of refugees more the subject of interreligious dialogue. “A successful integration relies not least on the clarification that extremist individuals who are opposed to the basic values of our state and our society, and who threaten our internal security, cannot be accepted.”

“It is possible to be Austrian and a good Muslim”

The “living reality” of Austrian Muslims is that of a “European-style Islam embedded in a state with a democratic constitutional order”, Fischer affirmed. “It is possible to simultaneously be a good Muslim and a good Austrian”, Fischer said. “I would therefore like to reiterate that the Muslims living permanently with us can be, and should be, a valuable part of our society.”

As for a subject for interreligious dialogue to approach, Fischer sees the differences in the status of women and family in society, which often cause “considerable difficulties in practice”. This questions needs to be “openly discussed”. However, it should also be remembered that “much of what is self-evident today, was absolutely unimaginable two or three generations before” in Western societies. “This leaves room for the hope and expectation that the position and the role of women in other societies, for example in those influenced by Islam, will continue to develop.”

Fischer Supports Abdullah Zentrum

*Heute (Print only)*

Translated Excerpt: Federal president Fischer stands behind the controversial Abdullah Centre, financed by Saudi Arabia.

Fischer Appreciates Bridge-Builders

*Volksblatt (Print only)*

**Translation:** The International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) in Vienna is an organisation for intercultural exchange, founded by Austria, Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Vatican. Last Tuesday, Federal President Heinz Fischer was a guest at the Centre. In his speech, Fischer congratulated the Centre “Dialogue is, and will continue to be, the key to peaceful coexistence.” The new direction is a chance.

Austrian President Heinz Fischer Says Austria Must Face Challenge of Integrating Refugees With Dialogue

*In* [*PR Newswire*](http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/news-releases/austrian-president-heinz-fischer-says-austria-must-face-challenge-of-integrating-refugees-with-dialogue-567501751.html) *(UK),* [*La Vanguardia*](http://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20160204/301909926754/comunicado-heinz-fischer-austria-debe-afrontar-el-reto-de-integrar-a-los-refugiados-a-traves-del-dialogo.html) *(Spain),* [*Le Lezard*](http://www.lelezard.com/communique-9295342.html) *(France)*[*Sys-Con Media*](http://news.sys-con.com/node/3662624) *(USA),* [*Open Source Magazine Sys-Con*](http://it.sys-con.com/node/3662624) *(USA),* [*le Lezard*](http://www.lelezard.com/en/news-9285072.html) *(Canada),* [*Vienna Archdiocese News*](https://www.erzdioezese-wien.at/site/home/nachrichten/article/48412.html) *(German – Austria),* [*Kathpress*](http://www.kathpress.at/goto/meldung/1343868/kaiciid-fischer-betont-bedeutung-der-religion-fuer-integration) *(German – Austria),* [*Ulitzer Newswire*](http://prnewswire.ulitzer.com/node/3662624) *(USA),* [*FinanzNachrichten.de*](http://www.finanznachrichten.de/nachrichten-2016-02/36341949-austrian-president-heinz-fischer-says-austria-must-face-challenge-of-integrating-refugees-with-dialogue-008.htm) *(English – Germany),* [*Wallstreet-Online.de*](http://www.wallstreet-online.de/nachricht/8308231-austrian-president-heinz-fischer-says-austria-must-face-challenge-of-integrating-refugees-with-dialogue) *(English – Germany),* [*APA-OTS*](http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20160203_OTS0154/bundespraesident-fischer-bekraeftigt-unterstuetzung-fuer-kaiciid) *(German – Austria),* [*Religion News Service*](http://pressreleases.religionnews.com/2016/02/04/austrian-president-heinz-fischer-says-austria-must-face-challenge-of-integrating-refugees-with-dialogue/)*,* [*Politico*](http://www.politico.eu/newsletter/playbook/politico-brussels-playbook-presented-by-epp-group-brexit-briefs-spanish-politics-schengen-costs/)

Full Article

Speaking at the International Dialogue Centre yesterday, the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Dr. Heinz Fischer, stressed the importance of interreligious dialogue as Austria faces the challenges of integrating refugees fleeing turmoil and violence in the Middle East.

The President said that if the country does not face these challenges now, then there will be even greater problems in the future.

"The long-term integration of these individuals into our society is a major challenge. I would like to reiterate that Muslims who live in Austria can and should be a valuable part of our society. It is possible to be a good Muslim and a good Austrian simultaneously," he said.

The President was speaking on the occasion of World Interfaith Harmony Week, which is celebrated every year in the first week of February. He was hosted at the event by the Secretary General of KAICIID, Faisal Bin Muaammar.

In his lecture, President Fischer emphasized that Austria's longstanding record of promoting dialogue between religions and cultures has been a valuable asset in recent times, and that this sort of dialogue was now more important than ever.

The war in Syria has worsened the worst refugee crisis since World War II, and Austria has received one of the highest number of refugees per capita in Europe. As the refugee crisis makes it necessary for countries to quickly and effectively integrate large numbers of people from other religions into their own societies, the practical importance of interreligious dialogue becomes clear.

"The integration of refugees in Austria in the coming years will increasingly need to be part of the dialogue between religions. The inclusion of vulnerable people is a serious, societal responsibility that needs to be carefully and knowledgeably accomplished with a view to securing social cohesion and social peace in Austria. It cannot be denied that this will also entail problems," the President said.

"I consider dialogue, being open to discussion, and the ability to engage respectfully with other viewpoints (even when one does not share them), to be a basic requirement for peaceful coexistence between people, communities, cultures and religions," he said.

The President traced the roots of several current international conflicts to the manipulation of nationalism, ideology, and power to marginalize individual rights, or the rights of the weaker sections of society. In order to bridge the mistrust, or oppression, of those of other religions and cultures or nationalities, he said, "voices of reason, signals of moderation and willingness to talk are needed."

He emphasised that KAICIID exists to serve these goals. "As a platform for interreligious dialogue, as a bridge builder in interreligious and intercultural dialogue, it can seek to be a cosmopolitan, open, international dialogue partner. Its work and mandate, as laid out in the establishment agreement, strengthen cooperation and mutual respect at the international level, and promote a tolerant exchange of views between religious communities."

"KAICIID is the only international organization to work together on an equal footing with leaders of the five major world religions. The center has the potential, through its work, to create a better understanding between religions and thereby make an important contribution to the development and advancement of human rights," he said.

In his welcoming words, the KAICIID Secretary General, Faisal Bin Muaammar described how the International Dialogue Centre works to support the integration of refugees into Austria.

"If refugees are to return to peaceful homes, or to integrate into new circumstances, then we must find a way to help people accept and not fear differences. Dialogue helps us achieve this. In dialogue we recognize that we are all equals and share core values. Austrian religious communities have shown great commitment and resolve in supporting the integration of refugees here in Austria. We are trying to do our part to support these efforts, by providing religious communities the means to help more refugees," he said.

### **Austria: Federal President honors Dialogzentrum KAICIID**

*Radio Vatican (*[*German*](http://de.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/03/%C3%B6sterreich_bundespr%C3%A4sident_w%C3%BCrdigt_dialogzentrum_kaiciid/1205585)*), (*[*Italian*](http://it.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/03/settimana_mondiale_dell%E2%80%99armonia_interreligiosa/1205560)*), (*[*Tamil*](http://ta.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/03/%E0%AE%89%E0%AE%B0%E0%AF%88%E0%AE%AF%E0%AE%BE%E0%AE%9F%E0%AE%B2%E0%AE%BF%E0%AE%B2%E0%AF%8D_%E0%AE%88%E0%AE%9F%E0%AF%81%E0%AE%AA%E0%AE%9F%E0%AF%81%E0%AE%B5%E0%AE%A4%E0%AF%81,_%E0%AE%85%E0%AE%AE%E0%AF%88%E0%AE%A4%E0%AE%BF%E0%AE%AF%E0%AE%BE%E0%AE%A9_%E0%AE%B5%E0%AE%BE%E0%AE%B4%E0%AF%8D%E0%AE%B5%E0%AF%81%E0%AE%95%E0%AF%8D%E0%AE%95%E0%AF%81_%E0%AE%85%E0%AE%9F%E0%AE%BF%E0%AE%A4%E0%AF%8D%E0%AE%A4%E0%AE%B3%E0%AE%AE%E0%AF%8D/1205770)*)*

Federal President Heinz Fischer reaffirmed his support for the Vienna-based dialogue organization with a speech. KAICIID has the potential, through its work to create a better understanding between religions and thereby make an important contribution to the development and advancement of human rights, the President paid tribute to the work of the Dialog Center. Finally he said that KAICIID is "the only international organization working together on an equal footing with the leaders of the five major world religions." The co-founded by the Holy See center for dialogue between religions is funded by the Saudi government.

In view of Saudi Arabia Fischer criticized the death sentences against 47 alleged terrorists. This caused him "much pain as a convinced opponent of the death penalty" . At the same time, he also condemned the violent protests against Saudi diplomatic missions in Tehran. The President warned against relativizing the importance of human rights by religious or ideological reasons. "My personal conviction is that only a religion which promotes peace fulfils its mission " Moreover, Fischer suggested to make the integration of refugees and the status of women more the subject of interreligious dialogue.

Launched in 2012, KAICIID is the first international institution on the basis of international law, which subscribes to the dialogue between religions and cultures. The governing body consists of representatives of major world religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism) and cultures. The Catholic Church is represented by the Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Miguel Angel Ayuso Guixot; He is an observer of the Holy See on KAICIID.

### **Federal President Fischer emphasized importance of religion for integration**

[*Archdiocese Vienna*](https://www.erzdioezese-wien.at/site/home/nachrichten/article/48412.html)

Federal President in Vienna Abdullah Dialogue Center: "Only a religion that preaches peace between people, fulfils its mission”.

Federal President Heinz Fischer on Tuesday evening, February 2, 2016 at the Vienna King Abdullah Dialog Center (KAICIID) on the occasion of the United Nations-proclaimed "World Interfaith Harmony Week", speaking before the representatives of the churches and religious communities in Austria - with Cardinal Christoph Schönborn at the top - and diplomacy, stressed the importance of interreligious dialogue for the refugee issue.

Here among other things the emergence of a European Islam will be of great importance, said Federal President Fischer. At the international level there is a need for dialogue platforms, where "cares, desires and problems in the field of human rights and interreligious dialogue can be addressed clearly and openly".

KAICIID has the potential, through its work to create a better understanding between religions and thereby make an important contribution to the development and advancement of human rights, stressed the President. Finally, the KAICIID was "the only international organization to work together on an equal footing with the leaders of the five major world religions".

In view of Saudi Arabia Heinz Fischer criticized the death sentences of 47 alleged terrorists. This would have "a convinced opponent of the death penalty very hurt" him. At the same time he also condemned the violent protests against Saudi diplomatic missions in Tehran.

The President warned against relativizing the importance of human rights for religious or ideological reasons. "My personal belief is that only a religion that preaches peace between people, fulfils its mission."

Integration through interreligious dialogue

Federal President Fischer also spoke out in favor of making the integration of refugees more the subject of interreligious dialogue. "A successful integration is not least the clarification that extremist settings individuals who are opposed to the basic values ​​of our state and our society and threaten the internal security, cannot be accepted."

The "living reality" of Austrian Muslims is that of a "European-style Islam embedded in a state with a democratic constitutional order," the President is convinced. "It is possible simultaneously to be a good Muslim and a good Austrian," Heinz Fischer said. "I would therefore like to reiterate that the Muslims living among us can and should be a valuable part of our society."

As a theme for Interreligious Dialogue Fischer sees the differences in the status of women in family and society as causing, "often in practice considerable difficulties". This question needs to be "openly discussed". However, it should also be remembered that what has been achieved in terms of equality in Western societies today, would have been unimaginable 2-3 generations ago. "That leaves room for the hope and expectation that the position and the role of women in other societies, for example, in those who are influenced by Islam, continue to develop."

To mark the event, a vigil of the Greens against the flogging-punishment of the Saudi blogger Raif Badawi took place before KAICIID. Approximately 40 people participated.

Arabic Media

Austrian President Heinz Fischer Emphasises Kaiciid’s Role in Solving Current International Conflicts

[Emirates News](http://emiratesnewswire.com/general/38985/%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%AC%D9%85%D9%87%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7-%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%B2-%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%B4%D8%B1-%D9%8A%D8%A4%D9%83%D9%91%D9%90%D8%AF-%D8%B9/), [Assafir](http://assafir.com/Article/85/472189), [Dar Al Akhbar](http://www.daralakhbar.com/news/2016/02/04/3008196/articles/9710734/%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%8A%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%85-%D9%81%D9%8A), [Al Madina](http://www.al-madina.com/node/657982/%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%8A%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%85-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AD%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B4%D9%83%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%B1.html), [Saudi Press Agency](http://www.spa.gov.sa/viewstory.php?lang=ar&newsid=1463316), [Al Mamlaka](http://www.almmlke.com/arabic/112913.html), [Dar Al Akhbar](http://www.daralakhbar.com/articles/9712263-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D8%B2%D9%88%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2), [Al Jazirah](http://www.al-jazirah.com/2016/20160204/ln2.htm), [Okaz](http://www.okaz.com.sa/new/Issues/20160205/Con20160205822869.htm), [Al Hayat](http://www.alhayat.com/Edition/Print/13833650/%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7-%D9%8A%D8%B5%D9%81-%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%B1--%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1--%D8%A8%D9%80-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A-), [Al Yaum](http://www.alyaum.com/page/50years), [Al Bilad](https://www.albiladdaily.com/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D8%B4%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A7/), [Iraq News Gazette](http://iraqnewsgazette.com/%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%AC%D9%85%D9%87%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7-%D9%87%D8%A7%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%B2-%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%B4%D8%B1-%D9%8A%D8%A4%D9%83%D9%91%D9%90%D8%AF-%D8%B9/), [Al Ekhbariya](http://alekhbariya.net/ar/node/5563), [Al Sharq](https://www.alsharq.net.sa/2016/02/07/1476294), [Makkah Newspaper](http://makkahnewspaper.com/article/119796), [Al Hayat Al Masrrya](http://www.alhyatalmasrya.com/arabic/306364.html), [Akhbar Arabia](http://www.akhbararabia.com/saudi/126956.html), [Al Weam](http://www.alweeam.com.sa/383318/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%88%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D9%84%D9%84/), [Al Mowaten](http://www.almowaten.net/2016/01/%D8%B1%D8%A6%D9%8A%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%A7-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%B6%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84/)

**Article Excerpt**

Speaking at the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) yesterday, the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Dr Heinz Fischer emphasized the importance of dialogue in ensuring peaceful coexistence, which is an essential requirement for the existence of future generations.

Faisal bin Muammar: Dialogue is the best way to strengthen co-existence and spread peace; Austrian Present visits the King Abdallah Centre for Dialogue in Vienna

*In* [*al-Iqtisad*](http://www.aleqt.com/2016/02/04/article_1027475.html) *(Arabic – Saudi Arabia),* [*al-Yaum*](http://www.alyaum.com/article/4117880) *(Arabic – Saudi Arabia*), [*Aliwaa*](http://aliwaa.com/Article.aspx?ArticleId=274864)*,* [*El Bayan*](http://www.elbayan.co/arabic/157724.html)*,* [*Al Eqtisadiah*](https://www.aleqt.com/2016/02/04/article_1027475.html)

Spanish Media

### **Together for peace: World Interfaith Harmony Week at KAICIID**

*In* [*Archdiocese of Madrid News*](http://archimadrid.org/index.php/oficina-de-informacion/noticias-mundo/item/82259-el-kaiciid-promueve-la-semana-mundial-de-la-armonia-interconfesional) *(Spanish – Spain)*

Full Article

NB: The Zenit version of this article is slightly different in form, although the content is the same.

As part of the celebrations of this year’s World Interfaith Harmony Week, Austrian Federal President Dr Heinz Fischer will accompany the Secretary-General of KAICIID, Faisal bin Muammar, and the Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Austria, HE Hussam al-Husseini, to the International Dialogue Centre in Vienna to highlight the importance of interfaith harmony.

During the event, President Fischer will address the religious leaders of the various communities present in Austria. KAICIID’s Secretary-General, Faisal bin Muammar, will host the meeting organised in honour of tolerance and dialogue between the followers of different religions.

Following the adoption of the World Interfaith Harmony Week by the UN in 2010, religious leaders from all religions and all parts of the world organise interreligious activities during the first week of February, to express their solidarity, strengthen links and build bridges within the global interreligious movement. This week aims that people from around the world participate in interreligious activities, and seeks to spread a message of harmony and tolerance.

The International Dialogue Centre KAICIID, in collaboration with the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Jordan, will participate in various events promoting the World Interfaith Harmony Week. On the 1st of February, KAICIID will join the “Vespers for Peace” in the famous Melk abbey, in order to deepen pacific cooperation and give visibility to this culture of peace.

On the 2nd of February, KAICIID’s HQ will host the Federal President of Austria, Heinz Fischer, who will speak on the importance of interreligious dialogue, as well as on its role in the resolution of the issues we are faced with today. Members of KAICIID’s Board of Directors will join in celebrating World Interfaith Harmony Week in Vienna.

The World Interfaith Harmony Week was established by a UN resolution in 2010. The week aims to encourage religious leaders to commit to organising, once a year, coordinated activities in interreligious dialogue, and it urges the world’s various religions to respect each other’s independence and singularity, without questioning any of its religious beliefs. The World Interfaith Harmony Week takes into account people of all faiths, as well as those who have no religion, in order to promote peace and harmony in the world.

### **Together for peace: World Interfaith Harmony Week at KAICIID**

*In* [*Religion Digital*](http://www.periodistadigital.com/religion/otras-confesiones/2016/02/03/juntos-por-la-paz-semana-mundial-de-la-armonia-interconfesional-en-kaiciid-religion-iglesia-kaiciid-religiones.shtml) *(Spanish – Spain),* [*Zenit*](http://es.zenit.org/articles/el-kaiciid-promueve-la-semana-mundial-de-la-armonia-interconfesional/) *(Spanish – Rome)*

Full Article

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### **World Interfaith Harmony Week**

*In* [*Radio Vaticana*](http://it.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/03/settimana_mondiale_dell%E2%80%99armonia_interreligiosa/1205560) *(Italian – the Vatican),* [*Swedish*](http://sv.radiovaticana.va/news/2016/02/03/den_internationella_veckan_för_interreligiös_harmoni/1205608)

Article Excerpt

Promoting dialogue and understanding between followers of different faiths and beliefs on a global level, which is an essential part of strengthening interreligious harmony and cooperation between peoples, to teach human rights and to build a culture of peace and tolerance. This is the objective of the World Harmony Week, proclaimed by the UN’s General Assembly in 2010 and celebrated each year during the first week of February.

KAICIID’s participation

Among the adherents to this edition’s initiatives is, among others, KAICIID, the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, founded in Vienna in 2012 by Saudi Arabia, Spain and Austria, with the Holy See in the role of an observed. The Centre was founded to promote dialogue between the followers of different religions and cultures of the world, so as to improve cooperation, respect for diversity, justice and peace.

Austrian President Heinz Fischer Emphasizes KAICIID’s Role in Solving Current International Conflicts

*In* [*Revista Ecclesia*](http://www.revistaecclesia.com/el-presidente-de-austria-destaco-el-papel-del-kaiciid/) *(Spanish – Spain)*

Full Article

NB: This article is available on the KAICIID website [here](http://www.kaiciid.org/news-events/news/austrian-president-heinz-fischer-emphasizes-kaiciids-role-solving-current) in English and [here](http://www.kaiciid.org/es/noticias-eventos/noticias/austrian-president-heinz-fischer-emphasizes-kaiciids-role-solving-current) in Spanish.

Speaking at the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) yesterday, the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Dr. Heinz Fischer emphasized the importance of dialogue in ensuring peaceful coexistence, which is an essential requirement for the existence of future generations.

“I consider dialogue, being open to discussion, and the ability to engage respectfully with other viewpoints (even when one does not share them), to be a basic requirement for peaceful coexistence between people, communities, cultures and religions.”

The President was speaking on the occasion of World Interfaith Harmony Week, which is celebrated every year in the first week of February. He was joined at the event by the Secretary General of KAICIID, Faisal Bin Muaammar and the Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Austria, His Excellency Ambassador Hussam Al Husseini.

The KAICIID Secretary General welcomed the representatives of religious and diplomatic communities at the event: “We are governed both by policymakers and by religious leaders: for this reason, no single religion, and no single nation determines our programmes. It is my belief that dialogue is the best way to foster the mutual respect that builds peace.

We are trying to help solve global challenges through dialogue. When religious leaders and national policy makers combine their efforts through dialogue, they can create positive change.”

The President traced the roots of several current international conflicts to the manipulation of nationalism, ideology, and power to marginalize individual rights, or the rights of the weaker sections of society. In order to bridge the mistrust, or oppression, of those of other religions and cultures or nationalities, he said, “voices of reason, signals of moderation and willingness to talk are needed.”

He emphasised that KAICIID exists to serve these goals. As a platform for interreligious dialogue, as a bridge builder in interreligious and intercultural dialogue, it can seek to be a cosmopolitan, open, international dialogue partner. Its work and mandate, as laid out in the establishment agreement, strengthen cooperation and mutual respect at the international level, and promote a tolerant exchange of views between religious communities.

“KAICIID is the only international organization to work together on an equal footing with leaders of the five major world religions. The center has the potential, through its work, to create a better understanding between religions and thereby make an important contribution to the development and advancement of human rights,” he said.

In his lecture, President Fischer stressed that Austria’s longstanding record of promoting dialogue between religions and cultures has been a valuable asset in recent times. The war in Syria has triggered the largest wave of refugees since World War II, and Austria has received one of the highest number of refugees per capita in Europe. As the refugee crisis makes it necessary for countries to quickly and effectively integrate large numbers of people from other religions into their own societies, the practical importance of interreligious dialogue becomes clear.

“The long-term integration of these people (refugees) into our society is a major challenge. I would like to reiterate that Muslims who live in Austria can and should, be a valuable part of our society. It is possible to be a good Muslim and a good Austrian simultaneously.”

“The integration of refugees in Austria in the coming years will increasingly need to be part of the dialogue between religions. The inclusion of vulnerable people is a serious, societal responsibility that needs to be carefully and knowledgeably executed with a view to securing social cohesion and social peace in Austria. That (this) will also entail problems cannot be denied. But would we not make the effort, we would have far bigger problems.”

In his welcoming words, the KAICIID Secretary General, Faisal Bin Muaammar described how the International Dialogue Centre works to support the integration of refugees into Austria:

“If refugees are to return to peaceful homes, or to integrate into new circumstances, then we must find a way to help people accept and not fear differences.

Dialogue helps us achieve this. In dialogue we recognize that we are all equals and share core values.

Austrian religious communities have shown great commitment and resolve in supporting the integration of refugees here in Austria.

We are trying to do our part to support these efforts, by providing religious communities the means to help more refugees.”

His Excellency Ambassador Hussam Al Husseini explained the origins of World Interfaith Harmony Week as a Jordanian initiative which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and is now celebrated worldwide. He also thanked the International Dialogue Centre for its work in promoting dialogue and described Vienna as a global centre for dialogue.

Digital Media Impact: 2-5 February 2016

WEBSITE: [www.kaiciid.org](http://www.kaiciid.org): 1567 visits 6,000 pages read

TWITTER: impressions:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Tweet** | **Impressions** | **Engagements** |
| **TOTAL** | **11429** | **161** |
| Austria's President Fischer reaffirms support for KAICIID, recognizes that KAICIID builds bridges through dialogue <http://www.kaiciid.org/news-events/news/austrian-president-heinz-fischer-emphasizes-kaiciids-role-solving-current> | 795 | 18 |
| HBP Fischer bekräftigt Unterstützung für KAICIID: Es ist „Brückenbauer im interreligiösen & interkulturellen Dialog“ <http://www.ots.at/presseaussendung/OTS_20160203_OTS0154/bundespraesident-fischer-bekraeftigt-unterstuetzung-fuer-kaiciid> | 593 | 5 |
| HBP Fischer dankt KAICIID: Dialog ist der Schlüssel zum friedlichen Zusammenleben der Menschen & Existenzgrundlage künftiger Generationen | 718 | 16 |
| President Fischer thanks KAICIID: Dialogue has always been a key to peaceful coexistence, an important objective for future generations | 628 | 6 |
| HBP Fischer betont,dass die Integration von Flüchtlingen in Österreich in den nächsten Jahren Teil des Dialoges der Religionen sein muss | 585 | 4 |
| President Fischer: Integration of refugees in Austria in the coming years increasingly needs to be part of the dialogue between religions | 862 | 8 |
| "Muslims who live amongst us in Austria can and should be a valuable component of our society" - President Fischer on refugee integration | 597 | 7 |
| HBP Fischer Kriege, Gewalt und Menschenrechtsverletzungen im Namen von Religion muss enden | 524 | 1 |
| Dialogue requires engagement from several partners to increase diversity. President Fischer supports KAICIID's enlargement strategy | 541 | 2 |
| President Fischer: KAICIID is the only international org that works through equal representation w/leaders of the 5 major world religions | 569 | 5 |
| President Fischer recognizes that #KAICIID's activities build bridges in interreligious & intercultural dialogue | 556 | 3 |
| Austria works to be a hub for international interreligious dialogue & being the host country of #KAICIID enables it to be more so | 533 | 4 |
| President Fischer quotes Albert Einstein: "Every war is a defeat of the human spirit" | 508 | 1 |
| "It is my personal conviction that only a religion that preaches peace fulfils its mission" -President Fischer | 517 | 3 |
| President Fischer of Austria takes the stage at #KAICIID International Dialogue Centre pic.twitter.com/2hoLQE9IhR | 629 | 22 |
| Amb.of Jordan: The fact is humanity everywhere is bound together. Not only by shared interests but by shared values. pic.twitter.com/RUs97kVwTz | 587 | 14 |
| KAICIID SG: Austrian religious communities have shown commitment in supporting refugee integration & we do our part to support them | 520 | 4 |
| KAICIID SG: When religious leaders & national policy makers combine their efforts through dialogue, they can create positive change | 604 | 10 |
| pic.twitter.com/Qf63ccNO2p | 563 | 28 |

**Facebook impact:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post 3 Feb. 2016** | **Impressions** | **Likes** | **Engagements** |
| Austria's President Heinz Fischer visited KAICIID HQ in Vienna… | 8.4k | 1,600 | 55 |