

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: THE FIGHT IS OURS
Brazilian National Day to Combat Religious Intolerance
Interfaith Sarau
Launch of the bilingual book "Religious Intolerance in Brazil"

Event co-organized by the Interreligious Movement of Rio de Janeiro Cooperation Circle – MIR-RJ, linked to the United Religions Initiative - URI.

As part of the celebrations of the Brazilian National Day to Combat Religious Intolerance (January 21) and the World Interfaith Harmony Week (February 1 to 7), the important event "Religious Freedom: the fight is ours" was held in the Brazilian Press Association (ABI), in the city of Rio de Janeiro, with a capacity of 500 people.

Several lectures were given by interfaith leaders: Catholics, Anglicans, Jews, Muslims, Bahá'í, Buddhists, Candomblers, Umbandists, Native Traditions, White Brotherhood, Paganism, Santo Daime, Hare Krishna, Druidism, Gypsies and Koinonia Ecumenical in Service), in addition to the Academic Community: Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Fluminense Federal University (UFF) and Institute of Religion Studies (ISER).

At the cultural moment, the Interfaith Sarau, there was the presence and participation of several important artists and the launching cocktail of the bilingual book: "Intolerance in Brazil: Report and Balance", of which Maria das Graças Nascimento, coordinator of the Cooperation Circle Interreligious Movement of Rio de Janeiro, is a co-author. Representing URI was also Alice Gress, MIR's deputy coordinator.

With this event was launched the campaign to publicize the book, receive donations and present the project "Legal Assistance to Victims of Intolerance". The book is the result of the report and account organized by the Commission for the Fight against Religious Intolerance (CCIR), which has as interlocutor the Babalawo Ivanir dos Santos.

The book is unprecedented and comes bilingual. Religious intolerance continues to make victims. In recent years, CCIR has been drawing society's attention to the danger and prejudice of a possible religious dictatorship in a country as diverse, multicultural and secular as Brazil. With information, studies, cases and numbers, it has the purpose of understanding and intervening in the process of prejudice. The document aims to highlight situations of discrimination, verbal and physical violence; Inserted in the field of religious intolerance in Brazil.

The book is the result of thorough scientific research. The researchers participating in the Commission on Combating Intolerance / CCIR, the Center for Articulation of Marginalized Populations / CEAP and the Laboratory of History of Religious Experiences of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro / UFRJ, present in a very informative way the data collected in organs, which focus on the issue of religious intolerance and make a bridge with society, such as the Secretariat for Human Rights, the Center for the Promotion of Religious Freedom and Human

Rights, and the Commission for the Fight against Religious Intolerance. The book presents an analysis of the data collected, with three academic articles, raising the issue and providing suggestions on how to deal with the problem of religious intolerance. The work presents a National Plan to Combat Religious Intolerance with effective action to guarantee Human Rights, with practical proposals for effective public action, aiming at full freedom of worship in Brazilian society.

"The book is one of the largest interdisciplinary works focusing on Religious Intolerance. With consistent data, it demonstrates how religious intolerance grows according to people's ignorance and prejudice. Religious intolerance, racism and prejudice are among the greatest Brazilian social phenomena", says the CCIR's spokesperson, Babalawo Ivanir dos Santos. The launching of the book is a consequence of the fruitful partnership between the various religious groups participating at CCIR, in favor of dialogue and tolerance between religions. The research is based on documents received, records from 2010 to December 2015, sent to CCIR with the aim of showing religious intolerance as a historical process in Brazil and in the world. For this, were selected cases obtained in administrative records, narratives, testimonies, interviews, news and print and virtual media. The spatial units range from local, municipal, state, regional and national scale. "We hope that the content addressed in the book can serve as educational and instructive material in society. The publication option, also in English, will allow its use in research and educational centers outside Brazil, thus enabling an intense flow and academic exchange of research experiences on the subject inside and outside the academic centers", says Ivanir.

The Cooperation Circle Interreligious Movement of Rio de Janeiro was present both in the organization of the book and in the production of statistical data of religious intolerance in Brazil through Graças Nascimento, whose testimony is found below:

"Beloved people: I share this very significant moment in my life: the launch of the book Religious Intolerance in Brazil. This is a long consultation work given to CCIR by the Interreligious Movement of Rio de Janeiro through me. The launch is part of CCIR's initiative within the framework of the National Day to Combat Religious Intolerance. Fraternal Greetings." Graças Nascimento, Coordinator of MIR.

Inter-religious Movement of Rio de Janeiro Cooperation Circle - MIR-RJ / United Religions Initiative - URI.

"Sharing the Sacred and Serving the World"

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