

Press Release
Pontifical Council for Culture
12 March 2015

A delegation led by H.E. Mr Ali Jannati, Iranian Minister for Culture and Islamic Guidance, accompanied by H.E. Mr Mohammad Taher Rabbani, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Holy See and Mr Mohammad M. D. Kamali, Counsellor visited the Pontifical Council for Culture Thursday 12 March 2015, at 12.30 where they were received by His Eminence Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, President, and Their Excellencies Bishop Carlos Azevedo, Delegate and Bishop Barthélemy Adoukonou, Secretary and Mons. Melchor Sanchez de Toca, Undersecretary.

During the conversation, the authorities focused on opportunities for cultural exchange and enrichment particularly in the fields of education and literature, with the support of religious and civic authorities to continue the positive dialogue that exists between Iran and the Holy See.

The Minister mentioned the peaceful situation for Christians and other religious minorities in his country, speaking particularly about the care for the elderly and in schools. He looks to further encourage mutual understanding among the people in his country who already carry out a dialogue of life together. Concerned about the youth and the cultural heritage, he invited continued collaboration in the face of emerging aggressive challenges to peace.

His Eminence recalled his own experiences working in the archaeological sites of the region. He appreciated the proposal to collaborate on safeguarding and researching historical documents and spoke highly of a new translation into Farsi of the Pentateuch which he has recently received from an Iranian scholar. He also suggested other literature from the Christian world for the attention of the Iranian authorities to supplement the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* which was recently translated and made available.

Departing on good terms, the authorities spoke of identifying candidates to take part in the Film Festival *Tertio Millennio*, organising an event centring on Poetry, Mysticism and Music, and plans for an interreligious dialogue in October prepared by the Archdiocese of Milan for the Holy See's Pavilion at Expo Milano 2015.

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