

CSI Supports Conference on Future of Religious Minorities in Middle East at St. Antony's, Oxford

Former Lebanese President Amine Gemayel and former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Williams, among the Speakers

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OXFORD, England, June 7, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- St. Antony's College at Oxford University is hosting a conference on "The Future of Religious Minorities in the Middle East, North Africa and the Two Sudans" today, June 7, and tomorrow, June 8. Amine Gemayel, the former president of Lebanon, and Lord Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, are addressing the conference tonight. The conference is supported by Christian Solidarity International (CSI), a Christian human rights group campaigning for religious freedom and human dignity worldwide.

In his introductory remarks, Dr. John Eibner, the CEO of Christian Solidarity International (CSI-USA), stated that the conference will explore "whether or not broad religious pluralism, rooted in the international human rights instruments, has a future in the Middle East, North Africa and the two Sudans."

Underlining the importance of the issue, Dr. Eibner stated that, "If present trends continue, it is indeed conceivable that within a generation, the Christian and other minority communities of the region will look very much like the tiny remnants of the Jewish communities," warning of the potential "demise of the region's non-Muslim communities."

Herbert Meier, the international president of CSI, and Benjamin Doberstein, the Chairman of CSI's International Management, are also in attendance. Others presenting at the conference include Sydney Assor, the head of the Moroccan Jewish Community in Britain, Dr. Nazila Ghanea, a lecturer of international human rights law at Oxford University, Nabil Adib Abdullah, an advocate and human rights lawyer in Sudan, Pascale Warda, Iraq's former Minister of Migration and Displacement, Dr. Mariz Tadros of Sussex University, and Dr. Kishan Manocha of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United Kingdom.

The conference will cover a range of issues affecting religious minorities in the Middle East following such political upheavals as the secession of South Sudan, the Iraq War and the Arab uprisings that began in 2011. Speaking of the latter, Dr. Eibner claimed they "have so far, if anything, produced greater insecurity and danger for religious minorities," noting the "bestial sectarian conflict" in Syria and "the momentum of anti-Christian discrimination and violence...with cases of religious cleansing" in Egypt.

More information about the conference and videos of President Gemayel and Lord Williams' speeches will be available at www.middle-east-minorities.com, CSI's website for its lecture series on the Future of Religious Minorities in the Middle East. More information about CSI, including its Genocide Warning for religious minorities in the region, can be found at www.csi-usa.org.

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