



World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR)

A representative body of Sikh institutions of America founded under the patronage of Siri Akal Takhat Sahib

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Member Gurdwaras:

1. Gurdwara Sahib Fremont, Fremont, CA
2. Guru Nanak Sikh Mission, Livingston, CA
3. Sikh Gurdwara of LA, North Hollywood, CA
4. Sikh Gurdwara Riverside, Riverside, CA
5. Colorado Singh Sabha, Denver, CO
6. Guru Singh Sabha of Augusta, Augusta, GA
7. Sikh Study Circle of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
8. Sikh Religious Society of Chicago, Palatine, IL
9. Sikh Society of South, New Orleans, LA
10. Sikh Gurdwara of Michigan, Rochester Hills, MI
11. Sikh Society of Michigan, Madison Heights, MI
12. Guru Nanak Foundation of Jackson, MS
13. Sikh Gurdwara of North Carolina, Durham, NC
14. Garden State Sikh Association, Bridgewater, NJ
15. Guru Nanak Sikh Society of Delaware Valley, Sewell, NJ
16. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Glenrock, NJ
17. Sikh Sabha of New Jersey, Lawrenceville, NJ
18. Sikh Cultural Society Inc., Richmond Hills, NY
19. Sikh Cultural & Edu. Society of Western NY, Buffalo, NY
20. Sikh Religious Society of Dayton, Dayton, OH
21. Guru Nanak Found. of Greater Cleveland, Richfield, OH
22. Guru Gobind Singh Sikh Society, Bedford, OH
23. Guru Nanak Religious Soc. of Central Ohio, Columbus, OH
24. Tristate Sikh Cultural Society, Monroeville, PA
25. Mid South Sikh Sabha, Memphis, TN
26. Sikh Center of Gulf Coast, Houston, TX
27. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Richardson, TX
28. Sikh Gurdwara of North Texas, Garland, TX
29. Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Fairfax, VA
30. Sikh Association of Central Virginia, VA
31. Sikh Religious Society of Wisconsin, Brookfield, WI

Other Sikh Institution Members:

1. Siri Guru Granth Sahib Found., Anaheim, CA
2. Sikhs Serving America, Topeka, KS
3. Sikh Youth Federation of North America, White Plains, NY
4. Sikh Educational & Religious Foundation, Dublin, OH
5. Sikh Youth Federation of USA, Toledo, OH
6. Academy of Guru Granth Studies, Arlington, TX

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WSC-AR Participates in WCC International Interfaith Conference in Switzerland; Gathering Calls for Deeper Dialogue in Common Action

(Photos available upon request)

The World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR) participated in a landmark international interfaith conference "Critical Moment in Interreligious Dialogue" held June 7 – 9 at the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, Switzerland. Representatives of virtually all the major world faith communities explored the connections between dialogue and action during the conference.

Dr. Tarunjit Singh, Secretary General and Chair of Interfaith Committee of WSC-AR, attended the conference and reflected, "This conference was not an opportunity for people of faith to come together to share once again our common humanity – we have done that too many times before. This conference was an opportunity for those engaged in interreligious dialogue to assess its achievements of the past, reflect on the relevance and effectiveness of it today, and plan a vision for the future in which dialogue and action will be interlinked."

Dr. Singh added, "This conference was a call to move beyond formal dialogue to being able to work with people of faith across religious boundaries in common action so as to reconcile and heal an imperfect and fragile world. Without justice, our world will not know peace."

The conference opened on June 7 with a Sikh spiritual reflection led by Mrs. Charanjit Singh (England), Mr. Ajit Singh (England), Dr. Brijinder Singh (India), and Dr. Tarunjit Singh (USA). The first day of the conference stressed the call for credible dialogue with common action.

The need for religions to undertake a "critical and realistic self assessment" while making "overcoming violence in all its forms" an "urgent priority" was stressed by the World Council of Churches (WCC) central committee moderator, His Holiness Catholicos Aram I. In a keynote speech, he emphasized that in the midst of the "moral vacuum" of today's globalized world, this common action must be grounded in common values. "Values, not interests, must be the guiding principles of interreligious collaboration", Aram I said.

The need for common action was also stressed by WCC General Secretary Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia in welcoming the 130 invited conference participants from ten world religions. After almost 35 years of involvement in dialogue, the WCC has "come to realize the interreligious truth of an old ecumenical principle: that which we can do together we should not do separately," he said.

The second day of the conference was devoted to exploring the relationship between dialogue and action. A session on action - dialogue and discussion was moderated by Dr. Tarunjit Singh. The panelists were Rabbi Naamah Kelman (Jewish – Israel), Dr. Vinu Aram (Hindu – India), Dr. Parichart Suwanbubha (Buddhist – Thailand), Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer (Muslim – India), Swami Agnivesh (Arya Samaj – India), and Rev. Valson Thampu (Christian – India).

On the last day of the conference, religious leaders from across the world focused on the growing global Christian - Muslim tensions. Discussions were held on the future of interreligious dialogue and initial steps were taken to develop a non-sectarian common declaration that may guide interfaith dialogue in action. The conference participants agreed that "recasting interreligious dialogue as a practice of humility and hope offers a way of building greater trust... Together may we seize this critical moment and help transform its perils into a pilgrimage of faith that will guide us to a more just, compassionate and peaceful future."

About 130 participants of diverse faiths and traditions, including academics, religious scholars, humanitarian workers, activists and journalists attended the event. The conference program included a series of presentations and dialogue sessions on the themes of "thinking together", "assessing the present", and "imagining the future". More information about the conference can be accessed at www.oikoumene.org/interreligious.html.

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches, now 347, in more than 120 countries in all continents from virtually all Christian traditions. The Roman Catholic Church is not a member church but works cooperatively with the WCC.

The WSC-AR is a representative and elected body of Sikh Gurdwaras and institutions in the United States. Its members include 37 Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship) and other Sikh institutions across the nation.

The following photos in jpeg format, suitable for publication, can be obtained by e-mailing <contact@worldsikhcouncil.org>:



Caption: Rabbi Awraham Soetendrop, President of World Union for Progressive Judaism – European Union, receives Parshaad from Dr. Tarunjit Singh and Dr. Brijinder Singh at the conference's opening Sikh spiritual reflection.
(Photo courtesy of Peter Williams of WCC)



Caption: Dr. Tarunjit Singh moderates a session on dialogue and action.
(Photo courtesy of Peter Williams of WCC)



Caption: About 130 persons representing ten major religions of the world attend the June 7-9, 2005 conference in Geneva, Switzerland.
(Photo courtesy of Peter Williams of WCC)