

## WFWP Europe Conference and Debate on Religious Pluralism in Portugal

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September 5, 2016 between 2 and 5: 30 pm, in the Auditorium 2 of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, there was held a Conference / Debate convened by the Portuguese Minister of Justice - Francisca Van Dunem.

It was about Religious Freedom and the invitation was addressed to various religious denominations registered into religious Liberty Commission.

It was the first meeting that Family Federation was officially invited by the Portuguese State and participated at this kind of event.

Highlighted by the national president, Sergio Neto, furthermore the president of the interfaith area of Family Federation, Mr. Liberto Silva and Dr. Avelino Rodrigues, accompanied by Sergio Vieira and Marta Carvalho, the head of the Portuguese WFWP & UPF and together with the eminent figures of national current politics, Scholars and renowned Constitutionalists.

The meeting had as theme: Religious Pluralism and Citizenship.

The opening remarks of the meeting, was given by the Minister of Justice – Dr.<sup>a</sup> Francisca Van Dunem.

The conference took place in two panels, the speakers were eminent figures of Politics, academics and renowned Jurists, and it was followed by a debate.

The room was decently made and there were more than 60 participants, who were part of different religions.

Speakers girded their speeches to the fields of Law and Religion - history and philosophy of religions, matters relating to the legality and interaction between religion and law.

They mentioned several quotes of universal philosophical figures and others.

During the debate there were some questions and also some additional comments.

Some observations were made, first placed by WFWP's President, who talk about love as aggregator factor of religion and law, saying that, as the human being is a whole compound whose essence is love, therefore the human society should be based on its essence and mutual respect, which would lead the society to a healthy living and prevent conflictual issues. She also took the opportunity to introduce the Founder of Family Federation – Rev. Sun Myung Moon - and she announced the offer of His Autobiography, which was distributed by both representatives of WFWP and UPF.

The President of UPF, took the words of his predecessor (WFWP's President), and clarified that the Unification she referred to, did not mean fusion, but dialogue, sharing the knowledge of one another and respect for what unites us, rather than what separates us - which is very little.

He was adding the comment related with what he called the three types of extremism:

The Religious extremism characterized by the lack of tolerance, understanding and cooperation in the light of the Divine teachings.

This results in denial extremism of other religions or confessions, which in turn, flows into extremism by negative Discrimination.



Beyond that, that is the origin of our changes into a secular and global world, reveling in the most liberals, it goes so far to wish to break with most traditional values, ethics, human and social moral, etc., in the name of Freedom Materialism and pleasure, with few or without any limits;

On the other hand, the Extremism of Dahesh, which ends up defending a God of a completely bloody justice?

The UPF President ended with the following question: Does the Religious Liberty Commission in Portugal or the United Nations International and the completely secular world achieve to be in balance and completely impartial intermediary?

These and other questions were commented by the last panel speakers.

After the closing speech, delivered by the newly National President of the Religious Committee - Dr. José Eduardo Vera Jardim, WFWP's National President of Portugal announced in her short intervention, the donation of Reverend Moon's Autobiography. WFWP & UPF distributed the 36 books and the first one of these books was delivered by hand to Her Excellency the Minister of Justice, by the national representative of the Interfaith Federation for World Peace, Liberto Silva.

The meeting was successful and everyone could go home with a sense of accomplishment.

By Marta de Carvalho