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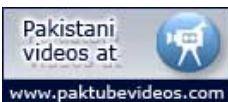
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King Abdullah urges dialogue for inter-faith tolerance

Thursday June 05, 2008 (0946 PST)

MAKKAH: The Guardian of the two Holy mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz, on Wednesday urged the Muslim Ummah to enter into a reasonable and continuous dialogue with the people belonging to other faiths to create religious tolerance.

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"Islam has also founded concept of dialogue and its continuity which is needed to promote tolerance and find solutions to the problems of the Muslim Ummah," King Abdullah said this in his inaugural address of three-day World Dialogue Conference of the Muslim World League (MWL) at Al Safa Palace.

The Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia Abdul Aziz Al-Sheikh, the Grand Mufti of Al-Azhar University Syed Muhammad Tantavi and Secretary General of MWL Dr Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Mohsen Al-Turki were also present there.

The conference was convened in response to King Abdullah's call for a meeting of the elite Muslim scholars, religious leaders and other delegates to discuss the ways and to initiate dialogue with other faiths in the light of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Over 600 delegates from 50 countries, including the representatives from the countries where the Muslims are in minority, attended the conference. Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Qazi Hussain Ahmed and former federal minister for Religious Affairs Ijazul Haq are among the invitees from Pakistan. Former minister for Religious Affairs Dr Mahmood Ahmed Ghazi is also attending the conference.

King Abdullah said Islam is greatest of all the religions, which ensures human values, justice and wisdom and there is need to preach it in the best possible manner. "How great the status of the Islamic Ummah is but how difficult time it is when the enemies of Islam are attaching extremism, militancy and terrorism with the Muslim!" King Abdullah exclaimed.

He said the enemies of the Muslims advocate violence and have been trying to malign the great faith and they target the principles of Islam and commit aggression against the Muslims. Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia Abdul Aziz Al-Sheikh pointed out that the dialogue was one basic of Islam and the best way of preaching the religion. "Islam advocates dialogue among people to explain good qualities of this religion," he said.

Former Iranian president Hashmi Rafsanjani called upon the Muslim Ummah to come out of their internal differences to protect its



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identity. He also mentioned the sufferings of the Muslim in Palestine, Iraq and other parts of the world. Rafsanjani said there were great opportunities for the Muslim countries to make progress in all fields, saying that the Muslim countries should also protect their rights.

He emphatically said the Muslim countries also need to protect their resources from Zionism to foil their designs. He also thanked King Abdullah for patronising such an event in Makkah and gathering scholars at one platform.

Secretary General of MWL Dr Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Mohsen Al-Turki said the scholars during discussion would come up with suggestions and ideas to present the true image of Islam. He also called upon the Muslim scholars to give their ideas to ensure a fruitful declaration at the end of the conference.

End.

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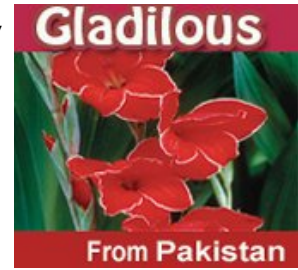
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