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Issues

(WASHINGTON, D.C., 7/16/2008) – The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) is joining the call for interfaith understanding and reconciliation issued at a groundbreaking international summit that opened today in Madrid, Spain.

CAIR representatives, along with some 200 religious leaders and scholars, took part in Wednesday’s opening ceremony of the World Conference on Dialogue. King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and King Juan Carlos of Spain both spoke at the opening of the summit. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and U.S. civil rights leader and former presidential candidate Rev. Jesse Jackson also attended the opening ceremonies.

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CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad, CAIR Board Member Larry Shaw and CAIR National Communications Director Ibrahim Hooper are taking part in the summit.

[Note: During the conference, media professionals may contact CAIR Communications Coordinator Amina Rubin at 202-341-4171 or arubin@cair.com. She will provide updated on-site contact information for CAIR conference participants.]

Spain was chosen as the conference site because of its historic significance as an area of the world in which Muslims, Christians and Jews lived in peace for centuries. The summit is part of a recently-announced initiative by King Abdullah to promote dialogue between Muslims and followers of other faiths.

A preparatory conference held in the holy city of Mecca last month focused on the legitimacy, objectives, themes, and methodology of interfaith dialogue from an Islamic perspective.

CAIR, America’s largest Islamic civil liberties group, has 35 offices and chapters nationwide and in Canada. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, encourage dialogue, protect civil liberties, empower American Muslims, and build coalitions that promote justice and mutual understanding.

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