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PRESS RELEASE: ISLAMIC-CATHOLIC LIAISON COMMITTEE

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With the help of Almighty God and with the generous invitation from the Federation of Islamic Organisations in Europe (FIOE), the Islamic - Catholic Liaison Committee held its eighth meeting in Markfield-UK, 2 -3 Jumada I st 1423 equivalent to 12 - 13 July 2002. The Islamic delegation was headed by H.E. Prof. Kamel AL-Sharif Secretary General of the International Islamic Council for Da'wah and Relief. Cairo- Egypt. H.E. Cardinal Francis Arinze, President of the Pontifical Council, headed the Catholic delegation for Interreligious Dialogue, Holy See. The topics addressed during the meeting, were Religion and Racism and Towards a Culture of Dialogue. After discussion of these topics and further exchanges on matters of mutual concern the Committee agreed upon the following:

1. We affirm that our religions both teach that Almighty God has created all people equal in dignity, and therefore we reject every form of racism.
2. We condemn the racist practices which exist today in many societies and we accept our responsibility to endeavour to eliminate misconceptions and prejudices which in turn generate racial discrimination.
3. We call upon individuals, educational and social institutions, and the media to join this effort against racism.
4. We believe that adherence to religious values and engaging in dialogue to achieve mutual understanding and mutual respect are conducive to a world of justice and peace.
5. We commit ourselves to continue to promote a culture of dialogue and to work together in order to introduce this culture of dialogue into our respective communities and more specifically in educational and cultural programmes.

Dr Kamil al-Sharif
Head of the Islamic Delegation

Cardinal Francis Arinze
Head of the Catholic Delegation

Prof. Dr Hamid A. al-Rifaie

Mgr Michael L. Fitzgerald

*President of the International Islamic
Forum for Dialogue*

*Secretary of the Pontifical Council
for Interreligious Dialogue*

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