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Project No. 58 - The week of the Religions – IRAS COTIS, Switzerland

The week of the religions took place for the 4th time in the 4 language regions all over Switzerland from 6th to 12th November 2010. The week of the religions is an interreligious platform between people of different religious beliefs. It aims at creating understanding as well as clarifying issues. This helps to discover the similarities as well as the differences and how to deal with them. Everyone interested in religions and cultures and whose concern is a respectful and peaceful co-existence in Switzerland, is invited.

The week of the religions is supported by IRAS COTS, the international Interfaith Working Group in Switzerland, consisting of 125 organisations from all faiths. 2 former members of the Federal Council (Adolf Ogi and Pascal Couchepin) as well as other prominent persons supported the patronage 2010.

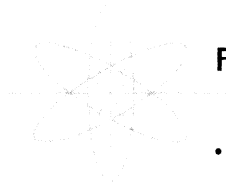
In the local areas ecclesiastic commissions, interreligious platforms, cantonal integration offices as well as representatives of the federal churches, participated in the organisation of the activities. Many private persons as well as organisations and institutions, schools, choirs, music groups and religious communities supported the week of religions.

About 180 events took place all over Switzerland between 6th and 12th of November 2010.

Especially in the towns but also in the country Bahais, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Moslems and Sikhs organised meetings, “open doors”, films and other events.

In everyday life and in the media, people often speak about religions in a polarizing manner. During the week of the religions the focus on religion is a different one: as a power which can unify and reconcile. That is their contribution to religious peace.

Each of the following examples contributed to more understanding and unity among the religions:



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- In Basel the week of the religions was opened under the following subject: " lived religion as an opportunity for integration?"
- In Berne the night of religions took place on 6th of November which was an unforgettable experience.
- In the Katharina-Werk in Basel 7 Women from 7 different religions arranged an evening with various rituals, texts and music.
- In Grenchen a bus-ride was organized, which lead to different religious sites.
- In Lugano the religious centres of the Bahais, Buddhists, Christians, Jews and Moslems were open during the week of the religions.
- On 6th of November all mosques in Switzerland opened their doors
- In the Holy Mary Chapel in Olten peace prayers were held, attended by Bahais, Christians, Jews and Moslems.
- In various places religious films were shown, inviting for discussions.
- In Kippel, a mountain village in the Lötsch valley, a film titled "4 generations – 4 religious worlds" was shown.

The week of the religions gives reason to hope that a life based on unity in diversity is possible, inspiring others to take up this idea.

The week of the religions takes place every year. This year it will be held from 6th to 12th November 2011.