

U.N. program] and the points we can discuss.” We had a lot of exchange. By July, we had done a lot. I gave some interviews. One of the best of them was in [the Italian Catholic monthly] *30 Giorni*, in which I explained our points about the conference. *30 Giorni* interviewed other ambassadors in the Vatican, too. This interview had a vast impact on public opinion in Italy. At the end of July or the beginning of August, the Vatican ambassador in Iran Monsignor Panciroli met the acting Foreign Minister Mohammed Hashemi, the brother of the Iranian President, and asked for full support and cooperation. I met Monsignor Panciroli and promised him we would do our best in Cairo. During August in Teheran we discussed the matter in the foreign and health ministries, which were the ministries mainly responsible for the conference. We had decided on the minister of health as the head of the delegation, but later we discovered that if the head of the delegation were a religious man who knows politics, the situation would change. The head of the delegation was His Excellency Taskhiri. For the Vatican case, they decided to send me also. There was one from the Health Ministry and two from the Foreign Ministry who specialized on the text. I went from Rome to Cairo.

The conference began on a Monday. The situation in Cairo was disappointing. The main problem was that many countries did not have any idea of the text. There was not enough courage on their part to participate in any active discussion. On Wednesday, we met with Taskhiri, the head of the Al Azhar, the Mufti of Egypt, and another, independent religious man named Imam Ghazali. Taskhiri explained the situation of the conference. I met Monsignor Martino (the apostolic nuncio at the United Nations), who headed the delegation, and his colleague Monsignor Martin. We discussed the text Thursday morning with an expert from the Foreign Ministry. The State Secretary [of the Vatican] visited Taskhiri and told him, they were ready for suggestions from Iran, because they knew that we knew the text. The Egyptian delegation then had close cooperation with us, as well as the Pakistani and Vatican delegations. We had more than daily contact. From Thursday to Friday, some Latin American countries brought up their points, Honduras, El Salvador, and in some cases, Nicaragua. The best were Benin and Malta. In the second part of the conference, the situation changed a lot. In the last days, the cooperation was very clear. The northern European countries, especially Norway and Sweden, but also the European Union—Germany was the representative of the EU, which spoke on its behalf—Canada and the United States began to understand that the situation was not as they had supposed.

As you saw, the results were excellent. They changed some paragraphs and accepted our considerations regarding other phrases. As an observer, I told you, the results were excellent. I heard from other delegates that this was the first time in the history of U.N. conferences, that people of faith have obliged the other side to accept their codes and religious

values. To speak adequately about the results of the conference it would be necessary to write books, because this was a symbol of the rapid changes of social and moral conditions of countries which want to have some religious values and principles and to preserve them. This is the reality.

Interview: Cardinal Francis Arinze

Permanent association needed in Sudan

The following interview was conducted by EIR with His Eminence Cardinal Francis Arinze, formerly a bishop in Nigeria who is now in the Roman Curia, on Oct. 9. He is in charge of Dialogue with Non-Christians for the Vatican and a member of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, as well as author of a well-known series of catechetical lectures on videotape.

EIR: What is your view of how the conference is proceeding so far?

Arinze: The most important thing is if the Christians and Muslims in the Sudan form a permanent association and if they will want that association to continue. Within such, they will listen to one another, they will try to understand one another, if there are problems they will raise them and face them straight on. That is the most important thing. Calling people from many countries for me has secondary importance. It is not the most important thing. It is not wrong, but it is not the primary thing, because the people from outside cannot understand the internal situation in two days.

EIR: There was some criticism of your speech, to the effect that it was interpreted to mean that you thought the Sudanese should not take part in the inter-religious dialogue internationally. Was this a misinterpretation?

Arinze: Yes, of course. Whoever said that, did not understand what I said, or was not listening or did not understand my recommendations. Read my paper. Of course, when I said, the most important thing is that the Sudanese have a permanent association, dialogue will have roots in the place, of course that is primary. I said, an international inter-religious dialogue is a different thing. It is also important. But it is not the same thing as a permanent association between Christians and Muslims in the Sudan. Of course they are different steps. You will first have Christians and Muslims in Sudan talking to one another in a permanent association. Only after that will they will be in a good position to meet

people from other countries. They do not start by meeting people from other countries except insofar as people from other countries can help them to start a national association, and not only national, but even local, in various parts of this country, because the country is very big.

EIR: What role do you think economic development has in this dialogue?

Arinze: I am not an economist. But speaking from the point of view of religion, I have this to say: Religion must motivate people to promote the good of their country. Therefore working together to promote the good of their country is part of the inter-religious dialogue, of course.

Documentation

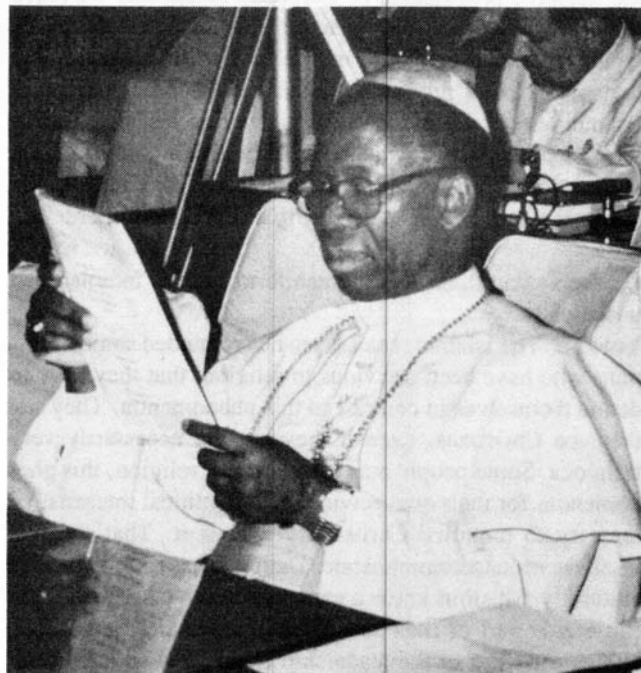
Sudanese leaders deal with the issues

In the context of the Inter-Religious Dialogue conference held in Khartoum Oct. 8-10, members of the Sudanese leadership opened up to the press on a wide variety of issues. *EIR* participated with questions at meetings with Dr. Hassan Al-Turabi, the chairman of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference, and with Dr. Ghazi Salahuddin Al-Atabani, state minister for political affairs. Both leaders, one spiritual and the other political, stressed that for meaningful dialogue to unfold, there is a need for leading figures in the West to learn about Sudan, and about Islam, directly. It is in the interest of providing such leaders—among them the newly elected members of the U.S. Congress and Senate—with a picture of Sudan as the Sudanese present it, that we include lengthy extracts from these discussions, which occurred in Khartoum on Oct. 11, 1994.

Dr. Hassan Al-Turabi

Q: You proposed during the conference the establishment of a “worldwide religious order.” Can you say more about how you see this evolving?

Turabi: There was probably too much focus on the domestic affairs of Christian-Islamic dialogue, but I am interested in the international human context, a dialogue initially, later on it would become cooperation. The concern about Christian-Islamic relations in Sudan is a reflection of international concern about the so-called Islamic society or Islamic renaissance, or whatever they call it, or “fundamentalism” in the Sudan. Whether it’s human rights or underdevelopment or regional problems here, it is always interpreted in terms of



Cardinal Arinze: Dialogue must first have roots in Sudan.

that Christian-Islamic relationship. That’s why I try to focus on the international human dialogue of religions generally, not only a dialogue, but further on, perhaps, an institution or machinery for cooperation as well.

Q: In the New World Order, what kind of dialogue are you looking for?

Turabi: Inter-government relations are now dominated by the so-called New World Order. It’s only a transitional world order, I think. The bi-polar world order, which was not only bi-polar in the sense of confrontation, was for the Third World countries of the southern hemisphere a structure of justice and balance. Each pole would take care not to provoke the other, there was much more fairness in that bi-polar order. But we can find in both “poles” people who are interested in dealing with other human beings as equals, understanding each other, and cooperating. The New World Order is not very orderly at all, it’s only a transition. After the collapse of the bi-polar order, people are looking for a new order, so to speak.

Q: Do you think the Islamic revival will change the world order?

Turabi: Within Islamic history, renaissances are cyclical. In old times, it might be local. In this country, for example, there was a revolution against the European invasion. But now, any revival in one country immediately affects other countries. For example, the Islamic renaissance in the Sudan, with its political, economic, and social dimension, has a worldwide influence, as an example. Sometimes we ride over