

IARF EME

Regional Conference 2016



22-25 August
Tetovo, FYR Macedonia

The quadrennial conference of the EME, IARF's Europe and Middle East region, will be held on 22-25 August 2016 in Tetovo, FYR Macedonia. It will be hosted by the Bektashi Community and the Evropa Centre for Human Rights.

The theme will be Religion and Conflict Prevention.

You will find the programme below. You can register on iarf.net/members/eme2016registration or request a form at luke@iarf.net

About IARF

www.iarf.net

The purpose of the International Association for Religious Freedom is to work for freedom of religion and belief since it is a precious human right that potentially enables the best within our religious lives, as well as genuine search for truth and enlightenment, to flourish.

About the Bektashi Community

www.bektashiorder.com

The order has its origin in the teachings and life of the 13th century Haji Bektash Veli in Anatolia, in present-day Turkey. In the early 16th century it took its present shape as a Sufi order. Four years after all Sufi orders had been prohibited in Turkey in 1925, the central power was shifted to Albania.

When, in 1967, all religious practices were being prohibited, all places of worship in Albania were shut down. The order is now in the process of re-establishing itself. Bektashism has incorporated elements of a wide range of religious traditions – Sunni, Sufi, Shia, and Christian among them. It is, and has been throughout its history, open to new ideas. Mysticism is eminent in all teachings and practices. Scriptures consist of poetry rather than doctrinal teachings. Music and art is used as a vehicle to convey teachings.

About IARF EME

iarf.net/members/eme

It is the organization of IARF member groups and chapters in Europe and the Middle East. To further aims within the IARF mandate, it can:

- organize conferences and symposia open to the general public,
- set up networks of people from among its membership,
- support IARF and its member organizations,
- invite others to join its networks and/or join forces with similar organizations to support religious communities suffering from injustice or persecution,
- give support to other organizations which operate within the IARF mandate,
- set up foundations to raise funds for specific targets within the IARF mandate.

SPEAKERS

To be confirmed and completed

HH Hajji Dede Baba E. Brahimaj

Head of the Bektashi World Center and world leader of the Bektashi Order, a mystical Islamic Sufi order identifying with the Shia tradition and IARF member group based in Albania and the Balkans. The Baba is very devoted to peace efforts and interfaith dialogue, presenting an open, inclusive face of Islam.

Prof. Fernando Enns

Representing the Mennonite tradition of non-violence, Prof. Enns is Director of the Institute of Peace Church Theology at the University of Hamburg and Mennonite (Peace-) Theology and Ethics at VU University Amsterdam. A renowned academic, he wrote and edited several books and actively takes part in the public debate advocating peaceful conflict resolution and renunciation of violence. Since 1998 Prof. Enns has sat at the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches and played a major role in the Council's work related to peace theology.

Prof. Etem Aziri

Dean of the Faculty of Public Administration and Political Science at the South East European University in Macedonia, Prof. Aziri is a sociologist of religion and sociologist specializing in Albanian studies and the challenges facing a multi-ethnic society.

Rev. Dr. Ilona Szent-Ivanyi

Currently a minister in the Unitarian Church in Budapest, Hungary, Dr. Szent-Ivanyi conducted research on interfaith relations and especially Muslim-Christian dialogue at the Faculty of Religious Studies of the Lutheran University in Budapest and the Goldziher Institute. She is also an experienced activist and practitioner. In the years 2001-2006 she worked as European coordinator of the International Association for Religious Freedom.

Prof. Arben Sulejmani

A historian working at the Department of Philosophy of the State University of Tetova and Head of Foreign Affairs of the Bektashi Community of Macedonia, Prof. Sulejmani is an expert in the Bektashi tradition and an ardent supporter and facilitator of interfaith dialogue as well as a human rights activists primarily concerned with the position of ethnic and religious minorities. He is author of *The Bektashi Community in the Balkans and Around the World* as well as diverse articles about Bektashism and the situation of the Albanian minority in Macedonia in English.

Up-to-date information concerning the speakers and all other conference details will be available at iarf.net/members/eme/eme2016

PROGRAMME

Optional Pre-Conference Tour

Friday 19 August - Monday 22 August

Those who wish may take part in the pre-conference tour to Albania organized by the Bektashi Community. Please indicate that on the registration form. The cost is 285 EUR.

Departure: Skopje airport, Friday 19 August at 12:00
Return: Hotel Emka, Tetovo

Day 1, Friday: Ohrid
Day 2, Saturday: Tirana, Durrës, Berat
Day 3, Sunday: Tomorri
Day 4, Monday: Tetovo

You may find out more at www.iarf.net or request the brochure at luke@iarf.net

Monday, 22 August

Venue: Hotel Emka

Arrival and registration. Participants will be welcomed at Skopje airport. A bus will be made available for transfer to the hotel in Tetovo. Participants arriving early will receive a lunch package at the hotel.

19:00 Dinner, cultural event (performance of music from various Macedonian traditions by the band "Këpurdhat") and socialising

Wednesday, 24 August

Venue: South East European University

8:30 Breakfast
9:30 Opening
9.45 Lectures/Workshops
12:30 Lunch
13:30 Various meetings/workshops
16:00 Coffee
16:30 Lecture
18.15 Break
18:30 Dinner
19:30 Conference closing

Tuesday, 23 August

Venue: South East European University

8:30 Breakfast
9:30 Official Opening Ceremony
10:30 Keynote Plenary Speaker
12:30 Lunch
13:30 Visit to local places of worship: a Bektashi tekke, a Muslim mosque, and an Orthodox Christian church. Short prayer and presentation will be held at each site.
16:00 Coffee
16:30 Lecture
18.15 Break
18:30 Dinner

Thursday, 25 August

Venue: Hotel Emka

Some participants will depart. Those who choose to stay for another day will be able to choose between one of two excursions and participation in the meeting of the European Liberal Protestant Network (to be confirmed). Members of the IARF Peace Commission will meet as well.

Excursion 1: Tetovo and Skopje, guided by volunteers from the Bektashi Community

(app. 3 hours, 15 EUR)

Excursion 2: Ohrid, guided by volunteers from the Bektashi Community (app. 6 hours, 25 EUR)

8:30 Breakfast
9:30 ELPN Meeting
10:00 Full-day excursion to Ohrid
14:00 Half-day excursion to Skopje/Tetovo
19:00 Dinner

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Cost

200 EUR: accommodation (3 nights), breakfast, lunch and dinner each day,
+45 EUR for 4 nights,
+30 EUR for airport transfer (on arrival and departure).

For those wishing to attend part of the programme or staying elsewhere day prices apply.

Contact persons

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Chairman of the Bektashi
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Venue

South East European University
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Accommodation

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