

A very special encounter of Israeli rabbi's and OJCM

Wednesday February 19 - 2020, Rasit Bal, ds Jan Post Hospers and Hanneke Gelderblom-Lankhout who are the core members of OJCM - the Council of Jews, Christians and Muslims in the Netherlands' had an encounter with a couple of Rabbi's and Rabbinets from Israel.

They were on a study tour in Europa, organised by the British Middle East programme called "Forward Thinking".

This organisation is a pro-active organisation which is working to

- promote a more inclusive peace process in the Middle East
- facilitate political dialogues in, and between the Arab/Muslim and Western worlds
- promote in the UK greater understanding and confidence between the diverse grassroots Muslim communities and the wider society including the Media and the

British establishment.

From OJCM-side we explained how we do work together, using the established covenant on ritual slaughter as an example, that because of the common input from Jewish as well Muslim partners, is unique in Europe.

They had questions about the rise of Salafism in the Netherlands and how we cope with it. What about our grassroots supporters and how do we cope with the different sorts of suspicion.

It became exiting when we started talking about Jerusalem and explained how we in OJCM are engaged in telling each other the specific stories about Jerusalem within our different religions. There was an instant recognition and Jordan Morgen from Forward Thinking told us how they are committed to this topic in a similar fashion.

It became even more exciting when we started talking about the issue of the so called double-loyalty issue. About loyalty towards fatherland and motherland. We had a lot of questions to ask each other.

Sadly we had to stop talking at 17.45 because the evening praying time was there. And naturally the question arose, where is the east side in this room where is the direction towards Jerusalem.

Marvellous that our Muslim friend Rasit immediately could be of assistance.