

MEDIA STATEMENT (First draft of Translation of the final German version)

Vienna, November 14th, 2018

„Pro Oriente“ defines Road Map for future Commitment in Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue
Constitutive Session of new „Pro Oriente Steering Committee for Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue“ took place in Vienna

Vienna, 14/11/18 (poi) On Wednesday the newly established “Catholic-Orthodox Study Group”, convoked by “Pro Oriente”, concluded its constitutive session at „Kardinal-Koenig-Haus“ in Vienna. In the session, six Orthodox and six Catholic theologians from eight different countries had conferred about future perspectives for Orthodox-Catholic dialogue since Monday, November 12th, deliberating on a road map for “Pro Oriente” foundation’s dedication for this dialogue. Established in 1964 by Cardinal Franz Koenig, at that time Archbishop of Vienna, the foundation for decades has been campaigning for rapprochement of Orthodox and Catholic Christians in various projects and initiatives. Among others, the considerations centred on current developments and actual challenges in ecumenical dialogue. Several participants emphasized the growing importance of formats for unofficial dialogue between the churches like those developed by “Pro Oriente” in times of growing tensions between the churches. Thus the group gathered possible themes, exchanged visions and developed conceptual approaches for future “Pro Oriente” projects in Orthodox-Catholic dialogue. The participants agreed upon the central relevance of joint efforts “to overcome historic wounds and harms mutually inflicted upon one another” and to crosslink different already existing levels of dialogue with each other. In addition to this, it was stated that results already achieved in these dialogues should be better communicated to a wider ecclesiastical and societal public. The group agreed to convene as „Pro Oriente Steering Committee for Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue“ (“Pro Oriente“-Kommission für orthodox-katholischen Dialog) on a regular base, in order to harmonize and develop further the foundation’s activities in different fields of Orthodox-Catholic dialogue. (end)