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Press Release: Meeting of the Presidents of the Doctrinal Commissions of the Episcopal Conferences of Asia with a Delegation from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Bangkok, Thailand (15-18 January 2019)

A meeting between a Delegation from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, led by Cardinal Luis F. Ladaria, SJ, Prefect, and Archbishop J. Augustine Di Noia, O.P., Adjunct Secretary, and the Presidents of the Doctrinal Commissions of the Episcopal Conferences of Asia is to take place at the Baan Phu Waan Pastoral Center in Bangkok, Thailand from 15-18 January 2019.

In an Instruction dated 23 February 1967, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, at the behest of Saint Pope Paul VI, asked the Bishops' Conferences to establish their own Doctrinal Commissions within the Conferences, as a consultative body assisting the Conferences themselves, and the individual bishops, in their concern for faith and morality. In certain situations where this may be difficult, this essential pastoral task can be assumed by another Commission, or by a singular bishop who follows doctrinal problems with particular attention.

To strengthen the collaboration between the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Doctrinal Commissions of the Episcopal Conferences, in 1982 the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger decided that the Presidents of such Commissions should meet periodically at a continental level. One of the original characteristics of these meetings lies in the fact that the Superiors of the Congregation go to the different continents, thereby underlining the importance of the local and regional jurisdictions and their responsibility in addressing doctrinal issues. The first of these meetings took place in Latin America, in Bogotá (1984); there were subsequent meetings in Kinshasa, Africa (1987); in Vienna, Europe (1989); in Hong-Kong, Asia (1993); in Guadalajara, Latin America (1996), and in San Francisco, North America (1999). In more recent times, meetings took place in Dar es Salaam, Africa (2009) and in Esztergom-Budapest, Europe (2015).

Now, in collaboration with the Presidency of the Federation of the Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC), a new meeting of the same kind has been prepared for Asia. Such an event manifests the desire of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to support the local Episcopates in their responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the doctrine of the faith, considering the specific challenges that face the continent of Asia today.

