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Tehran, 10 Oct. (AKI) - Several speakers at a conference hosted by Iran's foreign ministry have claimed Pope Benedict XVI wants a "war" against Muslims and that documents exist proving he had once supported Adolf Hitler's Nazi policies, Adnkronos International (AKI) has learnt. A former Iranian ambassador to the Holy See, Hojatolislam Mostafa Brujerdi, said that the pontiff's controversial speech during a visit to Germany in September indicated that "he feared Islam's expansion in Europe and especially in Italy," a source familiar with the conference told AKI.

Another former Iranian ambassador to the Vatican, Hojatolislam Seyyed Hadi Khosrowshahi described the pope's speech delivered at Regensburg University as "not the start of a new crusade, but

IRAN: DIPLOMATS TOLD POPE BENEDICT XVI WANTS 'WAR' WITH ISLAM

continuation of the first war between Christians and Islam, a war which has never ended."

Khosrowshahi also described Pope Benedict as "an ex-Nazi" and that "documents exist on his collaboration with Adolf Hitler and [Italian fascist dictator] Benito Mussolini."

Khosrowshahi said that the pontiff's decision not to apologise for the remarks "has convinced many eminent Islamic intellectuals and personalities to break off all relations with the Vatican and the Catholic Church."

Another speaker, Mohaghegh Damad, director of Iran's Islamic Encyclopaedia said the Islamic Republic should seek to "elaborate a strategy of action against Catholicism."

The conference continues through Wednesday.

