

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Over 200 Muslim Women from Around the World Gathered to Sign “Jihad Against Violence”

Women Condemned Violence in Indonesia, Promoted Peace and Opportunity

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA —Over 200 Muslim women from around the world were in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for the Women’s Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality (WISE) Conference. The women, comprised of activists, academics, religious scholars, lawyers and community leaders gathered to launch initiatives targeted towards ending violence and empowering their communities around the globe. In light of the recent tragedies in Indonesia, the meeting was especially significant.

On Saturday, July 18 the organizers announced the launch of the Global Muslim Women’s Shura Council, an all-women’s advisory council that will promote women’s rights within an Islamic framework. The first statement by the Shura Council will be titled, “Jihad against Violence.”

“Recent events in Indonesia are a stark reminder that violence and violent extremism in particular will continue to destroy the fabric of our communities,” said Daisy Khan, Executive Director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) and WISE Conference organizer, “Today women are taking the lead in campaigning for a global Jihad (struggle) Against Violence and taking a stand against these types of atrocities.”

The Global Muslim Women’s Shura Council wants their actions to contrast directly with those of perpetrators of the Indonesia attacks. Speaking for a global majority of Muslims, they feel great anguish for the victims of the Jakarta bombings and their families. The women of the council are committed to a world of peace, pluralism, justice and spiritual opportunity for those of all faiths and view the perpetrators, and those like them, as enemies of Islam and of all civilizations. They intend to combat such twisted ideologies through commitment to a world of understanding and opportunity for all -- where all parents can dream of better lives for their children regardless of religion, race or origins.

The 2009 WISE Kuala Lumpur Conference is organized by the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) in collaboration with the Cordoba Initiative (CI). It is supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Dutch Foreign Ministry's MDG3 Fund. Additional supporters include the Sister Fund and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

About the Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality (WISE), Empowering Muslim Women Around the Globe: The WISE program aims to empower Muslim women to fully participate in their communities and nations as well as to amplify their voices at all levels of political, economic, religious and social discourse. By creating the infrastructure and processes for Muslim women to join together and challenge the distorted interpretations of Islam and increasing their social and economic self-determination, WISE aims to change the status of Muslim women around the globe. This global network of individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and communities uses the teachings of Islam – both as inspiration and justification – for Muslim women's empowerment.

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