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MORE MUSLIM LEADERS



MUSLIM LEADERS OF TOMORROW

CONFERENCE REPORT

DOHA, QATAR
January 16-19, 2009

Sponsored by

Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue



DICID

مركز الدوحة الدولي لحوار الأديان
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*A program of American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA)
2009 MLT Conference in collaboration with the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The third Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) conference was held on January 16-19, 2009 in Doha, Qatar. Marking the global growth of the MLT program, the conference convened approximately 300 dynamic Muslim leaders from nearly 70 countries around the world. The two-day conference focused on the key challenges facing the worldwide Muslim community through a series of plenary and track sessions. In addition to the main sessions, the conference featured several exciting events, including the presentation of an “Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today from the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow,” authored by the MLTs and eventually published in the Washington Post on January 19, 2009 – coinciding with the inauguration of United States President Barack Obama. MLTs also participated in and attended a special edition of the BBC’s acclaimed “Doha Debates” program.

First Day

The first day opened with speeches by Imam Feisal, Chairman of Cordoba Initiative, Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi, Director of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, Daisy Khan, Executive Director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement, Sheikha Hanan Al-Thani, and Khalid Al-Jufairi. The first plenary session, entitled “Values to Action – The Story of US and What We Stand For,” discussed the values that define the MLT program including the MLT Charter (see Appendix C). Then, in “New Ideas and Competing Values,” MLTs commented on the challenge of reconciling differing values schemes in the interdependent world. Following this session, participants had an opportunity to discuss the issues raised during the plenary in smaller groups in the conference’s initial track session. In the afternoon, a special session on the crisis in Gaza highlighted key initiatives working to support the victims of the humanitarian situation through presentations of local Qataris and internationally based MLTs. Finally, MLTs attended a “Marketplace of Ideas” session where many MLT-led initiatives and organizations were showcased.

Second Day

On the second day, the plenary and track sessions focused first on the challenge of violent extremism and then on messaging and framing in the media. Following a presentation on media coverage of Muslim topics, a series of skill-building trainings were offered by leading experts in on-camera interviewing, perception management, messaging and framing, advocacy, blogging and new media, and leadership and movement building. At the closing session, MLTs discussed key elements of the MLT program. These included global MLT chapters, mentoring, the MLT website, MLT social networking platforms, and the Open Letter to World Leaders (see Appendix D). The conference ended with a special edition of the BBC’s “Doha Debates” on the motion “This House Believes that Political Islam is a Threat to the West.” The panel consisted of two MLTs who took opposite sides on the debate.

The MLT conference was sponsored by the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue. It was organized by the American Society for Muslim Advancement in collaboration with Cordoba Initiative and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. The conference received generous coverage in both regional and international media outlets of various forms (see Appendix E).

The following report presents the themes and outcomes of each session held at the conference as well as summaries of feedback and next steps to guide the future development of the MLT program.

INTRODUCTION

On January 16-19, 2009, the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) program¹ at the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) built on its success in the past three years and launched its global presence at a conference in Doha, Qatar. Sponsored by the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue and in collaboration with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and Cordoba Initiative, ASMA broadened the MLT network to include dynamic Muslim leaders from Muslim-majority countries as well as from the West. Approximately 300 Muslim leaders from over 70 countries convened at the Doha forum.

The Doha forum launched the MLT program on a global scale and empowered the MLT network further with a combination of practical media trainings, networking and plenary sessions designed to tackle common Muslim challenges with collective Muslim solutions.

Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue

Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID) was established as a result of a recommendation of the Fifth Doha Interfaith Conference on May 2007 in Doha. The center was opened officially in May 2008. The main role of the center is primarily to spread the culture of dialogue, the peaceful coexistence of humanity and the acceptance of others.

The American Society for Muslim Advancement

The American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) is a New-York based nonprofit organization founded in 1997 to elevate the discourse on Islam and foster environments in which Muslims thrive. ASMA is dedicated to strengthening an authentic expression of Islam based on cultural and religious harmony through interfaith collaboration, youth and women's empowerment, and arts and cultural exchange.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) is an initiative of the UN Secretary-General which aims to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures and religions, and to help counter the forces that fuel polarization and extremism. The Alliance was established in 2005, at the initiative of the Governments of Spain and Turkey, under the auspices of the United Nations. In April 2007, the United Nations Secretary-General appointed Jorge Sampaio, former President of Portugal, as High Representative for the Alliance. The AoC is supported by a Group of Friends – a community of over 85 member countries and international organizations and bodies.

Cordoba Initiative

Founded in 2004, Cordoba Initiative (CI) aims to achieve a tipping point in Muslim-West relations within the next decade, steering the world back to the course of mutual recognition and respect and away from heightened tensions. To do this, CI builds coalitions of leading individuals and organizations committed to promoting positive interaction between the Muslim World and the West.

¹ Please visit Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow website at www.muslimleadersoftomorrow.org for information on program.

Conference Goals:

The MLT global conference was designed to fulfill the following goals of the MLT program:

- Network emerging Muslim leaders from around the world
- Share and develop best practices between MLTs
- Strengthen the MLT platform for collective change
- Invest MLTs with leadership and media engagement tools and skills

These were accomplished through:

- Holding track sessions and facilitated networking activities during the conference
- Facilitating targeted and issue-specific plenary and track sessions at the conference
- Composing and ratifying an MLT values charter and encouraging MLTs to learn about each other's work through the "Marketplace of Ideas"
- Holding media and leadership training sessions and providing MLTs with access to training materials and other resources for their own professional development

The MLT program also introduced several new elements for streamlining the global MLT network, including global chapter development, an online MLT portal and an MLT one-to-one mentorship program for sharing best practices.

In addition to furthering the development of the MLT network, the 2009 conference featured several exciting events, including the presentation of an "Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today from the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow," a "Marketplace of Ideas," and an edition of the BBC's ["Doha Debates"](#) series.

- For the first time, Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow authored and signed a major document entitled "An Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today from the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow"—a unique set of policy recommendations addressed to both Muslim and non-Muslim heads of state to be distributed across international media.
- The conference program highlighted some of the most critical issues facing Muslim communities around the world today, including the lack of unified religious authority, violent extremism, competing values, and effective media engagement.
- The conference's "Marketplace of Ideas" showcased multiple initiatives – led by artists, philanthropists, social entrepreneurs, opinion leaders, civil society leaders, and religious leaders – that all aim at positive change.
- The conference featured a special edition of the BBC's acclaimed ["Doha Debates"](#) on the motion, "This House Believes that Political Islam is a Threat to the West."

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2009

The 2009 MLT conference began with informal activities scheduled for participants who arrived throughout the day prior to the main event. Participants who wished to take time to enjoy the city of Doha were encouraged to take advantage of a special bus service chartered with the assistance of the sponsor organization (The Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue), which visited the recently opened Islamic Museum of Art and the Grand Mosque several times throughout the day.

In the evening, the Opening Dinner was held in the main function hall. MLTs, who had arrived earlier in the day and had received their registration materials from the registration desk in the corridor outside, sat at round tables in an informal setting.

Naif al-Mutawa,

During the opening dinner, Dr. Naif al-Mutawa, founder of Teshkeel Comics, stood up to deliver a motivational speech. Focusing on the success of his comic strips in the Arab World – particularly the runaway successful series *The 99* – Dr. al-Mutawa outlined the steps every entrepreneur must take in order to realize his or her original vision. The inspiring talk provided a fitting opening for the 2009 MLT conference.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 2009

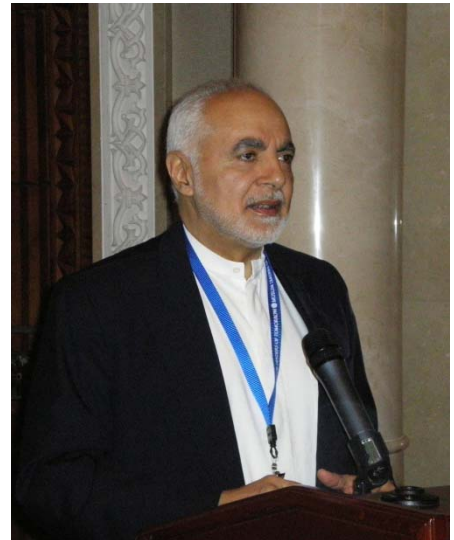
Summary

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf opened the first full day of the 2009 MLT Conference with moving remarks. The conference program then began with structured networking, facilitated by MLT Ahmed Younis, and a series of speeches given by conference sponsors and organizers: MLT Program Director Rushda Majeed, DICID Director Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi, and ASMA Executive Director Daisy Khan. Qatari MLTs Sheikha Hanan Al Thani and Khalid al-Jufair then shared their remarks about local efforts to promote women and youth development, highlighting Qatar's place as a leader in balancing tradition and positive social change.

The first day continued with a series of plenary and track level discussions, including "Values to Action," "New Ideas and Competing Values," and "Religious Authority," concluding with the "Marketplace of Ideas" session in the evening. MLT Hussein Rashid served as the Master of Ceremonies throughout the day and the conference as a whole. The day's events are highlighted below.

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf opened the first full day of the 2009 MLT Conference with a beautiful sermon stressing the historic importance that Muslim scholars and teachers have placed on diversity in the wider Muslim community. As leaders, he said, it behooves all who carry the MLT mantle to remain humble and never cease to thank their Creator for extending the boundaries that He has set for them. Imam Abdul Rauf ended his remarks with a prayer that MLTs continue to do good work in their communities.



*Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf
addresses the 2009 MLT
conference*

Sheikha Hanan Al Thani

Sheikha Al Thani presented her remarks on the subject of women's empowerment initiatives undertaken by the government of Qatar in recent years. The women's empowerment movement in Qatar, she said, has seen large numbers of highly educated women participate in the local workforce (with especially high representation in the medical and health sectors). In 1999, women participated in the Qatari election as voters and candidates, she added.



Sheikha Hanan Al Thani speaks about women's issues in Qatar during the 2009 MLT conference

Khalid al-Jufairi

Highlighting the "changes in all aspects of life" that Qatar has experienced in the past decade, Khalid al-Jufairi emphasized that Qatar has taken a lead in education (with the development of the Education City project initiated in 1996) and civil society growth. When Qatar gained independence in 1971, the discovery of oil and gas resources brought about social and structural reform within the country. The resulting "mixture between old and new," he said, has made Qatar into "a role model in change" for the wider Middle East.

Welcome Remarks

Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi, Director, DICID

Dr. Al-Naimi welcomed participants to Doha and expressed his excitement for the conference. He shared his hope that the gathering will lead to continued dialogue and knowledge-sharing amongst diverse people, encouraging the MLTs to return to their home countries transformed and committed to working together to find solutions to the globe's most pressing problems. Citing the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue's commitment to promoting respectful communications between faith communities around the world, he emphasized the need for MLTs to turn this mission inwards as they engage with the plurality of perspectives present at the conference. In addition, Dr. Al-Naimi stressed the importance of concrete follow-up and community building activities after the conference, saying, "I don't just want a conference where we can get together for three or four days and then go home with some nice memories of a beautiful country. Dialogue and the sharing of collective wisdom must be transformational."



Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi, Director of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, welcomes participants to the 2009 MLT conference in Doha

Daisy Khan, Co-Founder of MLT Program and ASMA Executive Director

Khan shared her own unlikely path to leadership, tying this to the story of the MLT. She described her childhood in Kashmir, her career in the U.S. as an architect, and how the event of 9/11 propelled her into leadership and full-time work at ASMA. Calling this "my story," Khan urged participants to share and listen to



Daisy Khan, Executive Director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement

each other's stories of courage, passion, and leadership, which together, form the collective MLT "*story of us.*" She concluded with the "*story of now,*" a reminder of the tremendous challenges and unprecedented opportunities ahead, as well as the MLTs' mandate to take action and make their respective communities, nations, and world more tolerant, just, and peaceful. She insisted that this MLT story and movement must apply a vision for inspiring and empowering one another, for teaching each other how to become better leaders, and for collective change. Finally, Khan encouraged participants to make the MLT program their own, to invest in it, use it for their benefit, and give back.

Values to Action: The Story of Us and What We Stand For

Plenary Session: Background Information

Today, strong Muslim leadership is both a necessity and an opportunity for transforming some of our most intractable and pressing problems. It is necessary because Islam is increasingly implicated in many critical issues. It is an opportunity because young Muslims are leading efforts to confront growing local and global challenges by bringing shared Islamic values into their work, inspiring shared and transformative action. The MLT program and movement arrives, therefore, at a critical time for both the *ummah* and the world.

Central Questions

- Why have I chosen the route of leadership? What drives my work?
- What are the core challenges I've faced, the choices I've made, and the successes I've achieved?
- Why is the MLT uniquely positioned to offer critical solutions to local and global problems?
- What are the shared values that guide the MLT and can inspire this group's shared action?

Participants

Moderator

Haroon Moghul (USA)

Panelists

Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur (USA)

Elshad Iskandarov (Azerbaijan)

Famile Arslan (Netherlands)

Zafar Ullah Jan (Pakistan)

Baber Saeed Siddiqi (UK)

Muna AbuSulayman (Saudi Arabia)

Summary of Remarks

Moderator *Haroon Moghul* opened the plenary with the *hadith*: "*The merciful will be shown compassion by the Merciful to All. Show mercy to those on Earth and those in the heavens will show you mercy.*" Moghul described how the plenary will demonstrate, through the panelists' examples, how such values as mercy can be turned into concrete action.

Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur discussed the values that drive her – honesty, truth, and social justice. She imbibed these values during her childhood in a Muslim home, through her work within the diverse Muslim community, and by following the example of her role models: Nelson Mandela, Soujourner Truth, Nawal al-Saadawi, and Malcolm X. Abdul-Ghafur pointed to the momentous and timely nature of the gathering, urging participants to seize the opportunity to collectively create change.

Elshad Iskandarov stressed that in the current environment, MLTs must concentrate on their own potential impact as young people. He highlighted the work of such youth initiatives as the Islamic Conference Youth



MLTs as panelists during "Values to Action – The Story of Us and What We Stand For"

Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF) and the Youth Alliance of Civilizations. Iskandarov urged participants to relate their discussions to the events in Gaza.

Famile Arslan described a particularly tense period in the Netherlands, during which her nephew told her, “*Khala*, they don’t like us. The Dutch people don’t like the Muslims.” As she spoke, Arslan was visibly emotional, and she called the event a turning point in her life. Since, she has worked to encourage proactive – not simply reactive – value-based action amongst Muslims. Most recently, she helped found a European Muslim professional network with the aim of nurturing a culture of success and leadership amongst diverse Muslims. She concluded by saying that she hopes her nephew will be a part of this movement one day.

Zafar Ullah Jan fired up the crowd, enthusiastically urging them: “Leadership starts *here*. We are here to create new history. We are here to make this gathering, this opportunity a social revolution for change and betterment, for the extraordinary and beautiful life of the *ummah*.” He recognized the different manifestations of leadership depending on the specific community, though he insisted we share a similar journey of achievement and improving each other’s lives.

Baber Saeed Siddiqi recognized that to create actual change, we must engage with and utilize grassroots organizations. Leadership is a community affair. Siddiqi said that faith remains at the heart of his own motivations, and he looks to the passion-driven life of the Prophet as a model.

Muna Abu Sulayman opened her comments by stating that she does not stand not for Islamic values alone; rather, all religions share the same values. She then asked what is unique about Islam, answering “extreme justice.” Insisting that Muslims are called to action and to struggle for justice, Abu Sulayman said that she came to the conference to make this world a better place for her daughters.

Question and Answer

During the Question and Answer period, participants discussed some of the values that drive their own work: equal rights for women, fighting injustice, and mercy, for example. Abu Sulayman spoke about the role of empowering people with knowledge, resources, and skills, and she highlighted the MLT as an important group to do this. Abdul-Ghafur addressed the need to collaborate with other faith communities, especially in resolving conflict.

One participant challenged the MLTs to more fully live by certain Islamic values, namely avoiding alcohol and maintaining gender boundaries. This generated an intense debate in the room, as MLTs challenged him on his understanding of Islam and the tone of his question. Arslan concluded by thanking him for his courage in speaking his mind, but encouraged participants to work to improve themselves first.

MLT Values Charter

The “Values to Action” session appropriately concluded with Moghul presenting the MLT Values Charter. See Appendix C for this document, which highlights the MLTs’ core commitments to freedom, justice, pluralism, intellectual development, creativity, and leadership.

New Ideas and Competing Values

Plenary Session: Background Information:

Today, we as Muslim leaders are increasingly called to engage new ideas that many claim are in competition or conflict with the core values of Islam. The tension between intellectual openness and the need to preserve certain central Islamic tenets—often framed as a clash between Islamic and Western values—has resulted in varied Muslim responses, including the attempts of some to preserve Islam by emphasizing ‘original’ Islamic values and rejecting ideas perceived as ‘un-Islamic.’ Many, however, view this approach as too defensive in nature. As Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, we must keep our *ummah* at the forefront of global advancement by ascertaining which Islamic values need to be highlighted—and how we should draw on them—to better deal with

global issues; and, in the process, *proactively* reconcile new ideas with these core values, if and when necessary.

- Muslims admire “adherence to Islamic values” more than any other aspect of the Muslim/Arab World. Conversely, few associate “adopting Western values” with Muslim political and economic progress. - *Gallup World Report, 2007*
- "I think the challenge for contemporary Muslim societies is to create their own modernity. Why should modernity be defined with a single Western perspective? They need to appreciate the contemporary world, use contemporary technologies, establish centers of science and learning, critique modernity and see how Muslim societies can be modern yet transform modernity from within." - *Zia Sardar, British Museum*
- “What we want to do instead is trigger a renaissance in Egypt, rooted in the religious values upon which Egyptian culture and society is built; for we believe these values can effectively deal with the obstacles that have hindered reform and development.” - *Khairat el-Shatir, Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt*

Central Questions

- Are there certain Islamic values that are in conflict with “Western” values? If so, what are these values?
- What Islamic values are most critical to dealing with contemporary local and global problems?
- Which sectors most successfully draw from Islamic values and/or integrate Islamic values with contemporary, non-Islamic values in their work?

Participants

Moderator

Shamil Idriss(USA)

Panelists

Imam Abu `Eesa Niamatullah (UK)

Mona Eltahawy (USA)

Malik Dahlan (Saudi Arabia)

Osama Saeed Butta (Scotland)

Madiha Younis (Pakistan)

Moderator's Opening

Shamil Idriss began by introducing the subject and discussing his experience as a Muslim growing up in the West, saying that “this is a fundamental issue.” Speaking of his own two daughters, he asserted that the way Muslims confront values in their societies is crucial in part because it impacts the way they raise their children. For Muslims not growing up in the West, he said, Western values are transmitted globally more so than any other cultural products. Speaking of lessons that his experience working at the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations has taught him, Idriss asserted that “what we call a value difference is not really specific to Islam, but rather in different times over history, the same values are being stressed differently.”



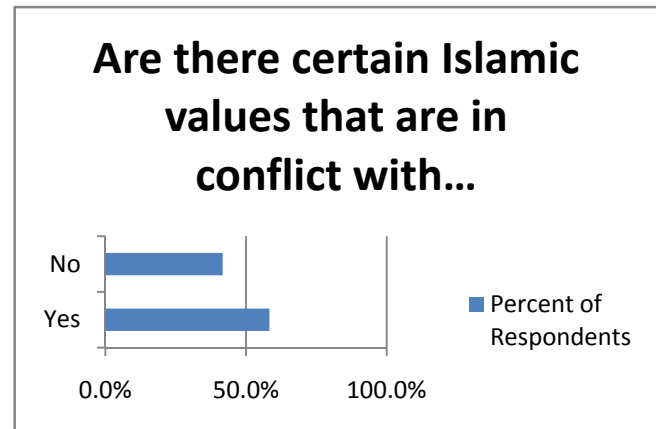
MLTs listening to panelists' remarks during the “New Ideas and Competing Values” plenary session

Instant Polling

After Idriss's remarks, the audience was polled on the question of "Are there certain Islamic values that conflict with Western values?"

Summary of Panelists' Remarks

Mona Eltahawy opened her remarks by referencing the late professor Samuel Huntington, saying: "while I wish he rests in peace, I wish to bury with him the idea of the 'clash of civilizations.' If there is one thing I learned from living in different cultures and societies, there are no Western values and Islamic values, but rather all of these are human values." Eltahawy cited her own experience as a Muslim who has "moved between the so-called 'East' and 'West.'" According to Eltahawy, the world should use its many declarative values charters as a tool to bring people together rather than divide them.



Imam Abu `Eesa Niamatullah warned that "we should be very specific when dealing with huge topics like values." What we often think of as values, he asserted, can be broken down into smaller principles that come from disparate sources like religion and secular tradition. And, he pointed out, this structure cannot be "claimed only be the West," as many Muslims seek to distinguish between religious injunctions and those values that arise from historical cultural influences.

Osama Saeed Bhutta claimed that the freedom and openness enshrined in the message of Islam caused it to spread where and when it did; and it is because of these qualities that "people were able to be creative and speak out." Bhutta went on to say that "we have to re-claim our heritage," asserting that "we were strongest when we were at our most open and we are at our weakest when we are the opposite." As a solution to the current situation, Bhutta posited a more positive approach to the contemporary discourse on modern Islamic values, saying that "we have to stress the unique parts of our faith."

Madiha Younas began by citing her own experience living in a Muslim-majority country, saying that "many people are concerned with what will happen when their youth start to live like the West." However, the East-West frame, according to Younas, is not a useful one, as values differ not between "civilizations" but between individuals living in different areas. In Pakistan, for example, "it is a value for women to be absent from public life, which means that girls there are not going to school. Half of their population is practically imprisoned, [which is against Islam,]" said Younas. The real difficulty, she explained, is to determine the differences between Islamic and Western values if there in fact are any.

Malik Dahlan took particular issue with the question of free speech, saying that this value "is not absolute in the West alone; this is the same for Islam." Continuing to speak about freedom in Islam, he explained that "we confuse perceptions of Islam as a strict religion and we go back to the idea that no compulsion in religion is a maxim in life for the past 14 centuries. All of us in this room have the freedom not to submit." To consolidate his point, he cited a verse from Mohammed Iqbal: "The weak Muslim objects by the will of God, but the strong Muslim is the actual realization of God's will." Dahlan then drew attention to the Gaza crisis, urging MLTs to forget any perceived differences in values to work together at this time of need.

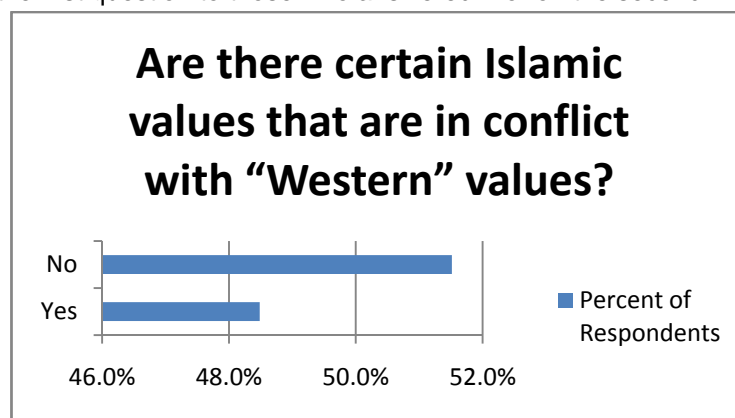
Questions and Answers

During the Q&A period that followed the panelists' presentations, several participants asked questions and made comments directed to the need to deconstruct categories and associations into which Muslims are automatically grouped. In particular, panelists and MLT participants debated the utility of paradigms of classification such as secular/extreme Muslims and Muslim/Western values.

At play also during the Q&A was the issue of absolute value standards across time. Dahlan responded to a question on this point by saying that "there was a reason that the Prophet Muhammad (SAWS) did not prescribe a system of government; because at the time it would have meant something and today [it means] something else."

Instant Polling

After the Q&A, the audience was polled again. The responses displayed a remarkable shift from those who answered "yes" on the first question to those who answered "no" on the second.



Recommendations

- Develop new language that allows us to frame the question of values conflicts without encouraging erroneous dichotomies such as Islam/West, secular/extreme, etc
- The world should use its many declarative values charters as a tool to bring people together rather than divide them
- In discussing the differences in values across societies, we should make an attempt to deconstruct what seem to be larger "values" into smaller principles that are independent of cultural or historical context
- Muslims should stress the unique parts of their faith rather than passively accept its similarities to other religions as its defining features
- Disagreements resulting from real or perceived clashes of values should be set aside in order to meet the pressing challenges that all Muslims face

Track Sessions

The 2009 MLT conference featured small breakout sessions to follow the "New Ideas and Competing Values," "Religious Authority: Crisis or Freedom?" and "Tackling Violent Extremism: Our Responsibility" plenary sessions. These sessions were termed "track sessions" as each represented a specific breakdown of participants along

first geographic (Track Session A) or professional lines (Track Sessions B and C). The geographic category deemed most relevant was region of origin, as participants would have the opportunity to network with others that they might be encouraged to collaborate with simply because of physical proximity. Regions selected for track sessions included Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East, North America and South Asia. For specific explanations, see Appendix B.

For the second and third track sessions (B and C), participants were divided into professional categories allowing them to meet and collaborate with individuals working in similar spheres in different areas of the world. The

professional orientations selected were Arts, Business, Community, Cross-Cultural, Gender, Internet, Justice/Law, Media, Policy, Religion, Thought and Youth. For specific explanations, see Appendix B.



MLTs participate in a facilitated track session

To fit the natural seating arrangement of the main plenary space of the Doha Marriott Hotel, individual tracks (such as “Asia” or “Business”) were broken down into tables of between eight and fourteen participants each. Each table was assigned a “facilitator,” who was informed of and committed to his/her role in advance of the conference. Informal briefing sessions for all facilitators were held on the night of January 16th after the opening dinner. Format sheets distributed to the track facilitators charged them with keeping time, managing the substance of the discussion at their table, and filling in a one-page evaluation form at the end of the session. As the results from these forms show, 88% of facilitators believed that the conversation at their tables was “interesting, enjoyable, original, productive, and revolved around the subjects contained in the relevant concept paper.”

Lunch Session

Presentation on Emir Abdul Kader by Author John Kiser

During lunch on the conference’s second day, author John Kiser delivered a brief lecture on the subject of his new book entitled “Commander of the Faithful: A Story of True Jihad.” The work, which was published in 2008, narrates the life and career of Emir Abd el-Qader, the 19th Century Algerian Sufi scholar-warrior who became a cultural icon from the Middle East to Iowa, where a town is named in his honor. As next steps, Kiser traveled with MLT Azhar Hussein to Pakistan where he presented his work to local religious leaders who will soon publish an Urdu translation; he is also planning to produce a film on the same subject. After the discussion, Kiser invited each MLT participant present to take one of his books as a gift.

Freedom or Crisis: Evolving Forms of Religious Authority

Plenary session: Background Information

With the expansion of literacy across the globe and the diversification of means to access information, Muslims today face both the challenge and opportunity to choose from many different authorities. At the same time, as more and more Muslims directly engage with their faith intellectually, traditional structures of authority are being reshaped. The activism of feminist NGOs in Southeast Asia in reforming Islamic family law, the rise of Muslim televangelists and the growing phenomenon of the online mufti (“Shaikh Google”), are all sites where traditional authority is being renegotiated and recast to accommodate the changing needs of Muslims today. While this can lead to misinformation and misinterpretation, it also presents an opportunity for increased knowledge-sharing.

- “For the first time in history, Muslims from every land and condition — a preacher in Harlem, a terrorist in Mombasa, a political party leader in Kuala Lumpur, a feminist in Marrakesh — can access a worldwide audience as easily as traditional authorities like a Shaikh al-Azhar in Cairo, an ayatollah in Najaf or a royally appointed mufti in Riyadh. Moreover, the devaluation of the old authorities by the modernizing regimes of the 19th and 20th centuries, and the creation of mass youth literacy by these same governments, have led many Muslims on the edge to believe that they are free to choose whatever brand of Islam best suits their circumstances.” - *Dr. Richard Bulliet, Columbia University*
- On Amr Khaled: "The fact that he has no training has actually given him additional legitimacy, as people are tired of the traditional clergy who have not kept up with the current dilemmas facing the young and who present Islam in ways that are archaic and boring." - *Radwan Masmoudi, Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy*

Central Questions

- Will the lack of religious authority ultimately lead to a more democratic interaction between religious communities and state power in Muslim societies?
- How can people who have been educated in traditional institutions of learning keep up with changing trends in communications?
- What must MLTs do given the lack of clear authority in many fields?



Participants

Moderator

Shaukat Warraich (UK)

Panelists

Nadeem Kazmi (UK)

Necmettin Kizilkaya (Turkey)

Nur Hidayat (Indonesia)

Yasir Qadhi (USA)

Laila Al-Zwaini (Netherlands)

Seemi Ghazi (Canada)

MLTs as panelists during “Freedom or Crisis: Evolving Forms of Religious Authority”

Summary of Remarks

Nadeem Kazmi emphasized that though religious authority is necessary, ordinary Muslims must challenge these authorities when they offer unjust or illogical opinions. Specifically, he mentioned the recent Saudi Arabian *fatwa* condoning marriage with girls as young as 10.

Necmettin Kizilkaya reiterated that authority depends on knowledge and is inherited from the Prophet, quoting the *hadith*, “*The scholars are the heirs of the prophets. The prophets bequeathed neither a dinar nor a dirham, they bequeathed knowledge.*” Kizilkaya defined the fundamental problem in modern Muslim societies as the decreased importance of knowledge, and he recommended that Muslims build the *ummah* upon the firm basis of knowledge obtained through divine revelation and the intellect.

Nur Hidayat spoke on the diversification of access to information within the Indonesian pesantren context. While he affirmed the *ulama*’s role in knowledge transmission, he insisted that their authority must be based on personal integrity and public trust, as well as an understanding of their community’s needs. In order to effectively

do so, Indonesian peasants are now utilizing technology and novel communications tools as a means for increased learning and development in their institutions, a development the Nahdlatul Ulama have embraced.

Yasir Qadhi highlighted the role of Islamic scholarship in creating flourishing societies. He pointed to radical changes in the last 200 years of the *ummah*, including a decline in the *ulama's* once seminal role. As a result, calls for reform today are largely disconnected from these religious authorities. Qadhi insisted that the *ulama* must again be at the core of creating such thriving societies. Therefore, Muslim communities must inspire the best and brightest minds to become religious authorities, in order to create a new breed of scholars who understand Islam and their specific contexts.

Laila al-Zwaini questioned whether or not access to diverse sources of religious authority, in addition to the traditional *ulama*, constitutes a crisis. She rejected the notion that religious knowledge and authority should be restricted to learned jurists, as opposed to intellectuals, lawyers, or even “Joe Hussein the plumber.” For al-Zwaini, this expanded access represents a distinctly positive transformation. She recommended that intellectuals bridge the gap between the various systems of law: international, national/constitutional, and Shari’ah.

“We all have a sapling to plant, and our Prophet (saw) gives us the authority to plant it.”

- *MLT Seemi Ghazi*

Seemi Ghazi stated that in the classical period, *fiqh* was part of a larger, sophisticated pattern of overlapping religious authorities which included such modalities as *futuwa'*, *adab*, poetry, and mysticism. Together, these multiple authorities speak to Muslims. Ghazi concluded by saying, “I am no *faqihah* but I do have an inner *ilm*, and I write, lead *dhikr*, and recite Qur’an. I act with the blessed authority of my parents and teachers, my students, and an inner discernment. We all have a sapling to plant, and our Prophet (saw) gives us the authority to plant it.”

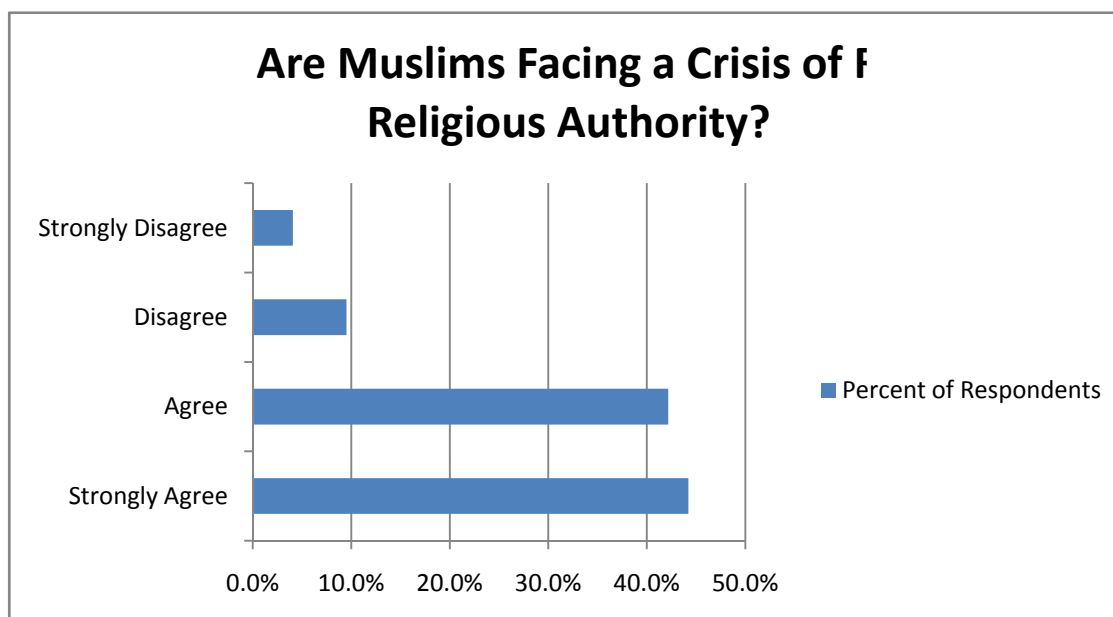
Moderator *Shaukat Warraich* reminded participants that they were living through an information revolution. He encouraged the group to consider how to ride this wave and utilize it to their advantage in creating change.

Question and Answer

During the Question and Answer period, participants questioned the panelists on who holds the legitimacy to interpret the faith and whether the rules to do so have changed. One participant highlighted the Qur’anic injunction to “Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know” as evidence for the role of religious authority and requisite training to interpret.

Kazmi, however, insisted on the importance of intellectual inquiry and the right of every Muslim to question rulings they find ethically objectionable. Qadhi recognized that the classical schools have been re-drawn in the modern period, thus fundamentally altering the landscape of religious authority and legitimacy.

Instant Polling



Moderator *Shaukat Warraich* concluded the panel by iterating that every crisis comes with an opportunity.

Recommendations

- Ordinary Muslims must challenge standing religious authorities when they offer unjust or illogical opinions
- Muslims should build the *ummah* upon the firm basis of knowledge obtained through divine revelation and the intellect
- Muslim communities must reform as necessary to inspire the best and brightest minds to become religious authorities, in order to create a new breed of scholars who understand Islam within their specific contexts
- Religious authority should be expanded further to include intellectuals who can bridge the gap between the various systems of “secular” law – such as international law, national/constitutional law, etc. – and Shari’ah
- Muslim communities should take advantage of the openness and access furnished by the current information revolution to create change more effectively

Track Session

The plenary session was followed by a brief track session during which MLT participants hailing from similar professional backgrounds convened in small groups to discuss the themes posited in the “central questions” (see above).

Special Gaza Session

Participants:

Moderator: *Daanish Masood (United Nations Alliance of Civilizations)*

Panelists:

Dana Al Kohloud (Al Fakhoora)

Farooq Burney (Reach Out to Asia)

Darya Sheikh (One Voice Movement)

Amirah al-Hussaini (Global Voices)

Summary:

In a special and impromptu session on the recent crisis in Gaza, participants were asked to consider specific aid and rehabilitation efforts. The session aimed to mobilize the MLT network to contribute to concrete and practical projects that would bring relief to the victims of Gaza following the impending ceasefire. Though the session was shorter in length than others (due to its late inclusion in the program), it provided opportunities for representatives from Al-Fakhoora, Reach Out to Asia, One Voice Movement and Global Voices to present on the specific solutions that their respective initiatives offered to help ameliorate the situation in Gaza.

Proposals discussed including long- and short-term needs to:

- Ensure that youth living in war zones are guaranteed access to educational tools and opportunities to become future leaders
- Use the internet to mobilize aid for reconstruction efforts
- Foster citizen-to-citizen relationships between Israelis and Palestinians that help improve the possibility of long-term peace.

Marketplace of Ideas

In an **Open Forum** session, MLTs showcased their own efforts and initiatives. At the “Marketplace of Ideas,” participants browsed the work of their fellow MLTs, hundreds of items including a Persian hip hop album, a pamphlet outlining projects combating female genital mutilation in Egypt, a DVD on religious efforts in Syria promoting interfaith work, a book on *hadith* criticism, Chinese art, and much more. The projects, all aiming for positive change, were arranged according to the MLTs’ various leadership categories: opinion, civil, cultural, servant, religious, and philanthropic. All told, more than 100 project brochures and other materials in more than ten languages were displayed on the tables.



MLTs help themselves to more than 100 printed materials at the conference’s “Marketplace of Ideas”

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2009

Continuing in the format of the previous day, the 2009 MLT conference's second day opened with a plenary session entitled "Tackling Violent Extremism: Our Responsibility." The focus then shifted to trends in engagement with local and international media as discussed in a subsequent plenary, "Framing and Messaging in the Media." Continuing with this theme, participants split into smaller group trainings after lunch in which they learned specific techniques and skills related to media and communications at the hands of experts in the field. Participants were then led outside for a group photo, after which they reconvened in the main hall for the conference's final session and closing ceremony. The 2009 MLT conference then concluded with participants boarding waiting buses to Education City, where they had the opportunity to observe a special edition of the Doha Debates.

Tackling Violent Extremism: Our Responsibility

Plenary Sessions-Background Information:

Regardless of provocation, we must recognize that some members of our *ummah* have used violence to approach both internal and external disputes. Some contend that non-Muslims must first halt their aggression before Muslims should curtail any violence against them. Others support extremists' causes in the name of greater justice, even though they are uncomfortable with the violence associated with them; still others champion non-violence from all quarters and without pre-condition. As Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, we must respond to the challenge of reducing violent impulses within our communities while promoting our message of tolerance and peace to the entire world.

- In "A Common Word between Us and You," 138 Muslim scholars and religious figures convened to declare, in part, that violence between the Muslim World and the West imperils "The very survival of the world." - *A Common Word, 2007*
- Increasingly, the aspect of the Muslim World that Muslims say they "admire least" is "narrow-minded fanaticism and violent extremism." - *Gallup World Poll, 2006*
- Sheikh Yusuf Qaradawi has said that "Islam sees an aggression on innocent lives [as] a major sin whose doer deserves punishment in this life and in the hereafter." – *IslamOnline, 2005*
- 86% of Pakistanis and 80% of Iranians believe that "terrorist attacks are never justified." – *John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, 2007*

Central Questions:

- What sector holds the *primary* responsibility to combat extremism?
- Is it possible to encourage Muslim diversity of opinion while curbing the influence of extremists?
- Do Muslims and non-Muslims share equal responsibility in taking steps to reduce Muslim extremism?
- What can the MLT program do to combat extremism?

Participants:

Moderator

Arsalan Iftikhar (USA)

Panelists

Azhar Hussein (Pakistan)

Hisham Hellyer (UK)

Mona Sheikh (Denmark)

Saqeb Mueen (UK)

Shaarik H. Zafar (USA)

Zulfiqar Majid (India)

Summary of Remarks:

Azhar Hussein emphasized that extremists have long used religion, and he cited the example of the Klu Klux Klan in the U.S. Similar to extremist groups in Muslim contexts, the KKK manipulated religion in order to convince others that their identity is under attack. Hussein contended that the best anecdote to this problem is community-based activism, that Muslims themselves must solve their own identity issues and combat extremism. He cited his own work with the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy (ICRD), which has trained more than 2000 Pakistani *madrassa* leaders and *ulama* in peace, conflict resolution and reconciliation.

Hisham Hellyer discussed the post-9/11 and 7/11 shift amongst UK policymakers towards equalizing issues of integration and citizenship with radicalization and terrorism. While recognizing that these issues are, at least to some extent, linked, Hellyer expressed disappointment that the study of Muslim communities has become centered on radicalization and violence.

Mona Sheikh asked, 'what are the root causes of violent extremism?' She maintained that while violence and injustice cannot be tied to Islam, religion nevertheless constitutes an important factor for many perpetrators of terrorism, in addition to occupation, unjust policies, and the integration debates within European and American contexts. In fact, extremists frequently justify their actions with verses from Qur'an and understandings of theology. Thus, Sheikh insisted that Muslims must step forward and recognize the responsibility to take on the theological debates and discuss perceptions of martyrdom, jihad, and paradise, and when violence is truly justified.

Saqeb Mueen highlighted the need to clearly state those core principles and non-negotiable issues. For example, anything that causes the deaths of innocent people, children and women – whether terrorism or any use of violence to settle inter-faith and intra-faith disputes – is abhorrent and unacceptable. Mueen identified the just war tradition in Islam as of critical importance to these debates and insisted that conscientious Muslims must reclaim this discourse.

Shaarik H. Zafar reflected on his own experience working in the U.S. and Europe, arguing that governments must apply a robust enforcement of civil and human rights. For example, if a girl wants to wear *hijab* and schools say she cannot, the government must intervene and ensure that her human rights are protected. Therefore, if communities are upset with specific policies, foreign or domestic, they will utilize the legal process. Zafar argued that in this way, the marginalized moves to the center.

Zulfiqar Majid declared, "We can kill terrorists but not terrorism," referencing the prevalence of gross human rights violation across the globe. Majid insisted that the global community must dislodge terrorism, rather than exploiting it for national interests.



MLTs as panelists during "Tackling Violent Extremism: Our Responsibility"

Moderator *Arsalan Iftikhar* tied the discussion together, pointing out how the issue of violent extremism revolves around the creation of meta-narratives. He contended that the global Muslim community must take ownership of *both* the good that it does *and* the issues it must remedy. By focusing exclusively on the good, people outside the community will monopolize this meta-narrative. Iftikhar pointed to the MLT community – its remarkable diversity and commitment to improving communities – as an important meta-narrative that must be promoted. He declared himself a “proud Muslim pacifist.”

“Questions and Answers”

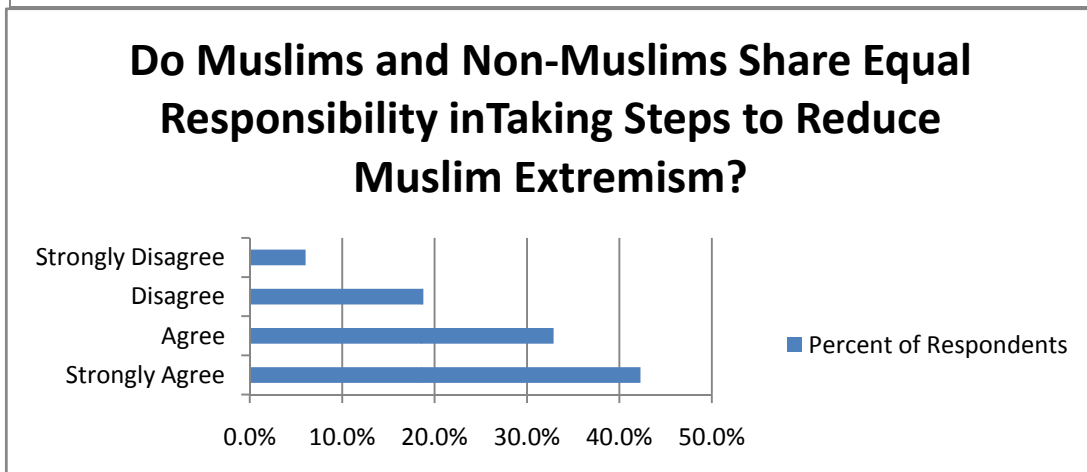
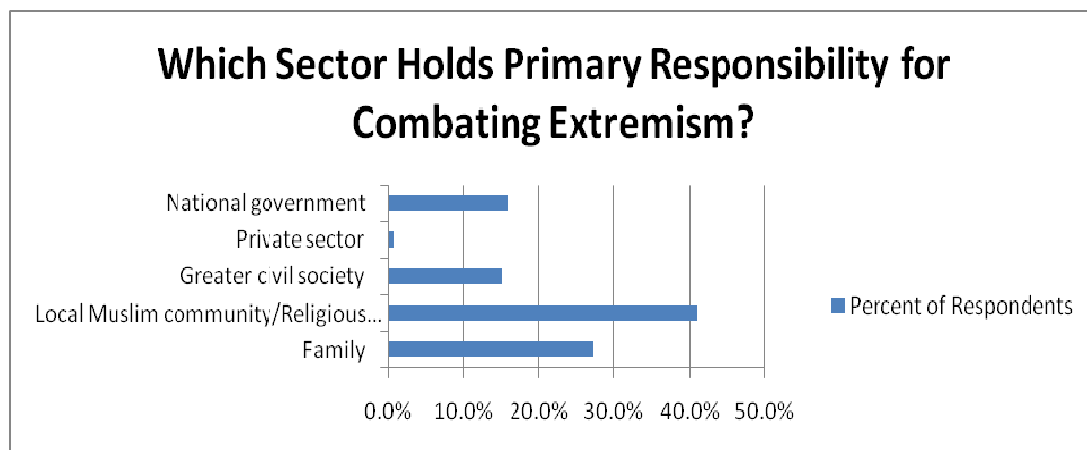
During the Questions and Answers period, some participants highlighted the media’s responsibility to promote such efforts as the Amman Message. When Muslims stand up to extremism, they insisted, their message is not effectively heard.

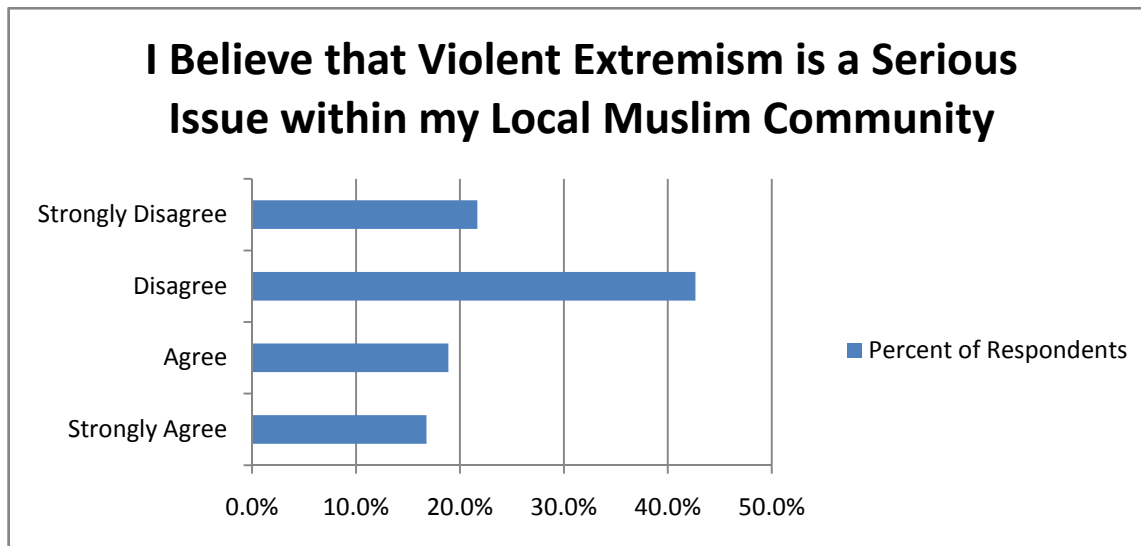
Others participants said that Muslims must do more than simply condemn extremism. Rather, they must produce counter-discourses and counter-narratives to militant jihad, which attracts some Muslims because of its firm condemnation of Western foreign policy.

Finally, participants insisted that while they can declare themselves to *not be part of the problem* of terrorism, this does not preclude them from *being part of the solution*.

Instant Polling:

For complete data, please see Appendix I.





Recommendations

- Train *ulama* in extremism-susceptible countries and conduct conflict resolution and reconciliation training in conflict areas as part of *madrassa* reform.
- Enforce civil rights and utilize legal processes to address grievances, in order to place the most marginalized – and potentially radicalized – squarely in the center.
- Promote more robust discussions and debates surrounding such issues as legitimate violence, martyrdom, and *jihad*.
- Create counter-narratives to militant *jihad*.
- Use media and public relations more effectively for such efforts as the Amman Message.

Track Session

The plenary session was followed by a brief track session during which MLT participants hailing from similar geographic backgrounds convened in small groups to discuss the themes posited in the “central questions” (see above).

Framing and Messaging in the Media

Training Session

Prior to the panel discussion on “Framing and Messaging in the Media”, Fenton Communications representative Robert Perez presented a short slideshow outlining the definitions of basic concepts in media analysis, including “frame,” “message,” etc. He introduced methods for how to manipulate these phenomena in order to optimize potential gains from engagement with the mass media.

Background Information

It is indisputable that local and international media help shape perceptions and set agendas for public debates.

The media's power can have positive as well as negative effects—a fact affirmed ever more acutely in the Muslim-West context. While the media is often criticized for reproducing generalizations and simplistic assessments of complex problems, it can also be a potent force for challenging stereotypes and channeling new ideas and perspectives.

Central Questions

- How is the Muslim-West conversation being shaped in the media at present?
- What frames are most relevant to your work?
- What frames are most relevant to the MLTs as a whole?
- How has your work been impacted by media coverage?
- How can better messaging techniques improve the effectiveness of organizations or individuals in your field?

Participants

Moderator

Abdallah Schleifer (USA)

Panelists

Mohammed Wajihuddin (India)

Hassan Fattah (UAE)

Ethar El-Kataneh (Egypt)

Nadira Artyk (Uzbekistan)

Mina al-Oraibi (UK)

Asmaa Alariachi (Netherlands)

Sohail Nakhoda (Jordan)



Summary of Remarks

Abdallah Schleifer opened the discussion

as moderator by speaking briefly about his own experience as a longtime journalist in both the Arab World and the United States. Turning the microphone over to the panelists, he asked, “What do each of you think of framing in the context of the work you do?”

Mohammed Wajihuddin followed Schleifer’s comments with a brief exploration of some of the thorniest issues in Islamic theology that, when tackled by the Western media, have only served to denigrate the image of Islam. In particular, Wajihuddin spoke of the Muslim conception of the afterlife, describing how its essentialization in the Western press has led to the stripping of subtle nuances in favor of blunt emphasis on the notion that Muslim martyrs receive 72 virgins in the hereafter.

Hassan Fattah began his remarks by outlining what he termed a “few realities about journalists.” According to Fattah, “they are in a hurry, impatient, and see their amount of print and broadcasting shrinking.” Therefore, the task of MLTs is not to deny the existence of stereotypes but to combat them with nuanced arguments targeted to the specific incentives of journalists. “Nothing is more powerful than that connection,” he said.

Ethar El-Kataneh stated that the focus of media coverage in the United States is increasingly narrowing. “The difference in Egypt is that we have a large variety nowadays,” she explained. With more options for viewers, there are more ways of penetrating media biases – a key obstacle to objectivity.

MLTs as panelists during “Framing and Messaging in the Media”

Nadira Artyk discussed one particular frame with personal relevance to her own work, that which claims that “Islam subjugates women and does not respect women’s rights.” Stories about women who are empowered and respected more difficult to find in the Western media than stories that enforce this paradigm. “The pressure is not from the editors but from the audience readers,” she said, “who react to positive stories with skepticism and disbelief. “

Mina al-Oraibi continued by saying that media activists should be mindful of journalistic methods as they seek to change the dominant paradigms. “Most journalists would be interested to know that they encouraged massive stereotypes,” she claimed. Noting Fattah’s point about the special and temporal limitations facing journalists, al-Oraibi described her own attempts to “do justice” to current issues given that she often was allowed only 500 words in her piece.

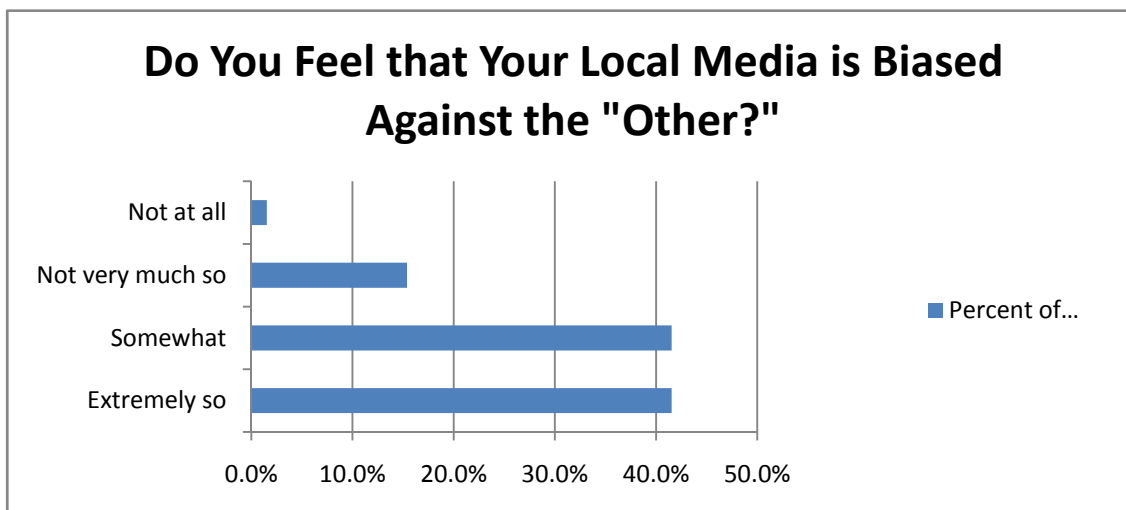
Asmaa Alariachi then described her own internal conflict as her work often makes her feel simultaneously “on the journalistic side and part of the audience.” Speaking about the Netherlands in particular, Alariachi said that the lack of censorship places her country in the international media spotlight more than it deserves to be.

Sohail Nakhooda closed the panel discussion by emphasizing that “it’s not enough to have a good story but you need to package it.” Combating structural bias, he continued, is a “dead end’ as little has changed since before 9/11 in terms of the ways in which journalists operate. Instead, Nakhooda offered an alternative solution - “let’s compete with them,” he said, stressing the need to do so responsibly with crafted strategies in place of “conspiracy theories.” Last, he decried the use of terms that lack key nuances, such as “Islam and the West.”

Questions and Answers

Following the panelists’ remarks, Schleifer opened the Q&A session by asking al-Oraibi about the frames that she encounters most frequently in her work. She responded that, as her work is primarily in current affairs, she routinely encounters all that had been discussed. She added that, working in Arabic, there are certain words that reinforce or discourage frames simply by the way in which they are translated.

Questions asked by the audience tackled additional subjects such as the on-screen pressure to conform to viewer prejudice (specifically regarding the wearing of the headscarf for women), the relative independence of the blogosphere versus traditional media, the difficulty of covering the Muslim World while residing in the West and the place of social responsibility and activism in journalism. In response, panelists generally emphasized the need for balance in their responses



Capacity-Building Trainings

For the first time ever, the 2009 MLT conference featured a 180-minute block of concurrent skill-building training sessions led by experts in several critical areas to help MLTs amplify their message to larger communities more effectively. MLT participants were offered the chance to view training descriptions and trainer biographies and select their top three choices prior to the conference via the online registration system put in place in December, 2008. Most participants (about 70%) received their first choice, and the remainder received their second choice. No participants received their third choice training.



Trainer Randy Benn lectures during "Effective Issue Advocacy"

The trainings offered included:

- "Effective Issue Advocacy", offered by Randy Benn
- "Influencing Perception in the Arab World," offered by Ramzi Khoury
- "What's Your Message?", offered by Robert Perez, Yasmin Hamidi and Rashid Shabazz of Fenton Communications, Inc.
- "Producing Viewer-Created News", offered by Abdallah Schleifer
- "Blogging and New Media", offered by Hussein Rashid, Amirah Al-Husseini and Farid Pouya
- "Leadership and Movement Building", offered by Nisreen Haj Ahmed

For training descriptions and trainer biographies, please see Appendix A.

Closing Plenary Session and Ceremony

The closing plenary of the MLT conference focused on MLT sustainability beyond the Doha conference. The panelists discussed MLT chapter building to strengthen the network, foster more leaders and peer-to-peer learning through MLT mentoring, and engaging with the MLT network and the world through the MLT website, Facebook, MySpace, and other social networking tools.

Participants

Moderator

Rushda Majeed (India/USA)

Panelists

Imam Yahya Pallavicini (Italy)

Jihad F. Saleh (USA)

Rahim Moloo (Canada)

Summary of Remarks

Imam Yahya Pallavicini discussed MLT chapter development around the world. Imam Pallavicini said that the global nature of the network demanded the creation of locally based chapters that encourage fidelity to the network and to serve as a practical organizing tool for the network to further its goals.

Proposing a slightly decentralized model, Imam Pallavicini stressed that MLT chapters should be loose and dynamic enough to adapt themselves to the contexts and needs in various countries. While MLT chapters may differ for Muslim-minority and Muslim-majority countries, the aim should be to create a global leadership that is also connected at the local level.

Imam Pallavicini also emphasized the need to distinguish between chapter-building and knowledge-sharing. A key factor in successful chapter development is coordination from the center. However, the coordination should be loose enough to allow chapters to adapt themselves to the local context.

Jihad Saleh discussed MLT mentoring between current and future MLTs. This would include peer-to-peer learning through sharing best practices. It would also encourage the current batch of MLTs to serve as mentors and teachers for new MLTs that enter the network. Mr. Saleh emphasized the importance of sharing one's knowledge and skills with others in the service of the worldwide Muslim community.

Rahim Moloo presented the new MLT website and MLT social networking as features of the global MLT program. He ran a short demonstration of the current MLT website (located at www.muslimleadersoftomorrow.org), pointing out the various features that will update MLTs about the work of other MLTs, keep the network connected, and serve as a resource center for media. In addition, Mr. Moloo showcased the MLT Facebook, MySpace and Flickr pages so that all members can contribute to it and remain connected.

After the closing plenary on MLT sustainability, Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi and Daisy Khan gave closing addresses.

Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi

Speaking once more after opening the conference, Dr. Al-Naimi remarked that he had personally enjoyed the conference and believed the participants to have done the same. Thanking ASMA and the staff who had worked hard to create the event, he expressed hope for the effective completion of follow-up activities during the post-conference period.

Daisy Khan

Continuing the theme and tone of her earlier remarks, Khan praised the leadership skills and enterprise of the MLTs present and their commitment to both their own constituencies and the global Muslim community. Speaking of the past, she pointed out how far the MLT program had come since its genesis in 2004; of the future, she urged MLTs to carry out her vision of a global Muslim leadership community. Last, Khan expressed her “deepest gratitude” to the conference’s host, DICID, and the other Qataris who were involved for their “phenomenal hospitality and support.”

Before leaving the podium, Khan presented a plaque of honor to Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser al Missned in absentia through a representative.

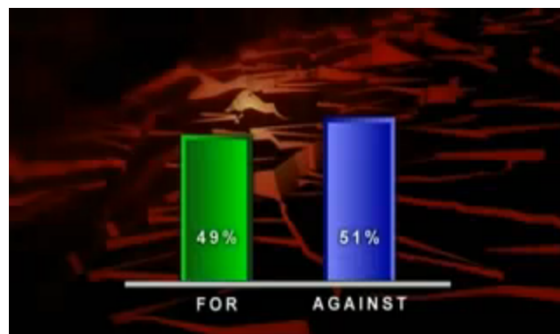
Doha Debates

For the final event of the 2009 MLT Conference, participants visited Doha’s Education City, where they were given the opportunity to watch the BBC’s “Doha Debates.” MLTs Sarah Joseph, Editor-in-Chief of *Emel Magazine*, and Imam Yahya Pallavicini, Vice President of CO.RE.IS (Comunita Religiosa Islamica), participated in the debates. A number of MLTs watched from the live studio audience, while others enjoyed the debate from overflow rooms near the Doha Debates’ studio.

The motion, “This House believes that political Islam is a threat to the West,” was rejected 49% to 51%. Joseph opposed the motion, while Pallavicini supported it.



Imam Yahya Pallavicini and Sarah Joseph participate in the Doha Debates



Vote on the motion, “This House believes that political Islam is a threat to the West.”



*300 Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow
January 18, 2009
Doha Marriott, Qatar*

MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2009

MLT Chapters

To facilitate the growth of the MLT network and advance its mission, ASMA proposed a network of chapters at the city, regional, and/or national level. Each of these chapters would function as a central organizing community for the members of the network. The chapters would also serve to increase visibility of the network and to create a sense of camaraderie amongst the members. The main purpose of the chapters would be to increase the visibility of MLTs and the values they represent while being a valuable resource to Muslims and non-Muslims.

On the morning of January 19, 2009 at the Doha Forum, ASMA facilitated a chapter building session which was attended by over 45 MLTs. The attendees were excited about this phase of MLT growth and offered many ideas and models to move this component of the MLT program forward.

The session touched upon the **need** to create a global leadership, one that is not focused on only one issue, sector, or region, and that connects Muslim leaders for sharing of knowledge and best practices. MLT chapters would serve as a means to strengthen a strong MLT identity, build an MLT community to nurture leadership amongst others, and create partnerships to naturally share and collaborate with others.

The **goals** of MLT chapters around the world would be to sustain MLT member affiliation and organizational partnerships, promote an elevated discourse on Islam and Muslims, organize events that address the intellectual and social concerns of a local community, function as information resource for local media outlets and research institutions, identify rising Muslim leaders eligible for MLT membership, and provide mentoring opportunities for MLTs.

Benefits of the MLT chapters would be access to a network of MLTs in their city, region, or country, give local MLTs the opportunities to act as a local media spokesperson on issues related to their personal skills and knowledge, give MLTs access to leadership training and professional development opportunities, and give MLTs access to online resources on MLT website.

Some of the key **recommendations** of the group were:

- Chapters should have one structure but loose/dynamic given the various contexts and needs
- Chapters should have a global structure (with central management), with local tailoring
- Chapter membership should be subscription based
- Chapters should be connected through common initiatives, issues, etc.
- Social networking and connectivity through an interactive website is key to chapter development
- Brand strongly coordinated from center, and we have faith in them
- Criteria for selection must be centralized through ASMA
- MLT should cooperate with other networks like the European Muslim Profession Network, CEDAR etc to find common initiatives. The MLT network must not seek to replicate their work and make clear that we recognize the work of others
- Thematic chapters are especially useful in situations of crisis, where MLT (because of its network) can best respond (crisis response) and focus on specific themes that link MLT chapters. These could be projects on youth, media, interfaith, and anti-radicalization
- Chapters must have realistic goals, yearly priorities, funding plan etc.
- All MLTs must agree with the MLT charter
- The first priority for chapter development must be forming a core group to move this forward

The participants also pointed out potential **challenges** to creating a structure that would be global yet local. The MLT group would need to carefully plan how to combine local contexts with global leadership needs while also making chapters relevant for different contexts around the world.

However, some MLTs stated **concerns** about chapter building. The MLT network is about exchanging ideas and sharing information, which can be done easily through annual conferences, social networking, and the MLT

website. Furthermore, MLTs would prefer to keep doing their own work and been connected to other such leaders. Most MLTs have many time constraints that would prevent them from contributing to formal chapters. One MLT suggested that a Davos model may be a good one to follow.

In terms of next steps, the participants suggested creating a sustainability plan that includes fundraising (local chapters should provide resources as well). Another suggestion was to encourage MLTs to make their skills known to others through the MLT website (themed chapters). In order to do this, the MLT website would have to be developed further to facilitate the process.

ASMA would launch **four chapters** in 2009. These would be launched according to geographic areas.

Mideast (Gulf) chapter: Two MLTs have shown interest in taking a lead on this. They are Imam Mohammad Daniel (Kuwait) and Riyaad Minty (Qatar).

Pakistan chapter: Azhar Hussain along with other Pakistani MLTs is interested in taking a lead on this.

European chapter: Imam Yahya Pallavicini will take the lead in developing this chapter.

US chapter: Minha Sheikh (DC) has already taken a lead in establishing this chapter.

The chapter development phase of the MLT program is one of its most exciting components. MLTs have repeatedly expressed interest in being connected through various methods beyond the annual conference. Chapters and a brand new MLT website fulfill this need. ASMA is currently working with an MLT advisory group to determine next steps in chapter development and future sustainability of the network.

CONFERENCE FINANCIALS

Budget vs. Actuals Report

Dates covered by this report: July 1, 2008 – April 30, 2009

Budget Category	Amount Allocated	Expended to Date (April 1, 2008-April 30, 2009)	Budget Remaining
INCOME			
TOTAL ALLOCATED	\$ 576,312		
1 st Installment received 11/18/08		\$ 230,525	
2 nd Installment received 12/26/08		\$ 201,709	
3 rd installment received 01/07/09		\$ 115,262	
	\$ 576,312	\$ 547,496	\$ 28,816
EXPENSES			
<i>(detailed expenditure lines highlighted in blue)**</i>			
PROJECT GOVERNANCE COSTS			
Working			
Committee Refreshments			
Governance Travel		\$ 14,948	
<i>Subtotal Governance Costs</i>	\$ 12,323	\$ 14,948	(\$2,625)
CONSULTANT COSTS			
Senior	\$67,527		
Consultant Accommodation & Meals	\$10,994		
Consultant Travel	\$10,905		
<i>Full-Time Project Team*</i>		\$114,250	
<i>Part-Time Consultant Costs</i>		\$5,943	
<i>Subtotal Project Consultant Costs</i>		\$120,193	
Conference Consultant Costs			
Accountant		\$1,000	
Photographer		\$2,159	
Videographer		\$4,800	
Video Editing		\$3,000	
Communications Consultant		\$6,000	
Graphic Consultant		\$5,000	
Web Design Consultant		\$7,950	
<i>Subtotal Conference Consultant Costs</i>		\$29,909	
<i>Subtotal Consultant Costs</i>	\$ 89,426	\$ 150,102	(\$60,676)
WORKSHOP/EVENT COSTS			
Venue Hire			
Conference	N/A		

Event Catering				
Daily	N/A			
Facilitator				
Nil	N/A			
Scribe (number of scribes)	N/A			
Participant Costs				
Participant Accommodation & Meals	N/A			
Participant Travel		\$397,830		\$290,640
Printing Costs				
Program, Brochure, Banners, Award, Concept Papers				\$12,231
Polling Devices				\$6,750
Folders				\$975
Name Badges				\$255
T-shirts, Tote bags, Table cloths, Lanyard, Key chains				\$9,398
Books for Distribution				\$5,169
Miscellaneous Costs				
Mailings/Office Supplies				\$1,000
Phone Charges				\$500
<i>Subtotal Workshop/Event Costs</i>		\$ 397,830	\$ 326,918	\$70,912
OPERATING EXPENSES	N/A			
ADDITIONAL OPERATING EXPENSES	N/A			
Qatar Visa	N/A			
CONTINGENCY (5%)		\$76,733		\$76,733
TOTAL PROJECT DEVELOPMENT COSTS / BUDGET		\$576,312	\$491,968	\$84,344
TOTAL AMOUNT RECEIVED		\$547,496	\$491,968	\$55,528
NET AMOUNT TO BE RECEIVED		\$28,816		\$28,816

** Please note that ASMA accounts will be formally audited and an audited statement, with a separate section on the MLT 2009 conference, will be submitted by November 5, 2009.

CONCLUSIONS

The 2009 MLT conference was the third such conference of the MLT program. It represented a growth in the program from a North America and Western Europe based one to a global one. With Doha, the MLT network also grew to 300 Muslim leaders in over 70 countries.

The Doha conference marked an exciting and important turning point in the history of the MLT. Several key outcomes of the conference indicate that the MLT program will only strengthen and grow through further peer-to-peer learning, skills training, media engagement, and chapter development. There were also key lessons learned at the Doha Forum, both during the planning and implementation phase. These lessons are documented below to serve as a guide for improving future events organized by ASMA or sponsored by the HHO in Doha.

Outcomes

- For the first time, Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow authored and signed, “An Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today from the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow”—a unique set of policy recommendations addressed to both Muslim and non-Muslim heads of state that was distributed across international media.
- The conference successfully convened 300 Muslim leaders from 70 countries around the world to further strengthen the MLT network.
- The conference’s “Marketplace of Ideas” successfully showcased multiple initiatives – founded and led by artists, philanthropists, social entrepreneurs, opinion leaders, civil society leaders, and religious leaders – that all aim for positive change.
- Apart from sharing their work with each other, MLTs sharpened their skills through media, leadership, and advocacy training. During these intensive training sessions, MLTs learn how to shape perceptions in the Arab world, using Gaza as a case study; produce viewer-created news; lobby the US Congress; speak to the media; blog and use other types of online social networking sites; and, lead social movements. Notably, one of Obama’s key ground campaign strategists led this last training.
- The conference increased the visibility of the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow program through wide media coverage in a variety of outlets around the world. These included USA Today, Christian Science Monitor, Newsweek, National Public Radio, Al Sharq Al Awasat, The Peninsula, The National, Gulf Times, UN Arab Radio, Times of India, Dawn, Jakarta Globe, (Japanese), along with a variety of blogs and online forums.
- The conference saw the launch of the MLT Charter. The MLT Charter encapsulates the core values that define the MLTs and bind them together. This document is essential for clarifying the purpose of the MLT and for future programming and recruitment.
- The conference also saw the launch of MLT chapters and mentorship components. In the closing session of the conference, MLTs discussed future programming including the development of worldwide MLT chapters and a mentorship component with the MLT.
- MLT online presence launched was also launched via new website and several social networking sites.
- Finally, the MLT conference further strengthened the MLT program brand through professional branding, marketing and publicity.

Lessons Learned

Key lessons of the 2009 MLT conference are based upon internal reflection, conversations with supporters and co-organizers, and participant feedback. They include the following points:

Procedural

Recommendation	Rationale
Work more closely with sponsors during conference implementation period	Some difficulties in communication could have been resolved with closer engagement between ASMA and the sponsoring organization
Follow proper protocol for presenting plaques, thank-yous, etc.to sponsors	Proper protocol was not explored sufficiently prior to the conference
Select crisis management group between sponsors and contractors	A specialized crisis management team might have better dealt with last-minute needs and difficulties as they arose
Debriefs to occur at mutually comfortable schedule	No comprehensive debriefing of conference activities was held between ASMA and the sponsoring organization
Facilitators and moderators should undergo better training prior to event	Lack of training and vetting impacted the quality and punctuality of some sessions
Follow-up on project milestones, including those set by the sponsor	Effective follow-up on each milestone as delineated in the working agreement might have led to more efficient and coordinate preparation on both ends
Create contingency plan for missed deadlines that impact overall project timeline, such as in the case of visa processing	Planning for unforeseen delays might have mitigated the effect of time lost on preparation
Clearly delineate roles and responsibilities of contracting team and affiliated organizations vis a vis the sponsor	There was confusion regarding specific roles and responsibilities, especially regarding the recruitment of Qatari participants
Allow more time for visa procurement	Had more time been allotted, there may have been a larger window for the sponsoring organization to facilitate the processing of visa applications

Logistical

Use walki-talkies for the internal conference planning team	Internal team communication was made difficult by the physical distance between rooms in the hotel – effective planning for internal communications technology may have mitigated these effects
Secretariat should be on the same floor as the conference	Significant time was lost in the transfer of information and materials between conference spaces and the team secretariat
Pre-select venue for group photo in advance	The late selection of a venue for the group photo meant that some training sessions had to be shortened

Programmatic

Conferences should be at least three full days	The lack of an extra day severely limited the amount of time participants could spend in between sessions and added to the daily agenda, exacerbating the general fatigue of both participants and staff
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Allow longer breaks between structured sessions	Longer breaks would have given participants a longer time to interact in an unstructured setting, taking advantage of networking opportunities
Allow more time for networking	More structured and unstructured networking opportunities would have helped strengthen the bonds between MLTs both at and after the conference
Do not schedule presentations during lunches or dinners	Presentations at mealtimes largely ran over schedule, contributing to the delay in the conference program
Plenary sessions should have fewer panelists	Smaller panels would give each session participant more time to speak, and a greater opportunity to delve deeper into the issue of discussion
Ensure greater quality and diversity of moderators in plenary sessions	Each moderator should be vetting for ability and commitment to keeping time in order to ensure that the conference program is not delayed further and that all attendants are satisfied with the level of the discussion
Allow for more time for Q&A with participants in plenary sessions	More Q&A would have given participants a greater opportunity to interact with panelists and provide feedback
Allow for more flexibility in the program in case unforeseen sessions need to be added	As the insertion of the Gaza session greatly burdened both the logistics team and the conference schedule, a higher level of contingency planning is needed to ensure that future last-minute demands are able to be met
Allow more time for track/breakout sessions	Many discussions in the track sessions had to be cut short as a result of the time limit
Facilitators should be trained for a longer period of time rather than a short briefing	Many facilitators were unable to fulfill their role or simply did not show up. Ensuring a longer and more in-depth briefing period might have helped limit this phenomenon
Less movement between tables in between track sessions would have ensured less confusion and more efficiency in beginning the session	Better logistics coordination might have given rise to solutions to this problem ahead of time
More track facilitators should be designated than necessary	The presence of extra trained facilitators to substitute for absent ones would have helped avoid confusion arising from facilitator absence
Fewer tracks should be created in order to minimize the need for specific people to sit at specific tables	The large number of tracks (Business, Arts, Community, etc.) added to the general confusion regarding table placement
Panels need to be representative of the diversity of participants	Some panels were not inclusive of the regional and/or national diversity present in the room. Participants failed to respond to repeated requests to be serve on panels. Some key panelists did not secure their visa in time for conference.

Next Steps

The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow program has moved from strength to strength. With the program now poised to grow and expand even further, ASMA plans to build up the program sustainability elements discussed at the conference. These include:

- Launch 4 pilot MLT chapters in 2009 in US, UK, Pakistan, and Middle East (regional);
- Build an MLT mentoring program within the MLT network;
- Launch a phase two of the MLT website (www.muslimleadersoftomorrow.org) with social networking components built in;
- Develop media skills of MLTs through a media conference on April 25-26, 2009 in New York City, USA;
- Develop specific policy recommendations and projects from the Open Letter to World Leaders of Today; and
- Develop leadership skills of MLTs through a leadership retreat in 2009.

In March 2009, ASMA convened a group of 12 MLTs to determine the strategic next steps for the MLT program. In intensive working sessions throughout the day, these MLTs discussed fundraising, branding, the website, and program governance. The working groups formed at the conference continue to work on their respective areas of interest. While the initial group consisted of MLTs from the US and UK, we are now expanding the working groups to include MLTs from around the world ensuring diversity and geographic representation.

ASMA convened 120 MLTs from around the US and Europe on **April 25-26, 2009** for two days of intensive media training. The conference built upon the skill building component of the Doha conference by offering trainings through leading journalists and consultants in the field. The conference enabled this group to work effectively with the media in promoting an accurate portrayal of Islam and Muslims. MLTs said that they left the conference better prepared to proactively engage it in their work or activism, as well as with an enhanced understanding of the coverage of Islam and Muslims.

At the conference, participants had the opportunity to:

- Develop specialized media skills through trainings such as “Messaging and Framing,” “Mastering the Interview,” “Media Rapid Response”, “Relationship building with Media”, “Self-Generated Media,” Round tables with local media and “Writing Op-Eds”
- Attend an evening panel discussion with prominent journalists and media personalities entitled, “Covering and Uncovering Islam in the Media.”
- Engage in fireside chats with prominent journalists including Rachel Zoll (Associated Press), Deborah Amos (National Public Radio), Bobby Ghosh (Time Magazine), Maria Ebrahimji (CNN), Noreen Ahmed-Ullah (Chicago Tribune), Mohamad Bazzi (Newsday and NYU), and Neil MacFarquhar (New York Times)
- Participate in learning journeys to media outlets in New York City including the United Nation Alliance of Civilizations, WBAI Radio, 1010WINS, *The Forward*, American Jewish Committee, Alliance, and NY1.

As a follow up to the **Open Letter** to World Leaders of Today presented at the conference and published in the Washington Post, copies of the letter were distributed to Embassies of approximately eighty countries around the world. Subsequent MLT policy activities will build upon the recommendations outlined in the Open Letter to engage policy makers and have a voice in policy that impacts Muslims worldwide.

As a follow up to the chapter development session, ASMA is consulting with key MLTs to set up chapters in 4 regions around the world. MLT interest in launching chapters in these regions, geographic distribution, and ASMA constituency (especially in the US) contributed to the decision in launching chapters in these regions.

Europe	Imam Pallavicini	Summer 2009
US	Minha Sheikh	Summer 2009
Mideast (Gulf)	Imam Daniel, Riyaad Minty	Fall 2009
Pakistan	Azhar Hussain	Fall 2009

ONLINE EVALUATIONS SUMMARY

ASMA conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the 2009 MLT conference through an online evaluation form. The evaluation was designed to analyze the conference logistics, plenary sessions, trainings, professional development of participants, and overall value. It also asked attendees to indicate their areas of interest in developing the MLT program further.

Some of the key responses are summarized below.

- 97.0% of the respondents found the MLT conference **extremely valuable** (59.0%) or very **valuable** (38.0%).
- 79.4% of the respondents found training and capacity building component of the conference **very beneficial** (43.1%) or **beneficial** (36.3%).
- 97.1% of the respondents found the networking component of the conference **very beneficial** (75.5%) or **beneficial** (21.6%).
- 97.0% of the respondents indicated that the MLT conference did extremely well (77.0%) or well (20.0%) in introducing them to Muslim leaders they would not have met otherwise.
- 95.0% found that learning from each other and sharing knowledge and best practices **very beneficial** (65.0%) or **beneficial** (30.0%).
- 95.9% found belonging to the worldwide MLT community **very beneficial** (73.7%) or **beneficial** (22.2%).
- 98.9% found making close and lasting connections with their peers **extremely valuable** (60.8%) or **valuable** (38.1%).
- 95.9% found developing a broader context and understanding of issues facing the worldwide Muslim community **extremely valuable** (55.1%) or **valuable** (40.8%).

Feedback on Future Trainings and Events:

- 58.9% of the respondents indicated that attending a leadership retreat in the future will help them in becoming an effective leader.
- 47.4% indicated that they would like to attend a media retreat.
- 44.2% indicated that they would like to attend an organizational capacity building training.
- 38.9% indicated that they would like to attend a conflict-resolution training.
- 34.7% indicated that they would like to attend a public speaking seminar.

ASMA also received comments and feedback from participants via email. This feedback was very positive with participants appreciating the planning and logistical arrangements, diversity of the group, mutual learning, and trainings. Participants also gave ASMA constructive feedback on how to improve the future events and further strengthen the MLT network. Please see the following section for individual testimonials.

SEE REPORT APPENDICES FOR DETAILED SURVEY

CONFERENCE PHOTOS



MLTs listen during plenary session



MLTs and Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf (second from left) speak over lunch in the outdoor tent



Introducing the instant polling devices



MLTs involved in discussion during a track session



The main Al-Fayrouz ballroom at the Doha Marriott during the conference's opening ceremony



Three MLTs pose at lunchtime



MLT Mona Eltahawy rises to ask a question during "New Ideas and Competing Values"



MLTs pose for a group photo before the start of the second day



MLTs at the "Marketplace of Ideas" session



Trainer Robert Perez leads a training session entitled "What's Your Message?"



MLTs at the "Marketplace of Ideas" session



MLTs after the group photo session on the second day



MLT speaks during one of the track sessions

MLT Participant Videos

ASMA also conducted interviews with diverse group MLTs at the conference. These MLTs discussed their work, reasons for attending the MLT conference, and their vision for the future of the worldwide Muslim community. Some excerpts include:



Imam Abu Eesa Niamatullah: "There is a lot of space in the boundaries of our tradition." UK



Imam Yahya Pallavacini: "The benefit of the network of this movement is to empower each other with better knowledge." Italy



Ilyasah Shabazz: "When my father Malcolm X returned from Hajj, he informed the world that Islam was a religion of unity." USA



Saleemah Abdul Ghafur: "Our goals as Muslims are the same as everybody else's are." USA



Ashley Nedumkandathil: "Change from Within'...a community building of Muslims for a better world." India



Sherin Khankan: "I felt the need to have a circle of understanding with other fellow Muslims." Denmark

MORE MUSLIM LEADERS



MUSLIM
LEADERS
OF TOMORROW

CONFERENCE REPORT – APPENDICES

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HIGHLIGHTED TESTIMONIALS

"It was a hugely inspirational moment in my life, and I am already working on some of the ideas that came out of my conversations with sisters and brothers from other countries and communities."

Nadira Artyk, USA/Uzbekistan

"I would have liked to spend some more time with the MLT organizers to discuss a few ideas on how the web could be used very effectively to build the MLT network. One of the things I've noticed when trying to follow up with people whom I met in Doha was the lack of any serious online presence from most of the MLTs. Which to me is quite surprising, as MLTs we should be online to "market" our values, ideas and achievements. Not just on the MLT website, but well beyond that."

Riyaad Minty, Qatar

"...I was also really happy with the diversity of the participation and learnt a huge amount from meeting so many people from so many different places, so again, well done in your efforts to meet the criteria of diversity - which is often so hard to meet in our community. ...

The structure of the MLT Doha was almost 90% panel discussions. There are several very serious problems with this format... all of you had gone through such trouble to assemble an amazing group of people but there was very little opportunity in the formal sessions to access the wisdom in the room..... My request and plea is for the area of process-design to be taken as seriously, if not more seriously, than the other aspects of the MLT."

Zaid Hassan, UK

"With regard to the content of the conference itself, I'd say that it was a bit too packed to give a chance to in-depth exchanges, but what I personally would like to look more attentively at are the huge difference in perceptions of a number of issues between Muslims from the East and the West (the debate on values was very interesting in that regard - not so much about the Islam/West so-called divide but about the Islam West and East divide: that would be a great area for the future MLTs to look at if we would like to build up something consistent between us)."

Michael Privot, Belgium

"I congratulate ASMA/Cordoba/AoC Teams. I am in touch with MLTs and prospective MLTs to coordinate/share for the greater cause in accordance with guidelines of MLT/ASMA and our commitment at Doha. I will be happy to know the schedule/your guidance regarding MLT Chapter Building in Pakistan."

Zafar Ullah Jan, Pakistan

"I measure my responsibility as a young Muslim leader who must contribute to the success of his community. I know you have hope in us. I pray to Allah to ensure that your hope grow and exceed your expectations."

Mamadou Bodian, Senegal

"Thank you very much for your hard work and making a successful conference. It was a great journey to gain knowledge, sharing Idea, Participating in a long friendship and relationship between all leaders. Your hard work made us to fulfill a successful trip to Doha."

Mahin Hoque, Bangladesh

"I wanted to take this chance to thank you, the team, Ms. Daisy, Imam Faisal and ASMA society for giving me the opportunity to meet many wonderful people whose presence was both humbling and inspiring."

Abdullah M. Hamidaddin, Yemen/Saudi Arabia

"...One of the components of the conference I have benefited from the most was the Training and Capacity-Building session we had on Sunday afternoon. I attended the Effective Issue Advocacy presented by Randy Benn, he spoke extensively about Lobbying in Washington, how it's done and what do young Lawyers who are trying to get into Lobbying need to do to become more effective...I think it would have been great to have more of the Training and Capacity-Building component and less of the Plenary Discussions in the conference."

Samer Saleh, USA/Egypt

"It was an enriching experience to be part of MLT Doha conference ... I think the things that we discussed must be followed up. I will be privileged to help in every future initiative of MLT. Take care and pls keep me posted on MLT's future activities."

Mohammed Wajihuddin, India

"I write to this email to thank you for the excellent arrangements that you made and the sincere effort you put in to make the conference successful. It was truly an unforgettable experience and meeting with all denominations of the Islamic sphere helped me to dispel some of my own prejudices."

Imam Mohammed Daniel, Kuwait

"Thanks very much and special appreciating for invitation Afghan delegation and me, really this MLT conference was perfect and historical for all human not only for Muslims because first we are human and than Muslim, we are living in one community with each other ,we need to be union. Am thanks full from you and those who arranged this nice conference, it was very important for us in this situation and we met numbers of experienced people over seas and learn from each of them."

Malina Fahiz, Afghanistan

"I am grateful to have had the opportunity to have met so many wonderful and inspiring individuals from all over the world, and I am honoured to have learnt some very valuable lessons from them. The panelists chosen to speak in the various sessions were inspiring and motivating, and the track sessions allowed us to share different perspectives, learn new viewpoints and even engage in healthy debate. It is my belief that this event brought together people from such unique backgrounds, and I know that I would not have had the chance to engage in discussion with such a diverse range of people in another context."

Although I am aware that conferences such as these warrant continuous action and follow-up in order for the goals and aims to become a reality, I for one have been inspired and motivated to do more and to play a more active role in my community, assisting to combat the various challenges encountered...I am certain that being a part of the MLT community will play a crucial role in this and hopefully we will be able to set up an MLT Chapter in South Africa in due time."

In short, I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank every single individual involved for their hard work and dedication. I pray that you are all rewarded in abundance by the Almighty Creator and May all your efforts bring about positive action."

Zarina Hassem, South Africa

Thank you all for all your hard work in pulling together something as big as the Doha MLT. I could see the look of awe on every MLT. And thank you for giving the opportunity to help you out ... What I did was nothing compared to your work."

Saadi Alkoutli, Saudi Arabia

In Qatar I spent the best days of the last 10 years, not because of the country, but because I met real good brothers and sisters. It was a pleasure, a honor to meet you all ... Allah (cc.) protect you and your families and gives you all power to work and to be a good human being and moslem, insallah."

Attila Dincer, Austria

Congratulation for the success of MLT conference. Our board member Mona was very happy and excited, she said it was very useful, and well organized ... Wish you all the best, you are so special and wonderful women. World needs people like you.

Dr. Wajeeha S. Al- Baharna, Bahrain

You have honored me by this invite and you have catalyzed my thinking on a number of issues. I have taken away many ideas from the MLT, which I will share with a number youth initiatives I'm currently involved with in different parts of the world.

Shaukat Warraich, UK

I wanted to take this chance to thank you, the team, Ms. Daisy, Imam Faisal and ASMA society for giving me the opportunity to meet many wonderful people whose presence was both humbling and inspiring... may Allah bestow upon all of you His Mercy and Grace.

Abdullah M. Hamidaddin, Yemen/Saudi Arabia

Thank you for giving us chance to participate in MLT conference that was great experience for us. Afghan youth want changes after decades of war and extremism now we are in transition period. This struggle can't be succeed without help of our Muslim brothers and sisters. Majority of Afghan youth is support MLT vision and mission and they want that let them chance to be an active member of MLT, espically from ASMA Society to assist Afghan youth and we will appreciate it .

Dr. M.Shafi Oriakhil, Afghanistan

"I was humbled that so many of our peers from Asia and Africa were invited and indeed able to attend the conference. However, I think a key lesson in cultural awareness stood out in that very few participants from these two continents participated in the plenary sessions or indeed spoke freely during the track sessions. I do not think this is a case of their lack of willingness to speak up rather a cultural reality that many of us from western continents speak so freely, passionately and perhaps do not appreciate more subtle communicative interactions of our Asian and African cousins."

"Hope you will be fine. Many thanks for sending the packet of MLT. Things are very beautiful and seemed to me, I was in that MLT conference. Thanks a lot again."

Muhammad Hayat Sial, Pakistan (could not attend conference but received the conference materials)

MEDIA AND LEADERSHIP TRAININGS

The following trainings were offered at the MLT conference on January 18, 2009.

Producing Viewer-Created News

Abdallah Schleifer

For economic reasons, TV networks such as CNN and Al-Jazeera increasingly ask members of the general public to create and send videos of news events—an excellent opportunity for civically-engaged Muslims to raise the profile of the initiatives they are involved in, or, more generally, project a more positive image of Muslims. Where pictures by themselves often lack a narrative, viewer-created content can, with the help of an effective outline, become a powerful communications tool. This workshop will focus on developing skills for storyboarding viewer-created news stories and pitching them appropriately to mainstream outlets.

What's Your Message?

Robert Perez, Rashid Shabazz, Yasmin Hamidi

Three concurrent trainings led by Fenton Communications (a public relations firm that works exclusively with NGO's) will take place on the important issue of developing messages. For any particular cause or NGO, `a message` is the one, all-important point that captures the essence of the subject one is trying raise public awareness around. Following a broader presentation on the importance of media, Fenton will conduct small workshops on developing messages. They will also work with more advanced media commentators in the MLT to develop best practices around answering difficult questions.

Blogging and New Media

Hussein Rashid, Amira al-Husseini, Farid Pouya

This session will survey the challenges and opportunities associated with web-based media such as social networking and, in particular, blogging. With a mixture of practical and theoretical forums, participants will be introduced to the cutting edge of online communication and will share best practices from their own experience of how web technology can work for positive change. Specific questions to be addressed include:

- How do governments restrict freedom of expression on the internet and what can be done to combat this trend?
- Why is citizen journalism important and how are "traditional" media outlets responding to it?

Effective Issue Advocacy: Lobbying Methodologies

Randy Benn

Using examples of case studies from specific lobbying assignments, this workshop will illustrate (1) what is lobbying and how it is regulated; (2) who lobbies and how lobbying works in practice; (3) who gets lobbied (i.e., Congress and the Executive Branch); (4) effective advocacy and coalition building. This workshop will touch upon these issues, using examples from Benn's own work in Washington, D.C through Cordoba Initiative, to address ways lobbying can be used to bridge the Muslim/West divide.

Influencing Perception in the Arab World

Ramzi Khoury

This workshop will introduce participants to the science of perception management. During this session, selected formulas will be presented, as well as their operative tools that influence perception of the Arab and Muslim world. The workshop includes interactive exercises to demonstrate and clarify these formulas.

Leadership and Movement Building

Nisreen Haj Ahmed

The election of Barack Obama as President of the United States was the result of a highly effective social movement, not merely a successful political campaign. Using the Obama “election” as a case study for developing transformative grassroots movements, trainers will lead 150 MLTs in social movement-building training. These MLTs will be imparted with the skills to act as movement leaders and cultivate positive, sustainable, and culturally-authentic social change. Trainers will, for example, teach them how to accomplish the following:

1. Inspire others with their own personal narratives
2. More precisely define their own mission and vision
3. Positively engage with potential opposition groups
4. Develop personal habits that can enhance their activism
5. Effectively mobilize others to action within their own constituencies and transform their communities

TRACK SESSIONS

Plenary sessions at the MLT conference were followed by smaller track discussions. The track sessions were designed so that MLTs could discuss key themes across a cross-section of regions and professions.

Track Session A – Regional

Region of Origin	Countries Included
Africa	Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Niger, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan
Asia	Australia, Azerbaijan, China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Uzbekistan
Europe	EU states, Russia, Ukraine, Bosnia, Croatia, Norway
Middle East	Arab League states, Turkey, Iran
North America	United States, Canada
South Asia	Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh

Track Sessions B and C – Professional Orientation

Profession	Explanation
Arts	Artists, musicians, writers, or those engaging in creative subject material through media or other means
Business	Leaders in the international business, economics, or financial fields
Community	Nonprofit executives, grassroots activists, educational specialists or others working in similar fields relating to local communities
Cross-Cultural	Leaders in the fields of dialogue, intercultural communications, peace-building or outreach to other faith communities
Gender	Leaders in women's empowerment, gender equality or sexual rights
Internet	Experts in online technology, social networking, viral marketing, new media or blogging
Justice/Law	Lawyers, judges or other legal professionals; or leaders in judicial reform or secular jurisprudence
Media	Media professionals, TV hosts, journalists, authors or other communications specialists
Policy	Policymakers, civil servants or leaders in political advocacy
Religion	Prayer leaders, Islamic jurists, leaders in intra-Islamic civil society or academics involved in research related to the study of Islam
Thought	Academic professionals, university students, think-tank experts or authors on academic subjects
Youth	Leaders in youth empowerment, youth job creation, childhood education, student organizing or related fields

MLT CHARTER

The following document was drafted by the MLT conference advisory committee in consultation with the key MLTs. This MLT value document was presented at the MLT conference and forms the core guiding principles for this network of Muslim leaders from all over the world. The MLT Charter can also be found on the MLT website at: <http://www.muslimleadersoftomorrow.org/about/charter/>.

MLT Charter

bismillah al rahman al Rahim

As Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, we proclaim our commitment to improving our communities and our world for present and future generations. Driven by sincere intentions and leading by example, we create a platform for informed, collective, and sustainable action; true to the diversity of the Ummah and the pluralism of Islamic thought, we work together and empower others to find solutions to difficult challenges; and, guided by the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet, we strive to create secure, peaceful, and thriving societies for the benefit of all humanity. We dedicate ourselves to the following:

Freedom: To protect the right of every man, woman, and child to live a free and dignified life.

Justice: To build a just global community, particularly for those that are most vulnerable.

Pluralism: To encourage tolerant and respectful intra-Islamic and interfaith interactions.

Intellectual Development: To create an environment of open dialogue, intellectual exchange, and knowledge sharing.

Creativity: To nurture the creative impulses of Muslims and Muslim cultures worldwide.

Leadership: To unite Muslims by exemplifying Islam as a faith of spiritual reflection, intellectual engagement, and social responsibility.

OPEN LETTER TO WORLD LEADERS

The following Open Letter to World Leaders was drafted by MLTs and presented at the conference. ASMA and the MLT advisory group solicited contributions from participants prior to the conference, collected and analyzed all responses, and created the first draft of the open letter. This first draft was then sent to all MLTs scheduled to attend the conference so that they could send ASMA their feedback. This feedback informed the second draft of the open letter. After final revisions, the Open Letter was presented at the MLT conference on January 18, 2009 during the closing session of the conference.

The Open Letter was also published in the Washington Post on January 19, 2009. This day was especially relevant since it marked Barack Obama's inauguration as the President of the United States.

OPEN LETTER TO WORLD LEADERS OF TODAY From the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow

In the face of the world's many unprecedented challenges, and with Barack Obama as the new U.S. President, there is no better time for men and women across the globe to present a case for positive change. We, as 300 Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow living in 76 countries around the world*, respectfully present this Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today. If we are to inaugurate a new era of hope and peaceful engagement, Muslim and non-Muslim world leaders must commit to the following:

Growth:

- Allocate resources to meeting basic needs, infrastructure, the environment, education, and job creation, because healthy, well-educated, and engaged citizens are more invested in their societies and are less likely to be swayed by radical ideologies.
- Support policies that enhance development and human rights, not war, because these rights are God-given to all and their violation inhibits our efforts to sustain peace, tolerance, and hope.
- Generate opportunities for intellectual and cultural advancement, because creative minds are better positioned to find solutions to complex challenges.

Participation:

- Promote youth participation in government and civil society, because in order to resolve our most intractable conflicts and problems, we must galvanize the youth to become part of the solutions.
- Ensure the full political participation and democratic rights of all people—including youth, women, and religious and ethnic minorities—because extremism is curtailed and prosperity ensured when all members of society are engaged, speech is free, governance is open and ethical, and civil society is robust.

Respect:

- Respect the contributions of all, including Muslims and peoples of other faiths, to their own societies and to global civilization, because a world built on mutual recognition is achievable only when everyone's contributions are valued.
- Safeguard our shared—Muslim and non-Muslim—values of peace, pluralism, and cooperation, because we draw upon these values to positively transform our communities.

Engagement:

- Seek honest engagement as equals, because respect and trust between leaders sets a powerful example for all.
- Pursue dialogue and diplomacy to resolve longstanding conflicts, because they destroy individuals and societies and weaken the efforts of future leaders like us to instill hope and ensure justice.

We urge you, the world leaders of today, to take these steps, so that we, the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, can help steer our world towards a better future for all. We are dedicated to working with you to realize this vision. The time for change is now.

**This letter represents a collective call by the group of MLTs attending the 2009 MLT Conference in Doha, Qatar; individuals will have the opportunity to personally endorse this letter during and after the conference.*

Pre-Conference Press Release

For immediate release

MEDIA ADVISORY

Contact:

Rushda Majeed, 212-870-2552 x 2, rushda@asmasociety.org

“Change cannot wait for tomorrow”

300 young Muslim Leaders from 75 countries
set the agenda for positive change
Doha, Qatar – January 16-18, 2009

The weekend of Barack Obama’s inauguration in Washington, DC, a new generation of dynamic Muslim leaders spanning the spectrum of ethnicity, ideology and profession will gather to mobilize a global Muslim movement for peace, justice and the common good.

Doha, Qatar — January 2, 2009 — In an historic time of change and diversity, young Muslim leaders from a broad range of countries are convening to push for change from within the global Muslim community. An Italian imam, a Saudi fashion designer, an Iranian rapper, a Pakistani *madrassa* reformer, an American blogger, and a Dutch lawyer are among the participants attending the 2009 Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow conference. This new generation of community-based, forward-thinking Muslim leaders will come together to share a wide range of strategies and leadership styles, to *“make tomorrow a day when Muslims are known around the world as people of peace,”* in the words of one invitee.

These young Muslim leaders—from Senegal to Somalia, Indonesia to Iraq, Britain to Bahrain, and Kosovo to Kuwait —will propose innovative solutions to challenges facing Muslims globally such as crisis of religious authority, violent extremism, competing values, and strained relations with the West.

The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow are answering a global call for change on behalf of the world’s Muslim community and will communicate their shared message of tolerance and progressive leadership by authoring a joint statement addressed to today’s global leadership.

Highlights:

- The participants will author and sign a major document entitled **“An Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today from the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow”**—a unique petition with policy recommendations addressed to both Muslim and non-Muslim leaders to be distributed across international media.
- Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow will attend a ***Doha Debate***, entitled “This House believes that political Islam is a threat to the West,” to be chaired by award-winning broadcaster Tim Sebastian and aired on BBC World News.
- A **“Marketplace of Ideas”** will showcase multiple initiatives – founded and led by artists, philanthropists, social entrepreneurs, opinion leaders, civil society leaders, and religious leaders – that all aim for positive change.

The 2009 Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow Doha Conference is organized by the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA), in collaboration with the Cordoba Initiative and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (AoC). It is being sponsored by the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID). For more

information on the conference or to set up interviews with participants, please contact Rushda Majeed, 212-879-2552 x 2, rushda@asmasociety.org.

For media accreditation and logistics, please contact Daanish Masood, (917) 367-9963, daanishm@unops.org.

The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) Program

Creating the Next Generation of Muslim Leaders

The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) is a global program, social network, and grassroots movement meant to cultivate the next generation of young Muslim leaders. By empowering young, dynamic Muslim leaders from all walks of life, the MLT program creates a platform to promote their message and develop the tools needed to galvanize lasting social change worldwide. The MLT program generates a free and open public space where this community can vigorously debate ideas, share best practices, and help one another become better leaders. With ethnic, religious and social diversity as key strengths, the MLTs are stepping up as spokespersons and activists for peace and tolerance around our globe today. MLT is the largest global program creating a new generation of Muslim civic leadership.

Post-Conference Press Release

For immediate release
MEDIA ADVISORY

Contact:

Rushda Majeed, 212-870-2552 x 2, rushda@asmasociety.org

300 Young Muslim Leaders from over 70 countries Author Open Letter to President Obama Calling for Change

Young Muslim Leaders Present Obama and Other World Leaders with Policy Recommendations to Improve Muslim-West Relations

19 January 2009, Doha, Qatar – Over 300 Young Muslim Leaders from 70 countries around the world published an open letter in today's *Washington Post* with policy changes that will help advance relations between the Muslim World and the West.

The letter urges change with four main recommendations: prioritize development, increase engagement of youth and minorities in civic processes, advance and respect mutually held values, and pursue honest dialogue and diplomacy to resolve conflicts.

In addition to today's full-page version in the Obama Inauguration section of today's *Post*, the letter will be circulated to media around the world to ensure that it receives adequate visibility. This Open Letter will likely be followed up with policy briefings and targeted meetings in which more specific recommendations will be presented to various members of government, think tanks, and journalists.

The letter comes at the back of the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) conference held in Doha, Qatar January 16-19 which convened young Muslim leaders to mobilize change from within the global Muslim community.

Mina Al Oraibi, an Iraqi journalist attending the MLT, described it as "an incredible array of high-caliber, ambitious and motivated Muslims made this...exceptional in a time of too many talking shops and too little substance. Most importantly, this group is humble but the sky is the limit with their talents."

Polls taken over the course of the MLT reveal important trends. For example, during a poll on extremism, seventy five percent of the young leaders present strongly agreed or agreed that both Muslims and non-Muslims are equally responsible for reducing Muslim extremism.

Based on their experience as young entrepreneurs, youth activists, peace builders, and journalists, MLT participants engaged in discussions to advance the agenda on tackling violent extremism, shared creative ideas to address the social and economic challenges facing young Muslims and explore ways in which they can advance peace and intercultural understanding.

The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) Program

Creating the Next Generation of Muslim Leaders

The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) is a global program, social network, and grassroots movement meant to cultivate the next generation of young Muslim leaders. By empowering young, dynamic Muslim leaders from all walks of life, the MLT program creates a platform to promote their message and develop the tools needed to galvanize lasting social change worldwide. The MLT program generates a free and open public space where this community can vigorously debate ideas, share best practices, and help one another become better leaders. With ethnic, religious and social diversity as key strengths, the MLTs are stepping up as spokespersons and activists for peace and tolerance around our globe today. MLT is the largest global program creating a new generation of Muslim civic leadership.

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Top News: Muslim leaders call for dialogue

January 20, 2009

DOHA, Qatar, Jan. 20 (UPI) -- A group of more than 300 Young Muslim leaders in an open letter urged U.S. President [Barack Obama](#) to advance relations with the Islamic world.

The letter, published Tuesday in The Washington Post ([NYSE:WPO](#)), the group said "if we are to inaugurate a new era of hope and peaceful engagement," Muslim and non-Muslim leaders must commit to honest dialogue.

The letter comes on the heels of the 2009 Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow conference held in Doha from Friday to Monday.

Among other things, the letter called for increased political participation.

It called on Obama and other world leaders to "ensure the full political participation and democratic rights of all people -- including youth, women, and religious and ethnic minorities -- because extremism is curtailed and prosperity ensured when all members of society are engaged, speech is free, governance is open and ethical, and civil society is robust."



British Young Muslim leaders to participate in Doha moot

January 13, 2009

LONDON, Jan 13, (APP)- Some twenty British young Muslim leaders will be among 300 delegates from 76 countries who are gathering in Doha later this week for a conference aimed at challenging the negative impression about Islam and mobilise a global Muslim movement for peace, justice and the common good.

“The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow” conference in the Qatari capital from January 16 to 18 will propose innovative solutions to challenges facing Muslims globally such as the crisis of religious authority, violent extremism, competing values and strained relations with the West.

Speaking at a news conference at the Foreign Press Association, Zaid Hassan, Nadeem Kazmi, Shelina Janmohamed and Saqib Mueen said they will put across the views of the British Muslim community regarding different topics to be discussed at the conference.

The Conference is organised by the American Society for Muslim Advancement in collaboration with the Cordoba Initiative and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

Originally launched in 2004, The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) programme is a global network of young, dynamic Muslims committed to creating positive social change.

The participants will author and sign a major document entitled “An Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today from the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow” which will be a unique petition with policy recommendations addressed to both Muslim and non Muslim leaders.

Zaid Hassan said one key area of debate surrounds the rights and roles of Muslim women in society especially those of a new generation who often face competing sets of values.

Zamila Bunglawala, Fellow, The Young Foundation, emphasised on greater choice of work for Muslim women and expressed hope that at the conference Muslim women from

around the world will debate the issue more thoroughly. She also noted about the opportunity to debate what the mosque can contribute to the modern-day community.

Violent extremism by a small minority is a threat that some leaders feel Muslims need to continue to tackle from within.

Nadeem Kazmi, Director, The British Islam Partnership, said. "I don't think we ought to exaggerate threat, we have got to be very, very careful but at the same time we have got to be responsible as well. If we want to benefit from all the wonderful things that are available as people, as citizens in this country, then you have got to contribute, be positive and look towards integration not towards separation."



Muslim youth request Obama's help in fighting extremism

By Nicole Neroulis, Religion News Service

January 22, 2009

As Barack Obama begins his tenure as the first U.S. president with Muslim ancestry (though he is a Christian), a group of 300 young Muslim activists from 76 countries has asked him to promote policies that can help peacefully curtail religious extremism.

The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, a grassroots movement aiming to foster a new generation of civic engagement, issued the open letter after convening the group's first international conference last weekend in Doha, Qatar.

Participants, all between the ages of 20 and 45, included artists, academics, religious leaders and business owners. About 40 came from the U.S., including comedian Azhar Usman, journalist Souheila Al-Jadda and faith-based activist Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur, who recently wrote the book *Living Islam Out Loud: American Muslim Women Speak*.

Among its recommendations, the group's statement asks Obama and other world leaders to support human rights, youth participation in political and civil society, and mutual respect and engagement between civilizations.

"Healthy, well-educated, and engaged citizens are more invested in their societies and are less likely to be swayed by radical ideologies," the letter states.

In addition to debating how to combat radicalization of Muslim youths, organize their communities and represent progressive values, participants discussed controversial issues ranging from Islam's position on homosexuality to whether Islamic and Western values are in conflict.

The conference's timing — with participants closely monitoring Palestinian deaths in Gaza and the birth of a new administration in Washington — added a sense of urgency to the discussions, organizers agreed.

"The time for change," the letter concluded, "is now."

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Young Muslims' open letter to Obama

January 21, 2009

WASHINGTON: As many as 300 young Muslim leaders from over 70 countries, including nine from India, in an open letter asked the US President Barack Obama and the world to adopt measures that can ease tensions and foster peace with the Muslims.

While the open letter was published in The Washington Post yesterday before Obama was sworn in, a statement issued on behalf of these Muslim leaders later in the afternoon said this letter is relevant given Obama's determination to find a "new way forward" with the Muslim world based on "mutual interest and mutual respect" — a goal that he mentioned in his inaugural address this afternoon.

"To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West — know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy," Obama said.

"To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history; but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist," Obama said.

The open letter is based on the last week's Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) conference in Doha. It outlines four key policy recommendations, which the statement said, Obama can implement to ease tensions and foster peace with the Muslim world. The letter urges Obama and other leaders to prioritise development of the youth and minorities and respect mutually held values; and pursue honest dialogue and diplomacy to resolve conflicts.

"We urge you, the world leaders of today, to take these steps, so that we, the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, can help steer our world towards a better future for all. We are dedicated to working with you to realise this vision. The time for change is now," said the open letter.

The CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Qatar: Future Muslim leaders seek fresh path

'No better time' for change, say activists at this past weekend's youth conference in Doha, Qatar

By Carlyle Murphy
January 20, 2009

DOHA, Qatar - The question put to the young Muslims gathered here from around the world went to the heart of today's perceived clash between Islam and the West: "Do Muslims and non-Muslims share equal responsibility in taking steps to reduce Muslim extremism?"

The answer, delivered instantly through wireless voting pads, was crystal clear: Seventy-five percent replied "Yes."

The verdict is worth heeding because of where it happened: At a conference of 300 progressive Muslim activists from 75 countries.

The "Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow Conference," was meant to be a catalyst for social change in the Islamic world by inspiring the activists and giving them opportunities to network.

"We're living in challenging times, and the plot for Muslims has been written by others," said Daisy Khan, of the New York-based American Society for Muslim Advancement, which worked with the Cordoba Initiative and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations to organize the event. "The time has come for Muslims to write their own plot, and to define themselves around the core values they believe in: pluralism, freedom, justice, creativity, and intellectual development."

Participants included a Saudi businesswoman, a New York filmmaker, an Indian teacher, an Italian imam, a Dutch lawyer, an Egyptian writer, and Osama Saeed Butta, who informed his peers in a fine Scottish brogue that he will be running for a seat in Britain's Parliament come the next election.

While some activists hold more conservative views than others, all are committed to pluralism as an Islamic value, Ms. Khan said.

Some were in a hurry to exert their influence. "I came because I wanted to know why it's 'Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow' and not 'Today,'" said Maha al-Khalifa, a student from Qatar.

The discussion sessions, which included the instant polling, tackled some of the thorniest questions facing Muslim intellectuals today, including: "Is there a crisis of religious authority in Islam?" Eighty-six percent said "Yes." And "are there Islamic values that are in conflict with Western values?" Sixty-one percent said "Yes."

Panelist Madiha Younas, of Pakistan's International Islamic University, said she often encounters anxiety over clashing values. "Our people are worried about what will happen if our youth will start to live like the West."

She added, to general approval from the floor, that "it's not an Islamic value to have absolute freedom. Islam puts boundaries on you."

Saudi-born attorney and Harvard University graduate Malik Dahlan led the conversation to a more theoretical level, stating: "It's freedom that is the absolute value in Islam.... It is freedom *not* to submit [to God's will] that gives value to submission itself."

In smaller discussion groups, participants covered such topics as why Europe has more Islamist radicalism than the United States, Islam's position on homosexuality, and the meaning of secularism.

When discussing who has responsibility for fighting Muslim extremism, the panelists steered clear of the polarization this subject normally provokes. Instead, they argued that both extremist interpretations of Islam and foreign policies of Western countries contribute to the radicalization of Muslim youth.

In fact, the impact of US policies in the Middle East was evident at the conference, where many participants were deeply upset, at times in tears, over the civilian death toll from Israel's three-week military siege of Gaza.

"I get a sense of helplessness with this latest crisis," said conference attendee Shaukat Warraich, director of London-based Right Start Foundation International, a community development nonprofit.

ASMA's Khan said that after 9/11, Americans wanted to know why Muslims' denunciations of the terrorist attacks were so muted. Although hundreds of Islamic religious leaders did condemn the attacks, they were not heard clearly because Islam has no central leadership, like Roman Catholicism's Vatican.

Khan, then an architectural designer, gave up her career to promote a new generation of Muslim leadership, holding the first conference in New York in 2004 with 125 participants from North America. The second conference, held in Copenhagen in 2006, included Europeans. Doha, the third one, was global.

Participants had to be between 20 and 45 years old, committed to pluralism, and involved in some type of community advancement work, Khan said.

At its conclusion, the conference issued "An Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today From the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow." Noting that "with Barack Obama as the new US president, there is no better time for ... positive change," the letter demanded that leaders start implementing policies that promote development and human rights rather than war.

For now, the Muslim leaders who will receive copies of the Open Letter do not know much about Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT), as the project is known. The conference drew little international or regional media attention. But organizers said they are committed to building a global network of progressive activists in the Muslim world, an effort they say will take time.

Muslim leaders call to delve into the causes of extremism

January 19, 2009

DOHA: The next generation of Muslim leaders have called on the intellectuals and academia to look into the causes of Muslim extremism rather than generalising the social problem.

A panel discussion on "Tackling Violent Extremism: Our Responsibility?", held on the second day of the international conference hosted by Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT), observed that a deeper discussion on various aspects of Muslim extremism are needed for detecting the root cause and finding a solution.

Mona Kanwal Sheikh, one of the panelists, said Islam has nothing to do with terrorism, injustice or violence. The phenomenon of more and more young people attracted to the militant outfits is a matter to be discussed covering all aspects of the issue. The wider perceptions about Jihad and martyrdom must also be subjected to a wider discussion, she said.

Mona, a researcher at the University of Copenhagen, attributed occupations on the borders to be one of the major reasons for the growing support for extremist outfits. There is a lack of psychological integration among the Muslims in many parts of the world. "Violence can be justified if it is defensive. Occupation certainly demands resistance", she said.

"When one really feels that his identity is under attack, it is natural that he will fight back, irrespective of his religion," said another panelist Azhar Hussain. "What is the dividing line between a moderate Muslim and an extremist Muslim? To what degree provocation can create an extreme Muslim. Can an angry Muslim be branded as an extremist?". These are some of the pertinent questions to be addressed by the academia, Hussain said.

Hussain, who is the Vice President for preventive Diplomacy at the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy (ICRD), also stressed the need for getting the community involved in the activities to safeguard their identity. Faris Arouri (Palestine), Shaarik Zafar (USA), Muzamil Jaleel (India) and Saqeb Mueen were among others who spoke. Arsalan Iftikhar(USA) was the moderator.

The concluding day of the two-day event also witnessed a panel discussion on “Framing and Messaging in the Media”.

Over 300 dynamic Muslim leaders, hailed from over 75 countries, discussed the most urgent collective challenges the Muslim community at the meet. They also debated solutions to pressing issues such as the global Muslim crisis in authority and the mandate to promote peace over extremism from within.

The Conference was organised by the American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA).

in collaboration with the Cordoba Initiative and UN Alliance of Civilizations (AoC). It was sponsored by the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue (DICID).

CAP: Mona Kanwal Sheikh (middle) addressing the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) meet at Marriot Hotel yesterday. Other panelists look on: pic by Salim Matramkot

Open letter to world leaders

January 18, 2009

DOHA: Organisers of the Muslim Leader of Tomorrow (MLT) conference being held here are planning to send an open letter to the world leaders including the US president-elect Barack Obama with a set of policy recommendations.

Titled "open letter to the world leaders of today from the world leaders of today", the document will be officially issued on January 20, the day when Obama will take over as US president, Daisy Khan, executive director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement, the organisers of the conference told The Peninsula yesterday.

"In the face of the world's many unprecedented challenges, and with Barack Obama as the new US President, there is no better time for men and women across the globe to present a case for positive change. We, as 300 Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow living in 76 countries around the world respectfully present this Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today," says the document.

It calls on Muslim and non-Muslim leaders all over the world to allocate resources to meeting basic needs, infrastructure, the environment, education, and job creation and support policies that enhance development and human rights, not war. It urges the leaders to ensure the full political participation and democratic rights of all people-including youth, women, and religious and ethnic minorities and respect the contributions of all, including Muslims and peoples of other faiths, to their own societies and to global civilisation.

"Seek honest engagement as equals, because respect and trust between leaders sets a powerful example for all. Pursue dialogue and diplomacy to resolve long-lasting conflicts, because they destroy individuals and societies and weaken the efforts of future leaders like us to instill hope and ensure justice," says the letter. The copies of the letter will also be sent to the leaders individually, added Khan.



Muslim Youth Meet In Doha

From January 16 to 18, 2009, 300 young Muslim leaders from 75 countries will converge on the Qatari capital, Doha, to push for positive changes from within the global Islamic community.

By Mohammed Muniru Kassim

January 16, 2009

These young Muslims will also propose innovative solutions to challenges facing Muslims globally such as crisis of religious authority, religious extremism, competing values and strained relations between the Islamic community and the West.

A three-man delegation from Ghana will leave Accra today for the conference. It comprises Adam Abdul Fatah, president of the Federation of Youth Club; Nurudeen Alhassan of the Ghana Muslim Academy; and Abbas Muhammed, GMSA president.

At the conference, the Muslim youth, who go by the name, Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT), will send an open letter with policy recommendations to both Muslim and non-Muslim leaders to be distributed to media houses globally.

According to organizers of the event, "this new generation of community-based forward-thinking Muslim leaders will share a wide range of strategies and leadership styles to make tomorrow a day when Muslims are known around the world as people of peace.

"The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow (MLT) are answering a global call for change and will communicate their shared message of tolerance and forward-thinking to today's global leadership."

Launched in 2004, the MLT is a network of young dynamic Muslims committed to creating positive social change. The MLT conferences provide an avenue for the Muslim youth to propose and debate solutions to problems facing their societies.

It is the largest programme of its kind in convening a generation of civic-minded Muslims from across the globe.

The Doha Conference is being organized by the American Society For Muslim Advancement (ASMA) in collaboration with the Corboda Initiative and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (AoC).

Islam's young envoys to gather in Doha

January 10, 2009

NEW YORK: Hundreds of young Muslims from around the world are gearing up for a three-day conference in Doha later this month to debate the tough issues facing the global Islamic community. About 300 young adult leaders of Islamic groups from 75 countries will be in the Qatari capital to discuss extremism and strained relations with the West from January 16.

Rushda Majeed, an organiser of the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow programme, described the event, which coincides with Barack Obama becoming the next US President on January 20, as a "historic initiative".

"On the same week end as the inauguration of President-elect Obama, a group of dynamic, committed, civic young leaders are getting together to create a change," said Majeed, from the American Society for Muslim Advancement. "Why? Because change cannot wait for tomorrow. This is the time to move towards a place where Muslims will become known as people of peace."

The initiative, begun after the September 11 attacks on the United States and broadened after the 7/7 London bombings of 2005, brings together "ordinary people who have committed their lives to create a positive change within their communities", she added. Hailing from countries as diverse as Senegal and Kosovo, participants will include an Italian imam, a Saudi fashion designer, an Iranian rapper, a Pakistani reformer, an American blogger and a Dutch lawyer.

Islam's young ambassadors include Haroon Moghul, director of public relations at New York University's Islamic Centre, which has arranged for Friday sermons to be downloaded via the internet to a weekly audience of 15,000.

"One of the important issues is to challenge the kind of discourse that one finds often in Islamic communities, which doesn't necessarily respond to the needs and desires of people in terms of the contemporary world," Moghul said Thursday.

Newsweek

Anger Management

If they want help from Obama, Arabs in the Middle East should learn the lessons of Martin Luther King.

By Christopher Dickey

January 20, 2009

Martin Luther King Day is celebrated. Barack Hussein Obama is inaugurated. The confluence of dates at the beginning of this week seems a culmination of hopes from the past, an auspicious omen for those with even greater hopes for the future. And in a general sense among Arabs and Muslims in the Middle East (whose satellite channels delight in using the new president's middle name) there is a shared sense of new possibilities opening up. This, even though their attention—their fear, their anger—has been focused on the carnage in Gaza these last three weeks.

What the vast majority of Arabs have been slow to realize, however, is the profound connection that exists between the history of the struggle that opened the way for Obama to become president, and the future of their own fight for freedom and dignity, and not only in the face of Israeli occupation, but under the tyrannies of so many Arab dictators. We talk about remembering Martin Luther King because of the power of his vision, of his language, of his morality and of his faith. But mainly we remember him because he adopted a strategy of nonviolent confrontation with an insidious and pervasive system of repression—and broke it—and broke through it. We remember him because his way worked.

What we know about the Middle East today is that wars no longer end in victories, and the process of peace never delivers more than the process itself. A new approach has to be found, and the leaders of the governments in the region don't seem up to the task. The most promising is nonviolent resistance: mass protests, boycotts, refusal to obey unjust laws.

Again, consider what we are seeing on the Mall in Washington today. As we look at that enormous crowd we do not, unless we are interested in the footnotes of modern American history, remember apostles of the gun like Eldridge Cleaver or Huey Newton or Stokely Carmichael or the rioters shouting "burn baby burn" as America's cities—their own homes—went up in flames in the 1960s. Violence drew attention to the civil-rights movement. It expressed the anger that had built up for years. That is unquestionable. But what it did to advance the cause of building a new world with new ideas, if anything, is hard to measure. What King's strategy of nonviolent resistance achieved is unquestionable: just about everything we are looking at now.

White Americans did not need to be taught to fear black Americans, after all. Jailers, deep down, will always fear their prisoners, slave-owners their slaves, the occupiers the occupied. That much was deeply ingrained in the white American psyche long before the Black Panthers posed for posters. What white Americans needed to be taught was to respect black Americans. And that fundamental change in attitude, so long coming, was the direct result of the sit-downs, the marches, the boycotts—the bravery of the resistance to oppression that King's life and history and, indeed, his martyrdom epitomizes. It was the bravery of the righteous, not only in the religious and moral sense, but in the pure common-sense sense that King and his followers were doing much more than acting out their anger or fighting for revenge. They were correcting an aberration in society so wildly irrational that, to look back on it today, one must wonder how and why it ever existed.

Forty years from now—and possibly in less time than that—we could look back on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and on what now seems the endless Age of Despotism in the Arab world, as something almost inconceivable. But for that to happen the people who hunger for that moment, and I believe that almost everyone in the Middle East does hunger for that moment, will have to reject the idea that only violence can appease their fury, or that some day some outside force will simply recognize their rectitude and fix the problems they can never seem to resolve on their own.

Over the weekend I was in Doha, Qatar, where two conferences took place. One was a confab—call it a quasi-summit—of a few Arab and Muslim leaders (including the head of Hamas and the president of Iran), which preceded *another* summit of *other* Arab and European leaders in Egypt, which came before another summit of most Arab leaders in Kuwait which tried to repair the damage done by the earlier summits. And what all of these leaders contributed to the cause of peace and reconciliation in the Middle East was, as far as I can tell (and I have watched a lot of these things) precisely nothing new at all.

The other Doha conference was more interesting. Attending were a couple of hundred people assembled from all over the world under the rubric Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow. Unlike the Muslim leaders of today, this group was less interested in posturing and intramural rivalries than in finding some practical solutions to the many problems that address their people, whether in Gaza or Rotterdam, Kabul or Los Angeles. There was a lot of talk about community organizing. One well-attended seminar on the subject, conducted by a Palestinian lawyer, held up Obama's presidential campaign and even his 2004 speech at the Democratic National convention as paradigms to study.

Obama, you will recall, started as a community organizer. So did Dr. King. Of course it's obvious that more will be required than a few marches, sit-ins and boycotts to change the habits of occupation and internal repression in the Palestinian territories. It took a lot more than that to bring the United States as far as it has come. But civil disobedience in the Middle East has some promising precedents, even in the blood-drenched Holy Land.

The Arabs of the little village of Bil'in on the West Bank, working with Israeli and Palestinian activists, have won international attention and the support of the Israeli courts

in their fight to change the path of the wall that would have divided their community. But there is an earlier and even more significant example.

The closest the Palestinians have ever come to what Dr. King and President Obama might understand as massive civil disobedience was the first Intifada that began in 1987 and lasted until 1993. It finished forever the Palestinians' passive endurance of Israeli occupation. Before then, for the first two decades after the West Bank and Gaza were taken by the Israelis in the 1967 war, the Palestinians there had waited for the Arab Nation or their own leaders in exile or maybe the good offices of the United States to end their plight. Then they just couldn't wait any more. Children began throwing stones at the Israelis, and would not stop, even when soldiers broke their bones. That is not nonviolent, to be sure, but the message was much the same: a popular uprising based on sheer guts against the massive brawn of the occupiers. And the rock-throwers were backed by general strikes and refusals to buy Israeli products.

That sort of resistance, built on asymmetric courage, not asymmetric warfare, can change radically the way adversaries think about each other and themselves. It can open the door to peace, and there was a long moment in the early and mid-1990s when the Middle East conflict was indeed much closer to being resolved than most people remember now. Made possible by massive, mostly nonviolent resistance, it was destroyed by terrorist acts on both sides. An Israeli slaughtered dozens of unarmed Arabs as they prayed in Hebron in 1994. Another Israeli murdered Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin as he attended a rally, singing peace songs in Tel Aviv in 1995. Among the Palestinians, Hamas and other groups, including a wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization, embraced the notion that only ferocious, suicidal violence could win respect.

Very likely Hamas still believes that, even after the events of the last month demonstrated how powerless it is to defend its people, and how feckless its little fireworks displays really are. All Hamas's violent resistance does is make it easier for otherwise sensible Israelis to rationalize the use of overwhelming force, and while many regret the death of so many hundreds of innocents, the general sentiment in Israel is that proportionality is for suckers. You meet fire with fire, and if you've got the guns, you use them. Having made its point, the Israeli government has been shrewd enough to pull most of its forces out of Gaza just before Obama takes the oath of office. It might even claim it did him a favor.

So, as the new American president takes power, we will hear many voices in the Arab and Muslim world calling on Obama to impose peace on the Middle East. And, yes, he can help and, I believe, wants to do so. But he has to have something to work with. An Arab movement that shows its unity and courage through stubborn peaceful resistance, not violent potshots and suicidal rituals, would offer a truly new beginning. Civil disobedience is a language of confrontation that leaves the door open to conciliation. It was the language of Dr. King, and it is a language that Barack Hussein Obama, the community-organizer-cum-president, understands very well. Some Arabs know it already. Others would be wise to listen to them.

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Young Muslims Ask Obama's Help in Fighting Extremism

By Nicole Neroulias (Religion News Service)

January 21, 2009

(RNS) As Barack Obama begins his tenure as the first U.S. president with Muslim ancestry, a group of 300 young Muslim activists from 76 countries has asked him to promote policies that can help peacefully curtail religious extremism.

The Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, a grassroots movement aiming to foster a new generation of civic engagement, issued the open letter after convening the group's first international conference last weekend (Jan. 16-19) in Doha, Qatar.

Participants, all between the ages of 20 and 45, included artists, academics, religious leaders and business owners. About 40 came from the U.S., including comedian Azhar Usman, journalist Souheila Al-Jadda and faith-based activist Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur, who recently wrote the book "Living Islam Out Loud: American Muslim Women Speak."

Among its recommendations, the group's statement asks Obama and other world leaders to support human rights, youth participation in political and civil society, and mutual respect and engagement between civilizations.

"Healthy, well-educated, and engaged citizens are more invested in their societies and are less likely to be swayed by radical ideologies," the letter states.

In addition to debating how to combat radicalization of Muslim youths, organize their communities and represent progressive values, participants discussed controversial issues ranging from Islam's position on homosexuality to whether Islamic and Western values are in conflict.

The conference's timing -- with participants closely monitoring Palestinian deaths in Gaza and the birth of a new administration in Washington -- added a sense of urgency to the discussions, organizers agreed.

"The time for change," the letter concluded, "is now."



Doha to host III conference of Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow

January 12, 2009

ASTANA. January 12. KAZINFORM /Bauyrzhan Mukanov/ During the period of January 16-17, 2009 Doha (Qatar) will host III conference of global Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow. Official representative of the Kazakh MFA Yerzhan Ashikbayev has made it public at a weekly briefing today, Kazinform correspondent reports.

“The event is held jointly with the “American Society of Muslims” (ASMA) non-governmental organization and aims at assistance to constructive dialogue on the key issues of modernity”, Y. Ashikbayev said.

According to him, Kazakhstan delegation will present the initiative on convocation of the Congress of the World and Traditional Religions’ Leaders at this forum.

The first conference of the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow was held in New York in 2004. It was attended by the American Muslims. The second one was held in 2006 in Copenhagen after a scandal over the cartoons mocking the Prophet Muhammad in Denmark and brought together the Muslims of the North America and Europe.

PARTICIPANT BIOS

Aalaa Aly Abuzaakouk is a Student Affairs Officer at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Doha, Qatar. In this position, Ms. Abuzaakouk works closely with undergraduate and high school students to help them explore their aspirations and contributions to their respective societies. She helped develop curriculum for the Muslim Public Service Network's summer program in Washington D.C., which focuses on nurturing a cohort of Muslim American students to learn about public service and civic engagement. She has also participated in a number of formal discussions that explore the diverse experiences of Muslim American youth, including at the Department of Homeland Security's Youth Roundtable Discussion, Muslim Public Affairs Council's National Youth Summit, and recently, at the U.S. State Department's Citizen Dialogue trip to Europe. Ms. Abuzaakouk graduated from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Regional Studies of the Muslim World and a Master's degree in Arab Studies, specializing in economic and human development.

Aasma Azhar Khan is the Head of Legal and Compliance Allied Partners PJSC (formerly Morgan Shipley Ltd.) in Dubai, UAE. Ms. Khan has extensive experience managing large, complex financial transactions in the Middle East and US, as well as regulatory experience under the regulations of the UAE Central Bank. She has routinely worked with international and local corporate clients in the Middle East. For example, she led a number of transactions as an associate of Greenwald & van de Kraats Legal Consultancy (now Chadbourne & Parke) in Dubai. Prior to working in Dubai, Ms. Khan practiced law in the Project Finance group of Chadbourne & Parke LLP, one of the top 5 project finance law firms, in New York City, where she counselled clients on project financings from Indonesia to Missouri.

In addition to her legal work, Ms. Khan has extensive knowledge of Shari'ah, having studied Islamic finance for over 16 years. She has been involved in the Shari'ah analysis of retail banking products, and she was instrumental in the restructuring of conventional transactions into Shari'ah-compliant structures, including developing corporate and retail Shari'ah-compliant banking products for Standard Chartered Bank.

Ms. Khan is a member of the State Bar of New York. She graduated from Chicago-Kent College of Law with Honors, serving as the Captain of the Philip C. Jessup International Moot Court team, winning honors at the regional, national and international levels. She completed the Certificate of International Law at Columbia Law School as a visiting student, where she was a member of the Journal of Transnational Law and the *Journal of International Arbitration*.

Abass Mohammed is President of the Ghana Muslim Students Association (GMSA) for the Greater Accra Region. Previously, he had served as the GMSA President and Vice President at Koforidua Secondary Technical School and the University of Ghana, Legon-Accra. He has also served on various committees while at the University of Ghana. For example, he was Chairman of the Community Service Committee of Rotataract Club, member of the Political Science Students Association (POSSA), Curatorial Committee Member, and Muslim Dialogue Committee Member.

Mr. Mohammed studied political science and philosophy at the University of Ghana. He completed his National Service at the Office of the Parliament of Ghana.

Abd Al-Minim Waheed Wahdan is Director General of Youth for the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Mr. Wahdan also worked as the Director General of Youth Affairs at the Ministry of Youth and Sport and was the Director of the Youth Exchange Department at the Ministry as well. He is heavily involved in civic activities, such as developing organizations and clubs aimed at organizing youth. Mr. Wahdan has participated in numerous global conferences regarding youth empowerment and dialogue techniques. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in history from Al-Quds Open University and a Master's degree in Regional Studies from Al-Quds University.

Abdelhak Azzouzi is President and Founder of the Interdisciplinary Moroccan Center for the Strategic and International Studies (CMIESI) in Fez, Morocco and law professor at the Faculty of Law, Economics and Social sciences of Fez. He is also a consulting member for several national and international organizations and a specialist in interfaith dialogue. His work concerns immigration, Arab countries' foreign policies, and the political and social relationships between the U.S., Arab states, and Europe, as well as the political and constitutional history of the Arab states.

Dr. Azzouzi is the author of "Authoritarianism and Democratic Risks of the Transition in the Maghreb Countries" and "Cultural and Civilizational Realities." He is a political science graduate from the Toulouse Institute of Political Studies, and he holds a doctorate in political sciences from the Toulouse Political Sciences University. Dr. Azzouzi was the youngest to graduate from the UT1. He has been given a number of distinctions and accolades. He is one of the founders of the Group "Studies and Research Group on the African Continent" (GERCA) affiliated with the IEP of Toulouse.

Abdinasser Rezkallah works at the Platform of Migrant Youth Associations in Antwerp, Belgium, an umbrella-organisation consisting of over 45 youth organisations from 30 different nationalities and run entirely by volunteers. He supports these youth organisations by providing training, writing grants, and working on various activities and projects. He has worked at various youth-centres, leading youth and new immigrant programs, career guidance and skills trainings, and language and homework support programs, Mr. Rezkallah has been an active participant in the Belgian-American Muslim Dialogue Project since 2005 and has spoken at various conferences on the social problems facing Europe's first-third generation Muslim immigrants, as well as potential practical solutions for these communities. He is a second generation Belgian immigrant of Algerian descent, living and working in Ghent and Antwerp.

Abdul Rahim Elham is Chairman of the Ismaili Tariqa and Religious Education Board (ITREB), an organization working with local Afghan communities. He devotes his time to educating Muslims on how to be better members of their respective communities. Utilizing his grassroots experience, he edited *Islam is a Religion of Peace*, which highlights the importance of morality in the daily life of a Muslim. Mr. Elham visits different communities throughout Afghanistan stressing the need for citizens to be responsible for their own actions, as well as the effect of such actions on the community as a whole. Mr. Elham has a Bachelor's degree in Literature from Baghlan University, in addition to his training at Islamic educational institutions, which enhanced his knowledge of the Islamic religious sciences.

Abdul-Ahmad Rashid is an editor for Channel Two of German Television Broadcast (ZDF). Previously, Mr. Rashid worked as a freelance journalist for several radio stations of German Broadcast (ARD), covering subjects concerning the Near Eastern region and the Muslim community in Germany. Through his journalism, he hopes to contribute to a better understanding of Islam in the West.

Born in Cologne as the son of an Afghan father and German mother, Mr. Rashid is fluent in German, Dari, and Arabic. He studied Islamic sciences, German language and literature, and religious studies at universities in Cologne, Bonn, Damascus and Cairo. In his free time, he sings for a rock 'n roll band.

Abdulkawi Hassan is the Coordinator of Women's Rights in Islam, a program of the Women's Forum for Research and Training (WFRT). Mr. Hassan is also a preacher and supervisor of Koranic Studies for the Ministry of Guidance and Endowments in Taiz, Yemen. He writes in the Yemeni press on topics of human rights, dialogue and social cohesion, the philosophy of state and citizenship, and Islamic movements. Mr. Hassan is also a researcher, and he has presented his work at numerous conferences and seminars in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. His latest study is the Effect of Terrorism on Yemeni Society. Mr. Hassan is also an approved trainer by the American Board in Human Development and Hypnosis He holds a Master's Degree from Al-Awazee'i University (Lebanon) in Islamic Thought.

Abdullah Hamidaddin is Deputy General Director of Ilm Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing higher education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Mr. Hamidaddin is a Board Member and Corporate Strategy Advisor for DMS (Direct Marketing Services), a direct marketing company and strategic partner for the Saudi Postal Authority responsible for developing the Direct Mail Industry in the Kingdom. He is also Chairman of the Zaid bin Ali Cultural Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Yemeni heritage. The

Foundation has edited and published over two hundred titles, in addition to photographing and cataloging over four thousand manuscripts.

Mr. Hamidaddin has provided consultancy on various societal issues such as harassment in the work place, family violence, student development, volunteerism and volunteer development, literacy, and activating school libraries. He is currently setting up an organization with the mission to enhance the role of strategic mediums, socializing institutions, and corporations with regards to developmental objectives, with a focus on human rights, women's empowerment, poverty, intercultural dialogue, and religious reformation. He has published on religious, political, and social issues, and holds a Master's Degree in Humanities, International Relations and is currently pursuing a Doctorate in religion and development.

Abdussalam AbdulFattah is the Publishing and Managing Editor of *The Peace Magazine (As-Salaam)*, an independent Islamic news magazine. Mr. AbdulFattah regularly writes for the opinion page of the newspaper and covers international events relating to Muslims and Islam. He also presents motivational lectures at numerous Islamic gatherings involving Muslim youth, and he has participated in an international interfaith dialogue program with the US government.

Born in the Ogun state in South-West Nigeria, Mr. AbdulFattah has worked across Nigeria and in other countries. He holds a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Political Science from the University of Ibadan, as well as a certificate in journalism. He believes that peace should be paramount in life in one's life and that religion should be practiced in an atmosphere of peace and toleration for others' beliefs.

Abubakar AbdulRasheed is the zonal co-coordinator of Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC), a Nigerian non-governmental organization dedicated to inculcating and promoting a culture of mutual respect and acceptance of different cultures' historical and religious inheritances. The Centre also propagates the virtue of religious harmony and peaceful co-existence. At IMC, Mr. AbdulRasheed has facilitated numerous peace-building and conflict management efforts, and he has conducted peace and conflict transformation training programs for student union leaders in universities and other institutions in Nigeria. He has regularly participated in dialogue with Christians, traditionalists, and Jews and has attended conflict resolution courses in Nigeria, Egypt, and the US.

Previously, Mr. AbdulRasheed spent seven years as the chief missionary of Al Fatih-ul-Quareeb Society in Cote D'Ivoire and headed delegations to Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea Conaqry, Senegal, Niger, Benin, Ghana, South Africa and Togo. Born in Nigeria to the family of the late Sheikh Abubakar Dhikrullai, he studied Islamic Studies and earned his Master's degree in inter-religious and inter-ethnic conflict resolution at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, US.

Adam Abdul Fatah is a Ghanaian youth activist, working in the field of youth development. He is currently President of National Islamic Youth Organisation and President of the Federation of Youth Clubs. He has also worked extensively with the Legal Resources Centre (Ghana), Nation of Islam (USA), Streetwise Project (Ghana), students and professors at Harvard Law School and Harvard University School of Public Health, the University of Ghana's Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER), among others. He is a graduate of the Common Purpose Ghana Leadership Training. Mr. Abdul Fatah is married with a daughter.

Adnan Šupuk is a Researcher and Coordinator of Slovenia's Center for Inter-Civilization Understanding. In this capacity, Mr. Šupuk has led numerous interfaith events such as "Islam and Muslims in Slovenia," which promoted intercultural dialogue as a process by which all residents of the European Union are able to increase the level of coexistence within EU member states in complex cultural environments. He has taken an active part in International Conference Europe and the World and Humanity in the 21st Century. Mr. Šupuk currently monitors Slovenia's media as research for improving Muslim relations.

Aftab Ahmad Malik is a Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Ethnicity and Culture at the University of Birmingham and a designated "Global Expert" on Muslim Affairs for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. Mr. Malik has been called a "first rate scholar" by John L. Esposito and a "rising intellectual star" by *The Muslim World Book Review*. His articles have appeared in a number of newspapers, on-line journals and magazines, and they have been translated into several languages including Arabic, French, Turkish, and Indonesian. Various media outlets,

including the *BBC*, *Panorama*, *National Geographic*, *ITN* and the *Voice of America*, have sought out Mr. Malik for his expertise in understanding the theological strain underpinning current manifestations of Muslim extremism and the challenges and opportunities confronting Muslims in the West generally, and Britain specifically. Mr. Malik recently traveled to Egypt and Turkey with five other British Muslims as part of the Foreign Commonwealth Office's "Projecting British-Islam" delegation, an initiative which provides a platform for British Muslims to challenge misconceptions overseas about the reality of life for Muslims in Britain. Mr. Malik also recently accompanied the Foreign Secretary, David Milliband, to Pakistan, where they engaged with students, press, scholars, and academics.

Ahmed Imam is CEO of the Islamic Council of Victoria, the peak representative body for the Muslim community in the State of Victoria, Australia. Yet he is more recognized today as the host and co-founder of the award winning Muslim television chat show "Salam Café." Shown on national broadcast across Australia "Salam Café" provides insight into the often unseen Australian Muslim community, while also dabbling in current Australian and international issues from a unique perspective. From a professional career in Management Consulting and Project Management with PricewaterhouseCoopers and IBM, Mr. Imam now focuses on his role as CEO of the Islamic Council of Victoria. In this capacity, he develops relationships for the Muslim community with the government, sporting bodies, NGO's and interfaith organizations for the purpose of building a prosperous multi-faith, multi-cultural Victoria.

Mr. Imam was a youth leader for many years at the Australia wide AFIC youth camps and was a co-founder of Young Muslims of Australia (YMA). A former director of the Muslim Community Co-Operative Australia (MCCA), he was instrumental in the establishment of Islamic financial services in Australia. He co-ran Australia's first Islamic Books Club for children "Ali Gator Book Club" and has just launched Ali Gator Productions for the publication of Islamic children's books, games and animated cartoons on DVD. Mr. Imam holds a Business degree and a Post Graduate Diploma in Information Technology.

Ahmed Lutfi Oezer was born in Denmark and is Manager of the F.C. Toros 95 Youth Club. F.C. Toros 95 focuses on influencing children to be well-rounded by involving them in soccer and online computer games, in order to help integrate Muslims in Denmark and build better futures for them. Mr. Oezer is also a member of the Council of Integration for the city of Hvideovre and is pursuing his studies in the field of engineering.

Ahmed Mohamed was born in Kebribeyah, Ethiopia but grew up in Hargeisa-Somaliland. He has graduated from a number of institutions, earning various certificates and diplomas. For the last seven years, he has worked for youth information and communication technologies (ICT) programs, as well as the Horn of Africa Youth Development Association, based in Hargeisa. Mr. Mohamed's work provides a platform for social development programs and creates employment opportunity programs, serving to empower young people and make their voices heard in society.

Ahmed Nagy is an Egyptian blogger, writer, and journalist. He is currently an editor for the *Akhbar El Adab* literary weekly and correspondent for *Emirates Today* and other literary periodicals. In addition, he is the publishing manager for Malameh Publishing House in Cairo. He published his first literary work "Rogers" in 2007.

Mr. Nagy started blogging in 2005 with his "Wasa Khaialak" ("Widen Your Imagination") , blog dedicated to issues of sociology, pop art, and cultural and human rights. In 2007, he co-founded the Egyptian Blogs Aggregator (omraneya.com). He has volunteered with the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (ANHRI), conducting a training course for Arab human rights activists on using the internet to advocate for human rights issues. He participated as a blogger in Egypt Blogs America, a program managed by the American University in Cairo to cover the 2008 U.S. Presidential election and give lectures on new media in the Middle East for the University of Texas's (Austin) School of Journalism.

Ahmad Zahir has served as a commissioner in the Council of Management Students Association at UPI (Indonesia University of Education) from 2006-2008. He became leader of a cadre in the Junior Youth Muhammadiyah Association in West Java, where he acted as a productive activist for education and social development. He also serves as a consultant for the MDG (Millennium Development Goals) missions in Indonesia.

Mr. Zahir has been active in numerous national and international activities, including as an Indonesian delegate for the Asian Youth Forum, Coordinator of the International Youth Forum, and Manager of Peace Generation Indonesia, where he creates peace programs and teaches children about the importance of peace in the world. In 2008, Mr. Zahir participated in the “Islamic Leadership Forum” in Egypt and Islamophobia conference in Azerbaijan. He recently founded the “Indonesian Islamic Youth Entrepreneur Forum” (IYEF), dedicated to strengthening Muslim youth to face global challenges.

Aissa Zanzen is the Chairman of the NMO Board (Muslim TV and radio in the Netherlands), Vice-Chairman of The Union of Moroccan Mosques in the Amsterdam area, and a Human Resource Management advisor for the Dutch Ministry of Justice. Mr. Zanzen is also concerned with a large number of social organizations in the Netherlands. Between 2006 and 2008, he served as a boardmember of the Dutch Muslim Council. During this period, he was also the Secretary of the Council of Moroccan Mosques in the Netherlands.

AbdoolKarim Vakil is Lecturer in Contemporary Portuguese History and Head of the Department of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies at King’s College in London. In addition to his academic research and writing on representations of Islam and Muslims in the Portuguese imaginary, the history of Portuguese relations and policies towards Muslim communities during the colonial period, and the formation of contemporary Muslim communities in post-colonial Portugal, Dr. Vakil has organized and participated in a number of inter-faith events for the Islamic Community of Lisbon, of which he is an adviser.

Dr. Vakil was formerly the convenor and chair of the Muslim Institute Symposia in London. Currently, he edits an opinion column for *The Muslim News* and is completing a co-authored book on Portuguese Muslim policy in Mozambique during the colonial wars and a co-edited volume on Islamophobia.

Al-Husein N. Madhany is the Executive Vice President of One Nation, a social venture fund whose mission is to foster a national conversation about the common values we share as Americans, regardless of how we choose to express our spirituality. Specifically, One Nation sponsors projects that challenge stereotypes and misperceptions of American Muslims and Islam by shining a spotlight on our shared values, beliefs and responsibilities.

Mr. Madhany is a track two diplomat of the American Muslim community. He is adept at connecting and coordinating groups of like-minded Muslims, including both Sunni and Shia communities to their mutual benefits, and America's, by actively promoting social entrepreneurship, civic engagement, and the professionalization of American Muslim religious leaders and their institutions.

With graduate degrees from Harvard, Georgetown and the University of Chicago, Mr. Madhany is a member of the Pacific Council on International Policy, a Senior Fellow at the Homeland Security Policy Institute at George Washington University and serves on the Stanford Islamic Studies Advisory Board. Previously, al-Husein taught at Georgetown University and worked as the Executive Director and Executive Editor of *Islamica* Magazine.

Ali Ardekani is one of the leading comedians working with Ummah Films, an Islamic film company that seeks to practices Halal entertainment. Through the widely popular video blog, “The Reminder,” Mr. Ali has become one of the leading ‘vloggers’ (video bloggers) with his internet personality, Baba Ali. His webpage on YouTube has received over five-million hits, and his style of humor has been acclaimed as creative, witty and thought-provoking, sending a powerful message that reaches all races and religions. Through his comedy, Mr. Ardekani has tackled complicated issues, such as race and religion. His work has received international acclaim and has been covered by the New York Times, USA Today and BBC WorldNews. Mr. Ardekani’s most recent project, <http://halfourdeen.com>, will be launched in January 2009.

Ali Aslan is an Advisor in the “Policy Planning, Europe and International Developments” Division at the German Federal Ministry of the Interior. Prior to joining the Ministry of Interior in 2006, he was a TV Journalist for *ABC News* in New York. He started his professional career at *CNN* in Washington D.C.

Mr. Aslan holds masters degrees from the School of International and Public Affairs and the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University and a bachelor's degree in International Politics from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service.

Ali Cumber is the Regional Director at AngelouEconomics, a global economic development and site selection consulting firm. His region of focus is the Middle East and South Asia (MESA), giving him specific insight into the socio-economic issues facing many Muslim communities, and the methodologies that exist to address them. In addition to his work at AngelouEconomics, Mr. Cumber has volunteered with youth development and economic planning programs serving primarily Muslim communities in the U.S. and MESA region for over 10 years. He received his B.A. in economics from Boston University and is currently based in Dubai, UAE.

Ali-Nihat Koç is the speaker and director of the 'Koordinierungsrat des Christlich-Islamischen Dialogs (KCID),' the Christian-Islamic Dialogue Center, in Nuremburg, Germany (www.kcid.de). Since October, 2008 Mr. Koç has been the chairperson of the KCID, building the organization up to a seventeen member union, with approximately 1000 members.

Mr. Koç's efforts are also directed towards, 'Christlich-Muslimische Freidensinitiativ,' the Christian-Muslim Peace Initiative (CM-FI (www.cm-fi.de), where he is a board member. The CM-FI works on both a community and political levels to facilitate a greater understanding of the Islamic and Christian faiths. In addition, he continues to act as an advisor on the political and community levels to lead inter-faith dialogues throughout Germany.

Almurad Kasym is Program-Coordinator for the Foundation for Promoting International Protection in Osh, Kyrgyzstan. The foundation assists refugees and asylum seekers from nearby Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, as well as from Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Born into a religious family of ethnic Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan, in the former Soviet Union, Mr. Kasym's primary religious education consisted of Koran memorization. His translation of the *tafsir* to Surat Al-Fatiha from Uzbek into English is expected to be distributed among English-speaking nationals in Central Asia. He continues to study the Arabic language and *fiqh* with renowned scholars of Islam in Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Kasym spent one year in the California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, CA, studying international relations. He was an active member of the university's Muslim Students' Association.

Amadou Djibril is one of the founding members of the Young African and European newspaper, *Passerelles*, which translates as 'Gateways.' The newspaper works for, and focuses on, intercultural dialogue. Mr. Djibril is currently on *Passerelles*'s editorial board.

As a student at El Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, Mr. Djibril is a member of several youth organizations including, the Francophone Club of Egypt, OHADA Club (Organization for Harmonization Business Law in Africa), and current Secretary General of the General Union of African Students Associations. He is a founding member of RJNTIC (Youth Network for Information Technology and Communications, in his home country of Niger. Mr. Djibril has also participated in the International Youth Forum for Peace which held its first forum in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt in September 2007. The First Lady of Egypt, Madame Susan Mubarak, facilitated the forum's proceedings.

Mr. Djibril has participated in several trainings and forums on intercultural dialogue and interreligious discussion across the world including Africa, Europe and Canada.

Amira Al Hussaini is Editor of *Global Voices Online*'s Middle East and North Africa and Arabic Language section and of *Voices without Votes*. Ms. Al Hussaini's experience in journalism spans 17 years, during which she began a trainee journalist and eventually became news editor of Bahrain's English language daily *Gulf Daily News*. She is among the first female Arab news editors of an English daily and among the first Arab women to win the coveted Dag Hammarskjold Scholarship, which offered her a three-month fellowship to cover the United Nations in New York. She has since been a frequent visitor to the UN's headquarters, where she continued to cover the UN General Assembly and Security Council. In 2004, Ms. Al Hussaini ventured into blogging and embraced online media. Her interests cover women's and human rights, politics, freedom of expression and democracy, and all forms of artistic expression.

Aliiev Mukhtarjan is Tajikistan's Diplomatic Trading Representative in Doha, Qatar and Deputy Director & Manager of the Da'wa Department in the Qatar Quest Center. He was leader of the Tajikistan Student's Union in Syria. Mr. Mukhtarjan holds a Master's degree in the Fundamentals of Islamic Law.

Amir Farmanesh is a research fellow with Georgetown University's Prince Alwaleed BinTala Center, working on governance transformations related to knowledge society and knowledge-driven development. Among the highlights of his experience are consulting several units of the World Bank, working for the United Nations Environment Program, serving as the advisor of Mayor of Tehran (2002-2003), and acting as national Focal Point for the United Nations IYV (2001). During his involvement with the Iranian civil society, he co-founded Iran Civil Society House – an umbrella organization like a chamber of commerce for the coalitions of NGOs – and the Iran Youth NGOs Network. In addition, Mr. Farmanesh has been involved in the UN (UNEP - UN-Habitat) Governing Councils and was a member of the UN Environment Program Youth Advisory Council. He also serves as an advisor for the Managing Board of Conference of NGOs, with Consultative Status with the UN, and has published several papers, including a report published by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Farmanesh received a Bachelor of Engineering from Iran University of Science and Technology (2002), Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Arts in International Relations from Syracuse University, both sponsored by a World Bank full scholarship (2006). He is currently a PhD candidate in Policy Studies at the University of Maryland, School of Public Policy.

Anas Samran works for the Jordan Youth Exchange Group, which he has represented at a number of events, including Youth for the Alliance of Civilizations, a program initiated by the ICYF aiming to narrow the gap between Islamic and non-Islamic cultures. Born in Algeria, Mr. Anas studied computer engineering at the Sumaya University for Technology. He later worked as a reporter for a local English weekly newspaper, *The Star*, which included two pages in French.

Anjum Babukhan is the Director of Education at the Glendale Academy in Hyderabad, India, where she handles academic, administrative, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. At the Academy, Ms. Babukhan has initiated an innovative teaching methodology and has established a number of important and popular workshops, including the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) and self-development and educational skill-building workshops. In addition, she served as Chairperson of the FICCI Ladies Organization (FLO) and is the former Education Chairperson of the Young Indians (Yi). For her efforts, Ms. Babukhan has won many accolades and awards, some of which were signed by President Reagan and President Bush. She has also written a number of articles on parenting and education for the *Times of India*. In 1993, she helped Bosnia through a medical and food relief program, and she also has been involved in Women's Welfare programs through the Babukhan Craft Center.

Born and raised in the U.S., Ms. Babukhan received an honors degree in psychology from the Loyola University of Chicago. Her thesis, "Savoring the Positive," won a Psychology Award. During this period, she became the president of Psi Chi-International Honors Society in Psychology and was selected in "Who's Who Among American Junior Colleges." She worked under various research teams and completed her M.Ed. in Educational Administration and Instructional Leadership from the University of Illinois of Chicago.

Imam Tahir Anwar is the Imam and Director of Religious Services at the South Bay Islamic Association in California. While chairing the Islamic Studies Department, Imam Tahir also teaches Islamic Studies for middle-school students at Granada Islamic School, in Santa Clara, California. The Imam's teaching career also includes instructing Islamic jurisprudence at the world-renowned Zaytuna Institute, in Hayward, California.

As a highly respected community leader, the Imam serves on numerous panels and commissions in the Bay area. He is the Human Rights Commissioner for the City of San Jose, and serves on the Community Advisory Panel for KQED, a local and hugely popular PBS radio and television station. Notably, he is the Muslim Chaplain at the Santa Clara County Correctional Facilities.

In February 2007, the U.S State Department invited the Imam to speak in Germany addressing the topic, 'Muslims as Citizens.' He has been interviewed by CNN during the Hajj, and was featured in a CNN documentary, *Hajj: The Essential Journey*, which closely documented his travel from the US to Mecca. In May, 2008, the Imam was awarded the Unity in Diversity Award by the County of Santa Clara for his work in the community.

Aref Assurmi is the director, writer, and anchor for "Issue for Discussion," a weekly Sana'a radio program which tackles important local, Arab and international issues. Mr. Assurmi is also an anchorperson for news and political programmes at *Yemen Alsaedah*, a private television channel broadcasting from Cairo, and he is the correspondent for the German radio DW, as well as for the state-run Riyadh radio stations. Mr. Assurmi was selected by *Yemen TV* to present a number of political and cultural live shows, and he also has presented several joint programmes between *Sana'a Radio* and other radio stations like *Douche Willa*, *Sawt al Arab* in Cairo, as well as a number of Riyadh and Jeddah stations. For his work in tackling hot-button issues in his programmes, Mr. Assurmi was chosen by the Yemeni Cultural Press as the best anchorperson for 1996 and 1997.

Born in Yemen, Mr. Assurmi has attended workshops and training courses in several countries like Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Germany. He is a member of a number of local and international media unions.

Nedumkandathil Ruzhakkara Ashley is Director of Development at Dayapuram, an educational and cultural centre for egalitarianism, religious inclusivism and gender equality, run by Al Islam Charitable Trust in Kerala, India. As Founder and Secretary-cum-Director of the Dayapuram Educational Adoption Scheme, which provides academic and financial support to poor students, he has conceptualized and implemented a framework for making quality education and the premier centers of higher education in India accessible to disadvantaged children. He has also played a major role in setting up Dayapuram Stage for Humanitarian Activism (DaSHA), which acts as a platform for Muslim leaders who stand for secular democracy and communal harmony. Mr. Ashley has published many articles and a book, and he has presented papers in international conferences held in the US, UK, Finland and South Africa. His research interests include performance studies, English language education and cultural theory. He is currently enrolled in a PhD program in English with the University of Hyderabad, after completing his M.A. and M.Phil degrees.

Arsalan Iftikhar is an international human rights lawyer and Contributing Editor for *Islamica* magazine, a contemporary global affairs magazine headquartered in Los Angeles and with editorial offices in London, Amman and Cambridge, Massachusetts. He is also the founder of www.TheMuslimGuy.com and a regular weekly contributor on the *Barbershop* segment for the National Public Radio (NPR) show 'Tell Me More' with Michel Martin.

In March 2008, Mr. Iftikhar was one of four international debaters selected to participate in *The Doha Debates* on BBC World Television. His interviews, commentaries and analyses have regularly appeared in CNN, BBC World News, The TODAY Show, National Public Radio (NPR), FOX News Channel, MSNBC, Associated Press, C-SPAN, Voice of America (VOA), Al-Jazeera, Agence France Press (AFP), *USA TODAY*, NBC Nightly News, *The Washington Post*, ABC World News Tonight, *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, Rolling Stone, TIME and Newsweek magazine. He has also been a freelance opinion writer with over 15 major daily newspapers and his columns have appeared in major publications such as: *USA TODAY*, *CNN.com*, *Detroit Free Press*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Miami Herald* and many more. He was also a contributing author to *Keeping Out the Other* and *Taking Back Islam*, winner of the 2003 Wilbur Communications Award for Religion Book of the Year. In 2006, the French Ambassador to the United States personally named him to the *Personnalités d'Avenir* (Personalities of the Future) World Leader Program in Paris sponsored by the French Foreign Ministry. Mr. Iftikhar graduated from Washington University in St. Louis and received his law doctorate from Washington University School of Law. He specializes in international human rights law and is licensed to practice law in Washington D.C.

Asim Rehman is President of the Muslim Bar Association of New York (MuBANY), a professional organization for Muslim lawyers, law students, and legal professionals. MuBANY serves the needs of its members through

networking opportunities, resource sharing, legal referrals, mentoring, and career development panels. MuBANY also focuses on improving the New York Muslim community at large by conducting informational events, registering Muslim voters, and advocating for the rights of Muslims in New York.

In addition, Mr. Rehman is a lawyer with Debevoise & Plimpton, LLP in New York. Mr. Rehman's practice focuses on complex litigation, but also includes pro bono work with immigrant's rights and death penalty law. Mr. Rehman spent six months as a Special District Attorney in the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, and was a clerk to a Federal District Judge in NY. He has positions with the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and the AIRE Centre (Advice on Individual Rights in Europe) in London.

Mr. Rehman is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the South Asian Bar Association of New York. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan Law School and Haverford College.

Ashar Saeed is Senior Vice President at the world's largest social media website, Muxlim.com, where he heads the global sales & marketing operations. At Muxlim.com, Mr. Saeed works towards connecting the world's Muslim communities to each other, as well as to the wider world, through shared online experiences. He is also a Board Member of the first Pan-European Muslim Professional Network, initiated in Salzburg this year. In addition, Mr. Saeed plays a key role in setting up various community-based organisations both in the UK and Scandinavia to promote cultural and religious cohesion between the Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Working closely with the UK/Swedish authorities, he is dedicated to eradicating youth boredom, violence and criminality. Having launched his career as a stockbroker, Mr. Saeed then became a pioneer of the Islamic Finance scene in the UK, taking on such positions as Senior Business Developer, Director of Corporate Relations and Director of Projects. He has held key positions in renowned organisations such as Swedbank, IslamiQ and AON.

Brought up in Sweden, Mr. Saeed obtained a degree in Human & Organisational Psychology and Political Science, after which he took postgraduate courses in Business Management from IHM Business School, Sweden. He recently completed an MA in International Relations in London.

Asim Siddiqui is a founding trustee of The City Circle, a grassroots network of professionals working in Britain. The City Circle is involved in educational and welfare projects in addition to hosting weekly public events which allow for debate on issues that concern the British Muslim community and wider society. An elected member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Mr. Siddiqui was also appointed to the UK-Indonesia Islamic Advisory Group. He has participated in numerous British Muslim delegations to the Muslim world sponsored by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. In 2007, Mr. Siddiqui was appointed to the Iraq Commission as an independent, non-partisan body.

Mr. Siddiqui is a member of the Securities & Investment Institute and holds the Islamic Finance Qualification. He has spent time at the UK Financial Services Authority and is now a manager at a leading Arab international bank in London. TIME Magazine placed him on its front page in 2008 as part of a cover piece on "Europe's Muslim Success Story". His blog can be found at www.guardian.co.uk.

Aslihan Eker is a reporter for the International News department of KANAL7 TV, a media station based in Turkey. Interested in exploring the relationship between women and Islam, Ms. Eker embarked on an extensive journey- leading her through thirteen countries, with over 200 interviews, to document and explore women's experiences with Islam. She was the Co-Producer/ Production Coordinator and Scriptwriter for 15 episodes of the documentary 'Behind Walls - Women in Muslim Countries,' which was televised in Turkey and screened at many International film festivals. It took place in 13 different Islamic countries (Oman, Sudan, Yemen, Egypt, Malaysia, Indonesia, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Algeria, Iran, Pakistan) (www.behindwalls.org). Ms. Eker continues to work on the project, directing her focus to European countries, starting in the UK.

Ms. Eker was a member of an initiative called 'Cultural Debates,' founded by a group of women to establish dialog between continental Europe and Turkey during the process of Turkey's accession to the European Union.

Ms. Eker received a Bachelor of Arts in Radio, TV and Cinema from the Istanbul University (1998) and a Masters from the London College of Music and Media in Film (2003).

Asmaa Alariachi is a TV personality on the Dutch show, *De Meiden van Halal*, "The Girls of Halal" named one of the best TV shows in the Netherlands, 2007. In collaboration with her two sisters, Jihad and Hajar, Ms. Alariachi promotes understanding and dialogue with the Dutch-Muslim community through the television medium. In addition to this work, Ms. Alariachi also is a teacher and works with students age 16 to 21, and volunteers with several local and national organizations. In 2007, Ms. Alariachi won the National IQ Test among Dutch celebrities.

Through her work, Ms. Alariachi seeks to show positive images of Islam and especially Muslim women, with or without the hijab; she also seeks to promote Muslims to participate in those debates which concern Dutch citizens and Europeans in general.

Attila Dincer is an intercultural communications expert in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Liechtenstein and Turkey, teaching in police academies, teacher academies, high schools and universities. He is Founder and General Secretary of the Islamic Association of Vorarlberg (Austria) and of the first Muslim cemetery in Vorarlberg. He is also Founder and General Secretary of the Turkish Platform in Vorarlberg, which holds 47 Turkish associations and 19,000 Muslims as members. He is the CEO of the NGO Institute for Intercultural Affairs (INKA), which he founded in 1999. INKA is now a specialized office with around 20 management and education experts on diversity, migration, interculturality and self-empowerment of immigrants and NGOs. Mr. Dincer has been quoted in a number of newspapers and television programs on diversity, empowerment, Islam, the Turkish community, dialogue between Muslims and non-Muslims, as well as the problems of discrimination. This summer, he was guest of the U.S. International Leaders Visitor Program. Born in Turkey and living in Austria for the past 33 years, Mr. Dincer studied political education at the University of Salzburg and is pursuing law and an MBA in Switzerland. He is married and has two children.

Ausma Khan is Editor in Chief of *Muslim Girl*, a bi-monthly publication aimed at re-shaping the conversation about Muslim women in North America. Her work has included extensive consultation with government agencies, NGOs, interfaith groups, and curriculum development at universities, schools and libraries. Her press appearances include the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Asharq al Awsat*, *Arabian Woman*, *India Times*, the *International Herald Tribune*, among others. Her TV and radio features include CNN, NBC Today, National Public Radio, PBS, CBC Radio, Al Jazeera English and Al Arabiyya TV.

Dr. Khan holds a Ph.D. in International Human Rights Law from Osgoode Hall Law School, where her research specialization was humanitarian intervention and war crimes in the Balkans. Her LL.M. thesis won the Canadian Council of International Law prize for Outstanding Thesis. Dr. Khan completed her LL.B. at the University of Ottawa and her Bachelor of Arts in English Literature & Sociology at the University of Toronto.

Azeem Ibrahim is Chairman and CEO of ECM Holdings, a conglomerate of six finance companies including a private online bank and private equity hedge fund. In 2006, he was the youngest member of both the *Sunday Times* Scot's Rich List and Carter Anderson's Asian Power 100 list, which described him as one of the most influential and highest-achieving people in Britain. In 2007, a Scottish Parliament motion signed by a number of MSPs congratulated Dr. Ibrahim for his contribution to the country, and in 2008, he accepted the Lloyds TSB and KPMG Business and Commerce Excellence Jewel Award. His achievements have attracted considerable recognition around the globe and over the last few years, he has met and advised a number of world leaders, including the Prime Minister of Turkey and leaders in the Gulf States.

Dr. Ibrahim is also a Research Fellow at the International Security Program at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, a Senior Research Scholar at the European Centre for Advanced Defence and Strategic Studies, a Council Member of the Dean's International Council at the Harris School of Public Policy and Diplomacy at the University of Chicago and a Director and Policy Board Member of the United Kingdom National Defence Association.

Much of Dr. Ibrahim's time is now devoted to his own five charities. The Ibrahim Foundation, his most recent venture, was established in 2008 and endowed with his own holdings. It provides funding to pioneering community projects after inviting applications from the public.

Azhar Hussain is the Vice President for Preventive Diplomacy at the International Center for Religion & Diplomacy (ICRD). Mr. Hussain currently heads ICRD's Pakistan Madrasa Project. Working in partnership with Pakistani civic and religious organizations, the Pakistan Madrasa Project encourages the expansion of madrasa pedagogies and curriculums to include scientific and social disciplines, particularly those promoting religious tolerance, human (and women's) rights, as well as conflict resolution and dialogue facilitation skills. Programs initiated by Mr. Hussain have trained over 2100 madrasa leaders throughout Pakistan to date. He has also pioneered recent initiatives to engage religious and political leaders in Afghanistan.

Mr. Hussain has been providing educational and intercultural consulting services for numerous multi-national organizations for the past ten years and has a well-established history of successful training and development initiatives throughout the world, including in India, Pakistan, Britain, the US, and Mexico. He has served as Senior Consultant to the Government of Mexico's Ministry of Education and as an adjunct professor at the Tecnológico de Monterrey University in Mexico, where he taught courses on international relations and history and served as a teacher trainer for various university faculty. More recently, Mr. Hussain held the position of Senior Consultant on International Education and Development at the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Mr. Hussain has organized and delivered presentations at numerous conferences around the world, including the Council on Foreign Relations, Johns Hopkins University, and Georgetown University, and to foreign guests of the US State Department's International Visitors Leadership Program. He has also collaborated with the US Institute of Peace to initiate, develop, and deliver a peace education-training program for Pakistani religious leaders. A native of Pakistan, Mr. Hussain received the 2006 *Peacemakers in Action Award* by the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding in New York.

Azhar Usman is a standup comedian, media producer, and artist-activist. He is co-founder of widely popular *Allah Made Me Funny—The Official Muslim Comedy Tour*. He produced a documentary-concert film based on the *Allah Made Me Funny* tour, which quickly became one of the top-20 highest grossing standup comedy concert films of all time. In addition, Mr. Usman is the creator and star of his own Web sketch comedy show, *Tinku's World*, which has been tapped by multiple broadband comedy channels for online distribution. He appeared in a sketch comedy role he invented ("Vijay the VJ") for MTV Networks and also as "Abu Zaid" in the comedy pilot "Taboogie" for Channel E4 in the UK. CNN recently called Mr. Usman "America's Funniest Muslim."

Born in Chicago to Indian immigrant parents, Mr. Usman was always interested in "waging peace through humor." He regularly performs a Jewish-Muslim comedy show, as well as a South Asian solidarity comedy show entitled "Make Chai Not War." He is also developing a book, *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Muslims but Were Afraid to Ask (No, Really Afraid!)*, which follows an FAQ format about Muslim culture and practices, only with accurate yet light-hearted, humorous responses. Mr. Usman's brand of comedy is steadily finding a global audience, and he has been profiled by the New York Times, ABC Nightline, Al-Jazeera English, ARY and GEO TV in Pakistan, ABC Australia, BBC, and numerous others. In addition to performing at theater venues, comedy clubs, and university campuses all over the world, he has performed at numerous governmental and policy-oriented venues.

Mr. Usman continues to serve as a co-founding board member of The Nawawi Foundation, an Illinois non-profit dedicated to contemporary Islamic research and as Arts and Culture advisor to the Inner-city Muslim Action Network (IMAN) in Chicago. He holds degrees from the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Minnesota Law School.

Baber Saeed is an advisor to a number of non-governmental and governmental organizations, exploring issues, crafting initiatives, and engaging in dialogue. He has been noted for his groundbreaking work in Community Leadership, developing a practical framework for addressing 'Women's Rights.' He has contributed to numerous

conferences and reports and has appeared on the BBC TV/Radio 4, ARY Digital and Geo TV, among others. Currently, his work focuses on social change amongst South Asian communities.

Basharat Peer is a journalist covering the conflict in Kashmir and Islamic affairs in India since 2000. Mr. Peer has worked as a Senior Correspondent with India's largest news portal, Rediff.com, and as a Principal Correspondent for India's leading newsweekly, *Tehelka*. His first book, *Curfewed Night*, a chronicle of the Kashmir conflict was recently published by Random House South Asia to critical acclaim across national borders and political divides. It will be published by Scribner (Simon and Schuster) in North America next year. Mr. Peer was recently an Assistant Editor at the international politics and policy journal *Foreign Affairs* in New York, and he is currently reporting from South Asia. His work has appeared in the *Guardian*, *New Statesman*, *The Nation*, *Financial Times*, *N+1*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, and *The National* (Abu Dhabi). Born in Kashmir, Mr. Peer studied Political Science at Aligarh Muslim University in India and Journalism and Politics at Columbia University in New York City.

M. Bilal Macit is Co-Founder of Young Civilians, a non-governmental organization established by a diverse group of activists to demand increased democracy, freedom, and civil society in Turkey. At Young Civilians, which has organized numerous public protests and campaigns, Mr. Macit has led many events and campaigns, such as Law, State and Gladio in Turkey, Stop Military Coups, and others. He completed his B.A. from Sabanci University (Turkey) with a major in Social and Political Science, and he is currently working on his Master's degree in the UK. During his undergraduate study, Mr. Macit was elected Sabanci University Student Union President for two years, and he co-founded the Istanbul Student Union, representing students at Istanbul in 2006.

Bilal Randeree is a founding member of the Muslim Professionals Network and has represented the network at recent World Islamic Economic Forums and other Islamic Finance and Economics conferences. He is also a founding editor of the national student publication, *The Message*, and now writes for many international news and Muslim websites. Mr. Randeree is also a Chartered Accountant with KPMG LLP., in Johannesburg, South Africa, a writer, comedian and successful blogger.

Mr. Randeree served as the President of the Muslim Students Association at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, one of the premier universities in South Africa. He was selected as one of South Africa's Brightest Young Minds to participate in a national forum with influential South African politicians and businessmen. In 2004, he coordinated with Middle East youth groups to help with earthquake assistance in Kashmir. Mr. Randeree became involved in comedy while working on Islamic Relief's first South African "Make Laugh Not War" event and then performed as 'Halal Bilal' with the US team of *Allah Made Me Funny* comedians during their tour of South Africa. He has also toured in the UK.

Bushra Hamwi is an artist, entrepreneur, public relations consultant, and former co-host of the prime-time youth talk show on *MBC*, one of the leading Arabic satellite channels. **Ms. Hamwi** has been involved in artistic, media, and public relations ventures in such diverse locations as Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Dubai, and New York. She dropped out of the *American University in Cairo* to start up an Internet services company, after which she worked with a number of the top public relations agencies and image consulting firms in the region. She continues to work on campaigns that tackle issues of youth empowerment and promote corporate social responsibility, and she is currently involved with upcoming TV initiatives aiming to bridge cultural gaps.

Ms. Hamwi's first poetry book, "**Who Got Eve out of Heaven**," achieved notable critical success in the Middle East and was highly acclaimed by renowned Arab artists and authors such as Marcele Khalife, Dr. Rana Kabbani and the late Salma Haffar Kezbari. The book was initially banned in Saudi Arabia.

Darah M. Rateb is Managing Consultant of the Visionary Consultants Group (VCG), a consultancy dedicated to comprehensive engagement between the Muslim World and West. Ms. Rateb has worked with a variety of institutions, including the Brookings Institution (U.S.), different government departments and think tanks in the UK, and organizations in the Muslim World. Currently, she is co-leading a comparative project looking at Muslim communities and religious education in Malaysia, Ethiopia, Brunei, Singapore, the Philippines and South Africa.

In the aftermath of the 'Cartoons Crisis', Ms. Rateb led the Amr Khaled Initiative in Copenhagen, which received wide media coverage in both the West and Arab world. Interviewed by Dream TV in Cairo, and a participant in the *Stairway to Paradise* program of Moez Massoud, She is also a contributor to *Islamica Magazine*. An Egyptian-Canadian, Ms. Rateb is a graduate of the American University in Cairo.

Darya Shaikh is the US Executive Director for the PeaceWorks Foundation's OneVoice Movement, helping to navigate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and enact her vision of reconciliation and peace. Joining the OneVoice Movement in January 2004 with a deep understanding for grassroots activism towards civic empowerment, Ms. Shaikh began working as the Public Education Coordinator and Program Developer. She has worked as the facilitator and moderator for a delegation of Jewish-Israeli, Arab-Israeli and Bedouin Youth, and has been involved in reconciliation efforts in the Middle East through Hashomer Hatzair and Givat Haviva since she was 9 years old.

Born in Brooklyn, NY to an Israeli mother (from Hadera) and a Pakistani father, Ms. Shaikh received her B.A in Political Science and Middle Eastern Studies at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec.

Debbie Almontaser is the founding principal of the Khalil Gibran International Academy. A 17-year veteran of the NYC Public School system, she has taught special education, trained teachers in literacy, and served as a multicultural specialist and diversity advisor. Presently, she is the Senior Program Manager of the 21st Century After School Programs at the Department of Education. Ms. Almontaser frequently lectures and serves on panels on Arab culture, Islam, and cultural diversity, at local, national and international conferences. She co-designed a curriculum for the Muslim Communities Project at Columbia University and for Educators for Social Responsibility/Metro. She has contributed chapters to *The Day Our World Changed: Children's Art of 9/11* and *Forever After: New York City Teachers on 9/11*.

Ms. Almontaser has been featured in several documentaries and has been profiled on the front page of the *New York Times* on the founding of the Khalil Gibran International Academy, as well as in NY 1, *TIME* Magazine, and *Newsweek*. *Daily News* profiled her for spearheading the inauguration of Arab Heritage Week with the City of New York in 2005. She sits on the boards of Brooklyn Borough President's Diversity Task Force, Muslim Consultative Network, Women In Islam Inc., We Are All Brooklyn, and Youth Bridge NY.

Born in Yemen and raised in the U.S., Ms. Almontaser is the recipient of numerous awards, including Pax Christi's *Local Peacemaker Award*, Jews for Racial and Economic Justice's *Risk-Takers Award*, the *Annual Faith Leaders Award* and proclamations for building bridges of understanding from the Borough President of Brooklyn and the Mayor of the City of New York. In 2004, Ms. Almontaser received the Revson Fellowship at Columbia University.

David Munir has served as the Imam and teacher at the Central Mosque of Lisbon, Portugal since 1986. A key representative of the Islamic community of Lisbon, Imam Munir has been an active participant in debates, conferences, and lectures throughout Portugal and at numerous universities. He is frequented by many non-Muslims at the mosque who seek a better understanding of Islam and the Lisbon Muslim community.

Born in Mozambique, Imam Munir graduated from the Islamic Centre of Karachi and obtained his Bachelor of Arts from Karachi University. He contributed to the translation of the Holy Quran into Portuguese.

Dr. Naif Al-Mutawa is creator of *THE 99*, a comic strip based on superheroes born of an Islamic archetype. The first of its kind, *THE 99* has received significant positive attention from international media and has been covered by *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *TIME* Magazine, *Newsweek*, *Wired*, *Elle*, *Washington Post* and *The Guardian*. Recently, *Forbes* named it one of the top 20 trends sweeping the globe.

Dr. Al-Mutawa has extensive clinical experience working with former prisoners of war in Kuwait as well as at the Survivors of Political Torture unit of Bellevue Hospital in New York. He has seen first hand the cancer that intolerance can bring to any society. This direct contact with the horrors of prisons and with victims of torture because of their religious and political beliefs, led to his writing a children's tale that won a UNESCO prize for literature in the service of tolerance.

Dr. Al-Mutawa holds a PhD in Clinical Psychology from Long Island University. He has a Masters in Business Administration from Columbia University and a Masters in Organizational Psychology from Teacher's College, Columbia University. He earned his undergraduate degree from Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts, where he triple majored in clinical psychology, English literature and history.

Dr Hisham A. Hellyer is Associate Fellow at the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick (UK) and the founding director of Visionary Consultants Group, a West-Muslim World relations research consultancy. In the aftermath of the July 7, 2005 bombings in London, he was Deputy Convenor of the UK Government's Home Office working group on "Tackling Extremism and Radicalization." Dr. Hellyer has been a Ford Fellow of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, as well as an ESRC Placement Fellow at the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He was a visiting professor at the Law Department at the American University in Cairo.

Dr. Hellyer writes on minority Muslim communities, Western political philosophy, and the interplay between Islam and modernity. He is a regular commentator for the *Guardian*, the *Washington Post*, and addresses forums such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) and the BBC Doha Debates. In his latest book, *The Other European*, he argues that Europe must come to terms with all of her history, past and present, and that Muslim communities should work to be integral to Europe.

Eman Fawzy is the Executive Director for the Egyptian Association for Society Development in Cairo, Egypt, an organization fighting such practices as FGM/FGC in the Cairo area. It has worked closely with ASMA, Global Fund and MAMA Cash. Ms. Fawzy is an expert in Egyptian and Islamic archeology, and she is a regular lecturer in the Egyptian and Islamic Museum, as well as in archeology sites across Egypt

Ethar El-Katatney is a staff writer at *Egypt Today*, the leading current affairs magazine in the Middle East, and at its sister magazine, *Business Today Egypt*. Ms. El-Katatney writes on social and religious issues and promotes women's rights in Egypt. She is a contributor to *Muslimah Media Watch*, a website that critiques how Muslim women are represented in the media and popular culture, and is a member of The Bussy Project, an organization that creates awareness campaigns surrounding events related to international women. The Project also holds annual performances of an Egyptian version of *The Vagina Monologues*, in which El-Katatney participates.

Ms. El-Katatney travels all over the world for conferences promoting dialogue between different religions and cultures and has attended summer intensive programs in England, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. While in Yemen, she wrote *40 days and 40 nights in Yemen*, which is set for publication by a London based publishing house. Born in Saudi Arabia, raised in Egypt, and educated in the West, Ms. El-Katatney has an undergraduate business degree from the American University in Cairo and is currently pursuing two graduate degrees from the same university, one in business administration and one in television and digital journalism.

Faisal Mirza is chairman and founder of Wij Blijven Hier! ("We're Staying Here!", www.wijblijvenhier.nl), the most popular Muslim website in the Netherlands and the largest religion-themed website in the Netherlands. It brings the Dutch Muslim voice into the national discussion and highlights the lives of proud Dutch Muslims. Founded as a simple weblog in 2005, Wij Blijven Hier! has grown to become the main platform for Muslim writers in the Netherlands, with over 25 writers, 1700 articles and thousands of daily visitors. The website has won several awards, including *Best Weblog* and *Best Collective Weblog* from the Dutch Bloggies, and it has been discussed in several television programs and newspapers, as well as the Dutch Parliament.

Mr. Mirza co-founded the Muslim students association MashriQ in 2003, and he is currently chairman of MashriQ National. With a chapter in Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam, it is the largest Muslim students association in the Netherlands. He was also member of the Advisory board of the National Muslim Youth Body and a committee for The Hague to do research on the use of grants. He is also active in Al-Hidayah, an organization working to revive Islamic spirituality in the European context. As part of his work with Al-Hidayah, he organizes the popular Mawlid Festival, a yearly event with international speakers and artists.

For his community work and study results, Mr. Mirza was awarded "Best Student" in the Netherlands by the Center for Diversity Policy and "Best Student" by The Hague University. He has written more than 300 articles on various topics in various media.

Fakhria Ibrahimi is daughter of M. Ibrahim, born in 1977 in Kabul, Afghanistan. She graduated from Rabia Balkhi girl's high school. After the Taliban took control of Kabul, she left Afghanistan for Pakistan, where she started medical school at Afghan University (Peshawar) in 2001. During the Hamed Karzai presidency, she returned to Afghanistan and joined Kabul Medical University.

In addition to her university education, Ms. Ibrahimi has been trained in film directing, and she has convened cultural and literature meetings for the Foundation of Cultural and Civil Society (FCCS), a Kabul-based arts center. She has also participated in Women and Politics at the Friedrich Ebert Foundation's (FES) Kabul office. She is currently working as a representative for the Funder's Network for Afghan Women in Kabul.

Farha Abdul Kadir Assegaf (Farha Ciciek) is a Board member of the Center for Education and Information on Islam and Women's Rights (RAHIMA), Indonesia. Since 2000, Ms. Ciciek has directed RAHIMA in implementing women's empowerment activities, focusing on building gender equality in the pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) communities, Madrasah, Public schools, Majelis Ta'lims (informal religious learning center) and Moslem Women's Organizations.

Since 1990 she has been a facilitator, trainer, speaker and consultant on gender and women's rights, Islamic education and interfaith issues. She has written numerous articles on gender, sexuality, reproductive rights, violence against women, fundamentalism, and interfaith issues relating to religious/Islamic discourses. She is currently conducting research on the Fundamentalization that is occurring in Islamic Boarding Schools and Secular Public Schools.

In 2005, Ms. Ciciek was nominated as part of 1000 women around the world for the Noble Peace Prize. Ashoka International awarded her the Ashoka Fellow (2007) for her work as "a social innovator" in creating alternative models to spread gender equality for, and within, Indonesian society. She holds a bachelor's degree in Islamic Philosophy from the Sunan Kalijaga State Institute for Islamic Studies Yogyakarta and a master's degree in Sociology from Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Farhan Latif is Director of Development in the office of Institutional Advancement at the University of Michigan, Dearborn. Mr. Latif is also co-founder and CEO of Strategic Inspirations, a marketing and consulting firm focused on the development of non-profit organizations. He has consulted with non-profits across the US in areas of brand management, market research, donor relationship management, and strategic planning.

Mr. Latif founded "Unity in Diversity," one of the largest youth organized, annual interfaith gatherings in the Metro-Detroit region. He is also a trainer for COMPASS, a management training program developed for Muslim students. Through COMPASS, he develops and conducts leadership seminars for students and campuses across the U.S. Mr. Latif has appeared on numerous media outlets, including ABC, FOX, BBC, *LA Times*, *New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Voice of America*, the *Gulf Times* and *USA Today*. Born in Pakistan and residing in Detroit, Mr. Latif is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Public Administration with a focus in Non-Profit Leadership, at the University of Michigan, Dearborn. As a student, he served as president of the Student Government, the Muslim Students Association, and Students United for Peace & Justice. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the University of Michigan's *Outstanding Service to the Metropolitan Community Award* and certificates of commendation from Michigan's Governor and Senate.

Fatih Alev has served as an imam in Copenhagen, Denmark from 1999 to 2006. He is currently chairman of the organization "Muslims in Dialogue," as well as co-editor of Islam.dk. In addition, he is boardmember of the Islamic-Christian Study Centre, a dialogue and "diapactice" oriented association established in 1996 by Muslims and Christians in cooperation. He is also a member of the European think tank European Muslim Network.

From 2001 to 2006, Mr. Alev was a columnist for the daily *Politiken*, contributing monthly articles on religious and social issues, often commenting on debates surrounding Islam and Muslims. In addition, he has written a

number of articles for books on society and religion, including “An Ottoman in Denmark,” “Islam in *New Danish*,” “Christian-Muslim Relations Now and in the Future, and “Christian-Muslim Counseling in Copenhagen.”

Fatima Aman is Information System Auditor with PricewaterhouseCoopers, where she has worked since 2005, first in Pakistan and now in Kabul, Afghanistan. She holds a master’s degree in computer science.

Ms. Aman is highly active in social work within the Shia Imami Ismaili community of Pakistan, and she has been involved with different institutions as an honorary/volunteer member for the past ten years. For example, she has worked with the Aga Khan Education Services (Pakistan) in a voluntary capacity since 1998, serving as chairperson for the Local Education Board, covering five regions, from 2006 to 2008. While working in Afghanistan, Ms. Aman is looking to replicate these activities for the benefit of her community, as well as the whole Muslim ummah. Her vision is to create a spark and bring opportunities to the less fortunate, regardless of cultural and religious differences, by improving education and creating sources of income for the unemployed.

Fatima Shama is the Senior Education Policy Advisor for the Mayor’s Office in the City of New York. She joined the Bloomberg Administration in 2006 to work in the areas of education and community development. Prior to joining the Mayor’s Office, Ms. Shama worked for a number of New York City nonprofits, specifically in the areas of public health policy, economic and workforce development, international health and human rights, and immigrant rights.

After the events of September 11th Ms. Shama, who has been engaged in Arab-Jewish dialogue since her teens, became actively involved in Muslim affairs. Born-and-raised in New Yorker to Palestinian and Brazilian parents, Ms. Shama is a graduate of SUNY Binghamton. She attended Temple Law School in Philadelphia, completed the Executive Management Program at Columbia Business School’s Institute for Nonprofit Management, and holds a Masters in Public Administration from Baruch College’s School of Public Affairs.

Fatima Shawqi is a researcher at Al Tajdeed Cultural & Social Society (Bahrain), focusing on Innovation of Islamic Thought. She is also a member in the Environmental Citizenship Program of Bahrain and Women’s Association for Human Development, among other women’s empowerment organizations. Ms. Shawqi’s speaking engagements include the Al Tajdeed Cultural & Social Society, Mohammed Consignment Conference, the Human Development Conference (organized by Bahrain Women’s Society members), and the Resistance of Violence Against Children regional conference in Egypt.

Faysal Soysal is a Turkish author, film writer and director, and cultural critic. Mr. Soysal’s poems and articles on film and literary criticism have appeared in several magazines and newspapers in Turkey, and his films have been screened and received awards at numerous national and international film festivals. These films include *What Time Is It?* (2008), *Istanbul* (2008), *Mizansen* (2008), *Dreams of Lost Time* (2007), *The Day I Became My Mother* (2006), *Ithica* (2005), and *Fordbiddan Dream* (2005). He has also written and directed several short films at New York Film Academy. Mr. Soysal’s poetry book, *Duse Yagmalanan Hayal Kuyusu*, was published in Turkish at 2002. He currently works on cinema projects and gives lectures on cinema and poetry at cultural centers in Istanbul.

Mr. Soysal holds two Master’s Degrees, one in Cinema from Tehran Art University, the other in Modern Turkish Literature from Van Yuzuncuyil University (Turkey).

Firoz Ladak is the Executive Director of the Edmond and Benjamin de Rothschild Foundations, which he joined in 2004. As Executive Director, his responsibilities include developing strategic philanthropic activities, worldwide, with a focus on education, environment, medical research, arts and cross-cultural dialogue. Prior to joining the foundation, Mr. Ladak spent 10 years in Investment Banking. During this time, he secured the financing of large developmental projects in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, gaining considerable experience in economic development and the setting of public-private partnerships. Mr. Ladak graduated from the University of Oxford with a Masters of Philosophy in Oriental studies. He is a multilingual Canadian and French citizen.

Gamila Dahri is the Coordinator of *Présence Musulmane Worldwide (PMW)*. Founded in 1996 by Tariq Ramadan, PMW is a network engaging in discourse about Muslim issues in French-speaking countries. Ms. Dahri is also a representative member of the non-profit organization, *FEMYSO (Forum of European Muslim Youth & Students Organizations)*, based in Brussels. As a member of FEMYSO, she participates in the annual "Week of Muslim-Christian Encounters," in Paris, with 40 participating cities in Europe. Similarly, Ms. Dahri co-founded the project "Women from Minorities & the Media," at the European Youth Council in Budapest. The research for this project is the first of its kind to be conducted in Europe and has received recognition and support from the Council of Europe.

Ms. Dahri recently received an award for best inter-religious project in Greece. Her project was an inter-religious calendar which, with the help of their teachers, was made by students themselves. Since its debut in Greece, the calendar is now also being made by students in other European countries.

Born in Brussels, Ms. Dahri is of Moroccan origins. She holds a Master's Degree in International Business Management. She is currently working for Lagora Invest, the largest French real estate company in Dubai, as Business Development Manager for the North American market.

Ghada El Nashar is the Associate Director of the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research at the American University in Cairo. Previously, Ms. El Nashar had worked as Assistant Professor in the Mass Communications Department at Misr International University, where she taught courses on Broadcasting. She still serves as an external examiner for evaluating MIU graduation projects every year. She had been the Senior Producer and Editor for Video Cairo, an in-house production company, working such for international news agencies as BBC, Reuters, CNN, NHK, and ZDF.

While working on her Master's degree in Television Journalism at the American University in Cairo, Ms. El Nashar had been Executive Producer at the Kamal Adham Center. Upon graduation, she received the Kamal Adham Award for Outstanding Performance, and she was nominated by the Egyptian government and selected by the Japanese Embassy to represent Egypt in the Fourth Program for the Ship for World Youth.

Ghassan Mansara is a Sufi sheikh and spiritual teacher and has been the second chair to the leaders of the Sufi community in Israel since 2001. Mr. Mansara studied with the Great Sheikh Muhammad Hashem el Bagdadi of East Jerusalem, Sheikh of the Caddery Order. In addition to his extensive knowledge of the Qur'an, *tafsir*, Halacha, theology, philosophy, and history as well as Sufi philosophy, medicine, and psychology, he is also an expert in Sufi dream interpretation and a scholar of Islamic writers, especially Rumi and Ibn Arabi. He has published his poems and stories in a variety of magazines in the Arab World and Israel, and he co-authored *Light Upon Light: A Journey Following Sufis* in 2006.

Mr. Mansara is deeply engaged in peace work and interfaith dialogue, lecturing internationally at various colleges, universities, synagogues, mosques and churches on co-existence, cooperation, Sufism, and the Israel-Palestine situation. He is the co-founder of and a lecturer at Abraham's Way, an interfaith institute promoting understanding and dialogue between Muslims and Jews. He is also a group facilitator on religious and international conflict and member of several projects promoting dialogue between different religions and nations worldwide. Mr. Mansara frequently conducts workshops for education leaders on subjects such as human dignity, the sanctity of life, and the status of women and spiritual workshops for personal development, anger management, and tolerance. He is also a recognized mediator between Jews and Muslims and a tour guide for spiritual trips.

Born in Nazareth, Mr. Mansara graduated from Hebrew University, Jerusalem with a degree in Islamic Studies and Arabic Language & Literature. He has also taken the "Facilitating Groups in Conflict" course at the Zipori School for Facilitators in Jerusalem.

Gonca Aydin is Vice-President of the Union of Muslim Theologians and Islamic Religious Researchers. Ms. Aydin is a leader in promoting inter-religious and intercultural dialogue in Frankfurt, Germany. For example, she created the Interfaith and Intercultural Women's Network, a group of about 40 women from various religious,

cultural and occupational backgrounds. She has worked as the instructor for inter-religious dialogue at DITIB-Frankfurt (The Turkish Islamic Union of Religious Institutes). For her interfaith activities, she received an award from the mayor of Frankfurt. She was selected by the newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* as one of the "People of the Week."

Ms. Aydin is also a respected theologian and frequent participant in discussions about Islam. In December 2007, she co-founded the Union of Muslim Theologians and Islamic Religious Researches in Germany, which seeks to lead a dialogue about Islam, build bridges with other religions, and discuss ways to teach about Islam in German Schools. She attended Dokuz Eylul University in Izmir, Turkey, where she studied Islamic Theology. From 2003-2007 she was at the Johann Wolfgang von Goethe University, studying Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as the pedagogy and sociology of religion.

Hady Amr is the Director of the Bookings Doha Center in Qatar, as well as a fellow in Foreign Policy studies at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Bookings Institution. He is also a co-organizer of the Saban Center at Brookings Project on U.S.-Relations with the Islamic World's annual forum in Doha *The U.S.-Islamic World Forum*, a global event that brings together American and Muslim leaders. Prior to his current position, Mr. Amr served as Senior Advisor to the World Economic Forum on Islamic-Western relations. He also served as the founding Executive Director of World Links Arab Region, a World Bank supported non-government organization working on technology, education and development. As an appointee at the U.S. Department of Defense, Mr. Amr helping establish the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, as well as served as an economist and consultant to the World Bank and U.N. agencies.

Mr. Amr is a thought leader on U.S. relations with the Muslim World and an expert with two decades of experience in economic development and democratization in the Muslim World. He is the author of numerous publications, including "*The Need to Communicate: How to Improve U.S. Public Diplomacy with the Islamic World*" published by Brookings. His work has also been published by *Newsweek*, the *Washington Post*, and the *International Herald Tribune*. He is a co-author of, "Engaging the Muslim World: A Communications Strategy to Win the War of Ideas" published by Opportunity 08, a project of Brookings and ABC News.

Mr. Amr received his undergraduate degree from Tufts University, and his Masters Degree in Economics and Public and International Affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University, and has since been appointed by the Princeton University Board of Trustees to the Woodrow Wilson School's Advisory Council.

Hana'a Al Syead is General Manager of Organization and Operational Development for the Olayan Financing Company, where she has managed strategic projects and external relationships, working with the World Economic Forum. She is currently spearheading the company's integrated marketing and communications activities. Prior to this appointment in 2001, Ms. Al Syead worked in the banking sector, first at Saudi American Bank, later Samba and then at the United Saudi Bank, where she was Director of Marketing, Product Development and Public Relations.

Ms. Al Syead obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science and International Management (with a minor in French) from Simmons College and a Master of Science degree in Computer Information Systems from Boston University.

Hanan Almadani is a fashion designer and the general manager of AlBana commercial center. She has presented in many different fashion shows, including the Saudi wedding fashion show in Jeddah (2003), along with several shows in Beirut. In Europe, Ms. Almadani's fashions have also been appreciated, featured during Italian fashion week in the Collezione Alta Moda, for which she received public attention as a Saudi designer. Ms. Almadani is a member of the Arab Women Investors Union, the Saudi Community for Safe Environment, and several charity organizations.

Hanan Hussein Kawasmi is the Senior Manager at Welfare Association, a leading Palestinian non-governmental development organization dedicated to preserving Palestinian heritage and identity through support of culture and a civil society. Prior to her work with Welfare Association, from 1997 to 2002 Ms. Kawasmi

was the grant officer at Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC), a Norwegian Project aimed at developmental needs of Palestinians.

Furthermore, Ms. Kawasmi is a founding member of the Center for International Dialogue and Development (CIDAD), established by a group of independent Palestinian Muslims and Christians to serve as a catalyst for change in Palestine, the Arab World and internationally through trainings, workshops, and conferences. Ms. Kawasmi is also a member of Young Entrepreneurs Palestine (YEP), an organization devoted to empowering women and youth in the economic and political spheres.

Hanif Escudero Uribe is President of Youth Cultural Association Al Agua, a Spanish nonprofit organization geared towards youth and inter-cultural dialogue which offers a framework for development and interaction between young people of diverse cultures and beliefs. Mr. Escudero is also a member of the Islamic Board, an Islamic religious, nonprofit organization dedicated to religious freedom in Spain, and is the Director of Development of the Halal Institute, a Spanish Guarantee Halal certification. Notably, he started Webislam.com, the first website about Islam in Spanish to receive over 10 million hits in a month. Working on such topics as *halal* and youth, Mr. Escudero is engaged with the Center for Documentation and Islamic Publications (CDPI) and has worked closely with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the Alliance for Peace. His other projects include the Course of Islam with the International Congress of Islamic Feminism and the Hispanic-speaking Muslims Congress.

For the past two years, Mr. Escudero has been working with Islamic Board and Al Agua to develop the Platform for Muslim Youth in order to address issues and create projects related to young Muslims. As an extension of this project, he is planning to organize an International Congress of Youth Muslims in 2009-2010.

Haris Hromic is a Founding Member of the Board of Directors for the Bosniak-American Advisory Council (BAACBH) and a co-founder of the Academy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in New York. He is a Fellow of The Royal Society of Arts in London and remains active with the Development Committee of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, where he served as the member of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Hromic was Head of the U.S. section of the Foreign Policy Initiative in Sarajevo. In 2004-2005, he served as a Tufts University Dayton Project Fellow on a project of constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Professionally, Mr. Hromic works for the Institutional Client Group of the Barclays Capital in New York. Prior, he served as Senior Analyst for the New York City Mayor Bloomberg Office of Management and Budget, with oversight responsibilities for \$1.6 billion capital program.

Mr. Hromic holds a Masters of Arts in Political Science from New York University specializing in International Political Economy, Masters of Public Affairs specializing in Public Management from Baruch College Graduate School of Public Affairs, and a B.B.A in International Marketing from Zicklin School of Business. He has published works in the field of international relations, social reconstruction and genocide, and gender leadership politics.

Haroon Moghul is Director of Public Relations for the Islamic Center at New York University. Formerly a contributing editor and columnist for *Islamica Magazine*, Mr. Moghul maintains a popular blog (*Avari*), which won several Brass Crescent Awards, including wins for Best Muslim Blog and Best Writing. His essays have been published in a variety of media, including Pakistan's *Dawn* and *The Friday Times*. His first novel, *The Order of Light*, was released by Penguin in 2006. A French translation, published by Cherche Midi, was released in 2007.

Mr. Moghul has spoken at numerous American Muslim, Christian and Jewish organizations, and participated in educational and interfaith workshops to advance understanding and dialogue on the Islamic world and the West. His speaking engagements include Columbia University, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Michigan and the University of Minnesota, as well as appearances on CNN and NPR.

Mr. Moghul graduated from New York University with a Bachelor of Arts in Middle Eastern Studies and Philosophy, with a minor in Arabic. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate at Columbia University, where his research

concerns the intellectual history of colonial South Asian Muslim discourses on community and authority.

Hasna Nada is a free lance Public Relations specialist based in Qatar. From 2004-2008, she worked at the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, holding various posts, including Public Relations Officer, Media and Communication Specialist and Senior Project Officer. Ms. Nada's public relations experience includes organizing and managing marketing campaigns, high caliber events, fundraiser dinners and international conferences in addition to media and marketing relations. During her time at the Qatar Foundation, she has contributed to the launch of Reach Out To Asia (ROTA), a Qatari NGO committed to providing and supporting basic, quality primary education across Asia.

Ms. Nada graduated in Switzerland with a combined major in Political Science and Economics and later worked as Treasurer and Forex Specialist for 4 years for the Indesit Company, a major Italian multinational, managing the firm's global hedging activities for exposures on the foreign exchange and money markets, including emerging ones. She trained at some of the world's leading investment banks including Citigroup, BNP Paribas and JP Morgan.

Born in the United States to an Egyptian father and Syrian mother, Ms. Nada grew up between Switzerland and Italy but has also lived for extended periods in other European and Arab countries, finally settling in Qatar in 2003. She speaks 5 languages and has been involved since an early age in various interfaith initiatives in Europe as well as Muslim Youth integration programs. In addition to her freelance work, she owns and manages a traditional fashion boutique.

Hassan Abdulla is a Youth Officer in the Ministry of Human Resources Youth & Sports (MHRYS), Government of the Republic of Maldives, where he identifies and develops innovate opportunities. He is interested in philosophies originating from the Holy Quran and building a peaceful and harmonious community. Mr. Abdulla started his career as a project officer in the regional administration office in the southern Maldives, where he worked in social and infrastructure development.

Hayat Maarafi is the Executive Director of the Qatar Debate Center, the national debating organization for Qatar, dedicated to developing, supporting and raising the standard of open discussion and debate among students in Qatar and across the Middle East. Established in 2007, the Qatar Debate Center is shaping the global citizens of today and the intellectual leaders of tomorrow. Until recently, Dr. Hayat was a faculty member at Qatar University, where she served as the Director for Student Activities. Previously, she had operated an independent girls' school under the Supreme Education Council. She is also a member of the Qatar Foundation.

Dr. Hayat earned her BA in English and European Languages from Qatar University. She received her Master's degree in Applied Linguistics and Sociolinguistics from Durham University and her doctorate in Psycholinguistics (Motivation to learn) from Sunderland University in 2004.

Hina Maqsood is a Program Officer with Human Resource Development Network (HRDN), a non-governmental, non-partisan civil society organization based in Islamabad, Pakistan. HRDN is a membership-based strategic think tank with over 800 members from Pakistan and other countries. As a Program Officer, Ms. Maqsood has conducted a number of trainings on social mobilization, capacity building, communication and report writing skills, media outreach, time management, gender and governance, organizational development and project management.

Over the last four years, Ms. Maqsood has diverse experience working in the development sector as project officer, project coordinator, monitoring & evaluation officer, trainer over the last four years. She holds an M.Phil degree in American Studies and a Master's in English literature and language.

Hongwei Musa is an activist and graduate student from Nanjing, China, where Muslims have lived for more than 1,000 years. Since 2004, Mr. Musa has organized various Muslim and non-Muslim groups – including Christians, Buddhists, and over ten nationalities – to visit mosques, Buddhist temples, and Christian churches in China. He carries out interfaith dialogue with non-Muslims in order to introduce them to Islam, giving them the Qur'an and

other books and items related to Islamic culture. In addition, he helps poor Muslim university students finish school and educates those Muslims who struggle with their faith.

Born into a multi-cultural family – his father’s family Muslim and his mother’s family Christian and Buddhist – Mr. Hongwei holds a bachelor’s degree in law and is currently studying for his master’s degree in politics, with specialties in ideological political education, religion, and social public management.

Dr. Huda Totonji is a female artist and a certified master calligrapher. She has taught at Dar Al-Hekma College in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and currently, she is working as an assistant professor in the Graphic Design Department at the Art Institute of Washington. Dr. Totonji’s multi-media and eclectic art practice reflects her existence in two cultural traditions: one of the east, the other of the west. The ability to combine both the Eastern and Western ideology has been a constant interest in her artistic approach, which investigates issues of femininity and visual representation. She has actively participated in more than 60 exhibitions. Her work was featured in the critically acclaimed PBS documentary entitled, *Mohammed, Legacy of the Prophet*. Recently, her artwork was exhibited in the United Nations and featured in the cover of the ISNA 2007 *Hijrah* Calendar.

Formally trained in the U.S., Dr. Totonji received her Bachelors and Masters of Fine Arts (MFA) in Art and Visual Technology from George Mason University. She also completed her PhD in Fine Art. She obtained her TESOL certificate in Applied Linguistics from Portland State University.

Humaam Mazyek is editorial staff manager at www.islam.de, the most well-known Muslim website for German speakers. Initially established by the Central Council of Muslims in Germany, *Islam.de* stands for a better understanding of Muslim issues and is visited by Muslims and non-Muslim readers alike. He is also significantly involved in *waymo.de*, a Muslim web2.0 community-website and successful “spin-off” of *islam.de*. In addition to his professional work, Mr. Maykez is active in his local mosque, involved in a Muslim youth organization, and co-founder of the interreligious relief agency “Green Helmets.” He was born in Aachen, Germany, son of a Syrian father and German mother. He studied international business economics and marketing at the University of Maastricht (Netherlands). He is married.

Humza Yousaf is the Public Affairs Director for the Scottish-Islamic Foundation (SIF), launched in June 2008 with the leaders of all major Scottish parties in attendance. Mr. Yousaf works as a political advisor to Scotland’s Deputy First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon MSP, and Scotland’s First Muslim Member of the Scottish Parliament, Bashir Ahmad MSP. He has been interviewed by BBC several times and quoted in national newspapers. Mr. Yousaf is also on the board of Young Muslims Glasgow and the Islamic Society of Britain. Furthermore, he is a presenter of the Current Affairs program on Radio Ramadhan Glasgow and an anchor on the iWitness News Podcast.

Husnul Amin is a PhD fellow at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) at the Hague, where he studies the discourses of Islamists and Islamic institutions from a developmental perspective in his home country of Pakistan. Mr. Amin’s PhD project is constructed on three levels of analysis: discourses of Islamic political parties, Islamic religious schools (*madrasas*), and the perceptions of individual Ulama. This study aims to explore how, and to what extent, issues concerning poverty, inequality, well-being and social uplift are debated in theoretical discourses and in the practical activities of Islamic political parties, religious schools, and religious scholars in Pakistan.

Mr. Amin also writes for an Urdu daily newspaper *Daily Mashriq* published from Peshawar, Pakistan. During the last five years, he has written extensively on religious politics, *madrasas*, militancy in Afghanistan and the tribal areas, suicide bombing, social movements, and the role of Ulama and Islamic institutions in conflict resolution and peace building. Recently he joined the editorial board of the newsletter “Sociology of Islam and Muslim Societies” published from the Virginia Tech Department of Sociology.

Hussein Rashid is an instructor at the Center for Religious Inquiry at St. Bartholomew’s Church in New York City and a professor at Hofstra University. After finishing his undergraduate degree at Columbia University, Mr. Rashid completed a Master’s in Theology at Harvard University, where he is now finishing his PhD in Islamic Cultures. He works with major political figures and institutions, advising them on the history and culture of

Muslims. In addition to founding Islamicate (islamicate.com) and writing regularly for Religion Dispatches (religiondispatches.org), he appears on various media outlets as an expert commentator. Mr. Rashid is deeply committed to inter-faith work and is passionate about teaching. His website can be found at husseinrashid.com.

Ibrahima Wone is General Secretary of the Muslims in Agriculture Initiative, a group of major land owners in Senegal, Mali and Mauritania. After previously working in accounting, Mr. Wone started his own business in Dakar and later switched to the agriculture sector. He now works on agricultural investment in Senegal. He has been invited to Europe to discuss the need for food self-sufficiency in Africa, insisting that the first step toward freedom and democracy in Africa is to feed the people.

Ilir Gashi was born on 21 May 1978 in Prizren, former Republic of Yugoslavia now Republic of Kosova. I am married and father of two children. I have studied Political Sciences in capital of Kosova, Prishtina and I am an active member at the Cultural Section of an NGO called AKEA, Association for Culture and Education. I can speak Albanian, English, Turkish and Serbian. I have experience with United Nations Mission in Kosova as a national staff and as a TV and Radio editor. Now I am as well engaged with an Islamic-informative web page called www.mesazhi.com. I took part in several seminars on the issue of Dialog between Cultures and Religions as well as on Young Muslim Leaders' issues.

Ilyasah bint Al-Shaheed Malik Al-Shabazz is an author, lecturer, and activist dedicated to empowering young people and encouraging a better understanding of history, culture, and self-expression through the use of arts & entertainment. Ms. Shabazz mentors at various group homes, lock-up facilities and high schools through production of *The WAKE-UP Tour*, her youth empowerment program. She is Corporation President and Board Member of *The Malcolm X & Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial, Educational, and Cultural Center* at The Audubon, the place of her father's martyrdom in 1965. As an Executive Producer, Ms. Shabazz recently produced a television pilot for *SHARE the eXperience*, a compilation of in-studio and on-location interviews of leaders in Entertainment, Sports and Politics, as well as citizens making a difference in their communities. She also assisted Spike Lee during the film production of *Malcolm X*, which won thirteen U.S. and international awards, including two Oscar Award nominations. Her book *Growing Up X* was nominated for the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Non-Fiction Literary Work and was named by the United Press International as its book of the week.

Ms. Shabazz is Honorary Co-Chair of *All For Africa*, a campaign which aims to plant 1 million oil palm trees to knockout poverty. As a member of the American Interfaith Leadership Delegation that participated with the Malaria No More Foundation, she helped to provide 2 million bednets to at-risk children in Mali. Ms. Shabazz has served on the Executive Youth Board for the Office of the Mayor in the City of Mount Vernon and as Director of Public Affairs & Special Events and Director of Cultural Affairs. She was an official member of the U.S. Delegation that accompanied former President Bill Clinton on the historic tour of South Africa to commemorate the victory of newly-elected President Nelson Mandela. Ms. Shabazz holds a Masters of Science in Education & Human Resource Development and a Bachelors of Science in Biology. For further information, please visit www.ilyasahshabazz.com

Imam Abu Eesa Niamatullah is the Founder of The Nahlah Foundation, an educational institute and publishing House based in the UK. He is also the Executive Director of Prophetic Guidance, a Da'wah organization involved in a number of local community activities such as charity work, fundraising, and holding workshops for various groups. Imam Abu is also the presenter of the al-Adab al-Mufrad TV show on Islamic manners and etiquette. He has appeared in the *Broadsheets*, BBC, and other media outlets as a commentator on various Islamic issues, especially post 9/11 and the July 7, 2005 bombings in London.

A translator of classical Arabic texts, author, and international lecturer, Imam Abu studied Islamic Theology and Law in Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Mauritania, as well as Anthropology and Islamic History in Manchester, UK. He currently teaches these subjects and is a part-time Imam and Khatib at the Cheadle Mosque in Cheshire, UK.

Iman Abou Atta works with Faith Matters, an organization dealing with conflict resolution, interfaith dialogue, the prevention of violent extremism, and community cohesion projects within the UK, especially between the Muslim

and Sikh communities. Ms. Atta was instrumental in the development of a ground-breaking project looking at tensions in some localized areas in the UK between these communities, and she has helped lead groups of UK-based Sikhs and Muslims on conflict resolution programs in Corrymeela and elsewhere in Northern Ireland.

Ms. Attah has also been involved in a number of interfaith and peace-building initiatives in Palestine/Israel. For example, she was instrumental in establishing the Future Vision (Al-Mustakbal), a charity which provides micro-finance loans to Palestinian women in the West Bank. She is also a member of the Steering Committee of the Religious Freedom Young Adults Network. Ms. Atta has traveled extensively to give lectures to interfaith groups in countries such as Taiwan, the UK and The Netherlands.

Imane Karich is founder of the ABPM (Belgian Association of Muslim Professionals), a Muslim networking platform aimed at inspiring the ethic of success among Muslim professionals in Belgium. She has worked in the field of Islamic finance for several years and has published two books on the subject: *Le Système Financier Islamique, de la Religion à la Banque* and *Finances & Islam*. In addition, she has published several articles on Islamic finance and economics for the main French-speaking Belgian economic newspapers *l'Echo*, the main banking revue, *Revue Bancaire et Financière*, and in the French newspaper *Le Monde*.

She also appeared on Belgian and French radios (Vivacité, Radio 21, Europe 1). She also contributed to the Chapter Islamic Accounting of the Islamic Finance Qualification (IFQ) proposed by the ESA/SII institute in London and wrote on economic development of Muslims in European in the book "European Islam: challenges for society and public policy" edited by the CEPS (EU). Born in Brussels, Belgium, she graduated in Business Administration from the HEC of Brussels. She is currently managing the Business Area "Financial Markets" at FINALYSE, a Brussels based Consultancy Company specialised in services to the financial industry.

Inayah Wulandari Wahid co-founded the Jakarta-based NGO Positive Movement in 2006. The organization's purpose is to awaken the young people's awareness to take action and build a peaceful and harmonious world by creating better relationships between self, the Divine, family, and nation. Positive Movement does work in Indonesia and throughout Southeast Asia, and under Ms. Wahid's leadership, it is now opening branches in other Indonesian cities, as well as in Vietnam. Currently, she is working with her organization, as well as her father, the former President of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid, to promote new ways of building peaceful relationships between Islam and the Western world.

In 2007, Ms. Wahid represented her country and organization at the UN Special Session on Children for "A World Fit for Children." In early 2008, she represented Positive Movement as a resource person for the United Nation's Alliance of Civilizations in Madrid. She graduated from the University of Indonesia in 2006, majoring in Indonesian Literature.

Irtiqa Ali is Communications and Outreach Manager for Women for Women International, where she focuses on helping women victims of conflicts and war. She is currently Communication & Outreach Manager of the organization, supervising projects in Baghdad, Hillah and Karbala. Ms. Ali has participated in conferences titled, "Our Constitution, Our Future" (Jordan, 2005) and the National Conference in Erbil, Iraq (2005), addressing women's issues and rights in state constitutions. Her most recent report published, "Strong Women, Strong Nations" concerned the status of women in Iraq. Ms. Ali has also supervised and participated in training sessions held in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey to improve management and communication skills, accounting, finance and budget work. She received her BSC in Computer Engineering from Al Nahrain University/College of Engineering in Iraq.

Itrath Syed is a lecturer at Langara College, Centennial College, and Simon Fraser University. She is also a Research Associate at the University of British Columbia, where she completed a Master's degree in Women's Studies at the Centre for Women's and Gender Studies. Her research explored the gendered and racialized construction of the Muslim community in the media discourses surrounding the Islamic Arbitration or "Shariah" debate in Ontario, Canada. She also coordinates the Action-Research Exchange program at Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG), which connects academia and community organizations. She has been interviewed for several documentaries and is a frequent presenter on a wide array of political and social issues.

In addition to her academic interests, Ms. Syed has also worked at a rape crisis center, and at a transition houses for battered women and their children. In the 2004 Canadian federal election, she ran as a candidate for the New Democratic Party in her home of Delta-Richmond East, British Columbia. She is an activist for social justice, opposing occupation, and the anti-war movement.

Dr. Ivana Hrdlickova is a researcher in Islamic Sharia, with a focus on human rights and women's rights in international and Islamic law. She has served on a number of international legal and judicial projects in this capacity, including the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's (EuroMed) efforts to increase judicial cooperation between the Mediterranean-European Development Agreement (MEDA) countries. She has also worked with the CEELI Institute (Prague) on issues of legal ethics, corruption and anti- money laundering.

Dr. Hrdlickova holds a Master's degree in Business and Criminal Law and J.D. in Civil and Procedural Law. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in International Law (Ph.D.) at Charles University in Prague.

Jihad F. Saleh is a Legislative Assistant in the United States Congress. His policy coverage focuses on education, homeland security, and government reform. Along with his policy duties, Mr. Saleh is the Program & Outreach Coordinator for the Congressional Muslim Staffers Association (CMSA). He is a frequent speaker at public and government programs focused on the Muslim community. Mr. Saleh's areas of specialization include Muslim youth, young professional civic engagement, and the influence of Muslim Americans in public affairs institutions. He is an advocate of young professional Muslim organizations that positively impact the lives of all Americans, through civic engagement and networking that promotes social justice and charity.

Mr. Saleh continues to serve as a Curriculum Adviser for the Muslim Public Service Network's (MPSN) Washington DC Fellowship Program, where he is an alumnus. MPSN's curriculum and networking events promote the ability of American Muslim students and young professionals to engage effectively with governmental, public affairs, and political institutions within the U.S. Mr. Saleh is also a Fellow of the American Muslim Civic Leadership Institute's (AMCLI) 2009 training program. AMCLI aims to identify and provide relevant academic training, professional development, and social networking opportunities to emerging American Muslim civic leaders.

Mr. Saleh has earned graduate degrees from Stanford University and Princeton University. Prior to graduate studies, he taught special education students for four years at an inner-city high school in his hometown of Los Angeles.

Jonathan AC Brown is Assistant Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization at the University of Washington in Seattle. He received his BA in History from Georgetown University in 2000 and his doctorate in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from the University of Chicago in 2006. Dr. Brown has studied and conducted research in Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Iran. His book publications include *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunni Hadith Canon* (Brill, 2007) and *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oneworld, 2008, forthcoming). He has also published articles in the fields of Hadith, Islamic law, Sufism, Arabic lexical theory and Pre-Islamic poetry. Dr. Brown's current research interests include the history of forgery and historical criticism in Islamic civilization and modern conflicts between Late Sunni Traditionalism and Salafism in Islamic thought. His webpage can be found at <http://faculty.washington.edu/brownj9/>.

Kannaporn Akarapisan (Noorjahan Ali Boolay) is Program Coordinator and Instructor in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformations at the Institute of Religion, Culture and Peace (IRCP) at Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Ms. Akarapisan organizes peace-study tours and inter- and intra-faith dialogues between Buddhist, Christian and Muslim for groups of students from across the globe, especially the US and Europe. She also is a frequent guest speaker to non-Muslims on Islam and women in Islam. Previously, she worked as an international news reporter, then as a diplomat at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok, Thailand.

Ms. Akarapisan has published "A Challenge for Peace-Loving Muslims" and "Personal Faith in Islam: More Powerful than Global Borders" in *The Nation*, an English-language newspaper in Thailand. She graduated with honors from Thammasat University and Western Michigan University with degrees in Political Science.

Khalid Al-Jufairi is a member of the Qatari Students Network and has been involved in the Youth for the Alliance of Civilization (United Nations), an initiative that aims to improve understanding and cooperative relations among nations and peoples across cultures. Mr. Al-Jufairi is also a member of the Rapid Response Media Mechanism team affiliated with the UN Alliance of Civilizations. He has been a proactive youth participating in several prominent symposiums, recently playing a part in the "Learning from the Future" project foreshadowing the World Economic Forum's agenda. He is a forth-year student at Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar, majoring in International Politics.

Khalil Aitbal is Director of Refresh Entertainment, an event agency that organizes intercultural and interreligious events for governmental and nonprofit organizations in the Netherlands. It aims to create a platform for art and culture from an Islamic perspective capable of competing in the Dutch market. Mr. Aitbal is also the spokesman of the Union of Moroccan mosques in Amsterdam, an organization dedicated to stimulating the processes of integration and creating understanding between the Muslims and the rest of Dutch society. He has also organized and participated several debates and events, especially during Ramadan

Kusainov Turarbek Kusainovich is President of Izgi Amal, a Kazakhstan-based nongovernmental organization dedicated to enhancing the moral education of the Kazak youth and regenerating the cultural values and traditions amongst the Kazak people, particularly in the intellectual and religious domains. Mr. Kusainovich studied at Agrotechnical College, and he embraced Islam in 2002.

Laila al-Zwaini leads the Rule of Law Unit in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Kabul, Afghanistan (UNAMA). She has worked as an independent scholar and advisor to a number of international organisations and government institutions on judicial reform, human rights, shari'a, tribal custom and arbitration, constitutional process, access to justice, and rule of law programs in Muslim countries such as Yemen, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Ms. al-Zwaini has also been affiliated with the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM, Leiden), where she co-initiated the action-research project "Rights at Home." This project engaged Muslim intellectuals, human rights trainers and local 'advocates of change' in a collaborative effort to encourage a rights-based approach to shari'a among, and between, Muslim communities in Yemen, Tanzania, and South-East Asia. She has co-published two books: *A Bibliography of Islamic Law, 1980-1993* (1994) and *Legal Pluralism in the Arab World* (1999) as well as written several articles.

Ms. al-Zwaini holds master degrees in Arabic and Islamic Studies (MA) and Law (LL.M) from Leiden University, The Netherlands. She specialized in Islamic law and Middle East politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and in the legal anthropology of the Middle East at the French "Centre d'Etudes et de Documentation Economiques, Juridiques et Sociales" (CEDEJ) in Cairo.

Leila Ezzarqui is currently on a year sabbatical from the UN to pursue advanced studies in the field of Security and Counter-terrorism at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University in Washington DC. Prior to that, she held responsibilities in Political, Legal and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations and also worked for the Alliance of Civilizations as Senior Researcher at the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General. She has lectured on issues of Migration and Muslims in Western Europe before the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations, composed of eminent dignitaries, as well as in various countries in the Americas, Europe and the Middle East. Ms. Ezzarqui also worked in Bosnia Herzegovina, Togo, East Timor and Gaza with the United Nations, as well as in Brussels with the Council of Ministers of the European Union, the European Commission and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Ms. Ezzarqui holds a post graduate degree in International Law from Sorbonne University in Paris. She wrote a book on Iraq prefaced by former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali and has also published several articles and frequently appeared on TV.

Leyla Cakir is Chairwoman of Al Nisa, founded in 1982 as the only national Dutch Muslim women's organization. Al Nisa aims to provide accurate information about Islam based on the interpretation of more than one law school or culture and to enhance women's knowledge of Islam and their awareness about the status of women in Islam and the situation of Muslim women in Dutch society. The organization has a monthly magazine and has led the publication of books about the status of women in Islam and Islamic education.

In addition to her work at Al Nisa, Ms. Cakir is the only female chairwoman of a mosque in the Netherlands. She has participated in numerous forums, discussions, and interviews, and she has written articles such as "(A) Way from Europe," "A Muslim with a Vision without a Mission," "Hèhè the Netherlands are Radicalising," and "Spirituality and Believing in Dialogue." Since 9/11, Ms. Çakir has been interviewed by several media regarding Muslim women's position in society, integration, terrorism, radicalism, and Islam.

Born in the Netherlands to immigrant parents from Turkey, Ms. Cakir started her professional career working in a youth jail for 2 years. *Website: www.alnisa.nl*

Lisa Bseiso works for Reach Out to Asia (ROTA), an NGO focusing primarily on community development projects in Asia with a specific emphasis on promoting global responsibility for basic, quality primary education. In mid 2008, Ms. Bseiso decided to take a year off from her position at ROTA and entered the Oil & Gas Industry as the Public Relations Consultant for Business Developing at Chevron International Gas Inc. in Qatar. In March, 2009 she will return to ROTA.

Born to a Colombian mother and a Palestinian father, Ms. Bseiso has spent most of her life in Qatar, but she has traveled all over the world for work and study. For example, she traveled to Japan with the *World Campus – Japan 2007* program to work with people with both intellectual and physical disabilities. She studied International Relations with a minor in communications in Florida, and soon after graduating, she began working with the Florida Refugees Center, volunteering with Palestinian and Bosnian Muslim refugees in the United States.

Madiha Younas is Academic Assistant to the Director at the Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University in Islamabad, Pakistan. Ms. Younas has been active in a number of projects uplifting her community, including rehabilitation efforts for the victims of the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan and serving as a volunteer teacher at the Working Girls School run by the Working Women's Association. She was speaker for the Islamabad Division in Pakistan's 1st Students Convention and Organizer and Member of the Pakistani Youth Delegation to China. She has also served as the contact person for the National Youth Cultural Forum under the Pakistani Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs.

A speaker of English, Urdu, Arabic, and Punjabi and with a working knowledge of French and Persia, Ms. Younas holds a Bachelor's degree in *usuluddin*, a P.G.D. in Women's Studies, and a Master's degree in Political Science. She is currently working on a book project entitled, *Modern Trends in Quranic Exegesis: Understanding the Quran in the Light of Modern Science*.

Magdy Amin is General Manager of the Egyptian Association for Society Development, an organization fighting such practices as FGM/FGC in the Cairo area. Since graduating from the Faculty of Arts at Cairo University, Mr. Amin has worked full-time in community service and civil society development, following the slogan "together we work. together we change. together we create a better society." He is currently a member of several civil society organizations in Egypt that work in the fields of human rights and development. Mr. Amin has also dedicated himself to dialogue between cultures and religions all over the world, seeking common and universal values that bind all of humanity.

Mahmud Al-Rashid is a Founder, former Chairman, and current Media Spokesman for the Association of Muslim Lawyers (AML), the UK's leading Muslim lawyer's organization. Mr. Al-Rashid is a London-based barrister specialising in the areas of civil liberties and human rights, and he has been involved in international and domestic terrorism and national security trials. He was also President of The Young Muslims UK and is currently the Vice-President of the Islamic Society of Britain, the foremost Muslim organisation promoting positive engagement and interaction with wider society. Between 2000 and 2002, Mr. Al-Rashid was Deputy Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), the UK's largest representative organisation on Muslim affairs, during which he led the MCB's task force in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. His work in the fields of political asylum and international migration has been recognised by the *Legal 500 Directory*.

In addition to his legal work, Mr. Al-Rashid is publisher of *emel*, the first ever Muslim lifestyle magazine. Launched in 2003, *emel* is a premier Muslim project and has led the way in branding the term “Muslim lifestyle.” It is a vibrant celebration of Muslim life, with an international distribution and subscription base in over 60 countries. Through his work, Mr. Al-Rashid is passionate about synthesising a British expression of Islam that is culturally modern and dynamic and at the same time true to the principles of Islam.

Malina Fahiz is Managing Director of the Afghan Women Enterprise Network (AWEN), a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering women and reducing poverty in Afghanistan. AWEN has a number of projects and programs in the areas of **education and awareness-raising for women’s rights, handicraft production and small business development**, and bridge building between the Afghan government and local communities. At AWEN, Ms. Fahiz has led 12 permanent and 26 project-based staff members and has launched offices in the Kabul, Baghlan and Kunduz Provinces. She also developed a handicrafts market for women’s products.

Ms. Fahiz has worked for women’s empowerment in 12 provinces of Afghanistan, as well as for Afghan refugee in Pakistan for four years. In the Baghlan Province alone, she has implemented more than 19 projects to empower Afghani young girls and women. Previously, she served as Head of Women’s Activities for the Aga Khan National Council and as Women’s Empowerment Adviser in the Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development.

Malik Dahlan is the Principal of Institution Quraysh for Law and Policy, a Qatar-based firm with offices in London, Jeddah and Doha that acts as outside-house counsel for Qatari business institutions and government entities, including the Qatar Foundation, chaired by the Emir’s Consort, Her Highness Sheikha Mozah. Mr. Dahlan is an expert in negotiation theory and transnational political entrepreneurship and has advised on the Parliament, legislative affairs, defence, energy policies and foreign relations. He also spearheaded the establishment of the Brookings Center in Qatar.

Mr. Dahlan is working with Lord Harry Woolf and Sir William Blair to create the Qatar International Commercial Court and reform Qatar’s Financial Services sector, the first attempt to integrate the common law in an Arab Shari’ah-based civil law system. He is also working with a group of blue chip GCC and US investors toward the establishment of the first Qatari Alternative Sources of Energy Company. Additionally, Mr. Dahlan is a UN Regional Expert with a focus on developing the Iraqi constitution and the oil & gas sector. Previously, he was a Foreign Legal Consultant for the international firm White & Case, LLP, and he has served as Policy Consultant on Gulf States for the British Government’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He has also advised the US Trade Representative on the accession of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the GCC to the World Trade Organization.

Mr. Dahlan received his civil law and jurisprudential studies degree from Jordan and his Anglo-American legal training at Harvard Law School, where he also read for degrees in Government and Middle Eastern Studies. He is the youngest student to graduate from law school and the youngest graduate student in the history of Harvard University. He studied for his Doctorate in Public Policy at the renowned Al-Azhar University in Cairo.

Mamadou Bodian is Research Director at Citizen Movement, a Senegalese nongovernmental organization that promotes participatory citizenship by educating and training young boys and girls. At Citizen Movement, Mr. Bodian coordinates all research programs and mentors young researchers within the organization. He has years of experience in researching and writing about Islam and democracy. For example, he was research assistant to the University of Florida’s Center for African Studies Director, Leonardo Villalon, on “Negotiating Islam and Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa.” Mr. Bodian has also participated in several research programs at the University of Dakar on Islam, the Senegalese student movement, and the illegal migration of young people to the Canary Islands.

Maria Ebrahimji is Director and Executive Editorial Producer for Network Booking at CNN. Based at CNN’s global headquarters in Atlanta, Ms. Ebrahimji is responsible for leading a team of editorial producers in guest coverage, newsgathering, and story planning for CNN USA’s special events, breaking news, and multi-platform programming. Her career at CNN spans a decade, and has granted her the privilege of working on some of the network’s most important breaking news and feature programming initiatives, including the 2000 & 2004 US

Presidential elections, 9/11, the Iraq War, Israeli-Lebanon conflict, Pakistani earthquake, "CNN Heroes," and CNN International's landmark townhall series, "CNN Connects," among others. Ms. Ebrahimji is a former Editorial Producer for CNN International, where she worked on high-profile programs such as "Your World Today," "Q&A," "Diplomatic License," and "Inside Africa." Prior to this position, she was lead editorial producer for CNN US weekend programming.

Among the awards Ms. Ebrahimji has shared with her colleagues are the Myers Media Innovation and Creativity Award for CNN's "Inspire Summit," the Alfred i. Dupont-Columbia Award for coverage of the Asian tsunami, the George Foster Peabody Award for coverage of Hurricane Katrina, and a NABJ Award of Excellence in the Television-Public Affairs Program category for "CNN Connects: The New South Africa."

Ms. Ebrahimji is a member of the CNN Diversity Council and an advisory board member of the Emory Development Institute and the Southern Center for International Studies. She has participated in a National Press Foundation "World Hot Spots" seminar, the Aspen Young Professionals program, and the East-West Center's Sr. Journalism Seminar in Southeast Asia. She holds a Master's Degree in International Affairs from Georgia State University and is currently writing a book about Muslim American women of her generation.

Dr Mastura Badzis has over 16 years experiences in education field. As an academican, she has rich experience as lecturer, consultant, trainer, researcher, coordinator, module developer and even as director for a centre at national level. She contributed her work not only to the university but also to other agencies and non government organizations at national and International level. She is also an active social worker and contributed a lot to society. She is quite versatile as her professional training and research has been in the areas of child development, child psychology, early childhood education, Islamic parenting, qualitative research methods and method of teaching Arabic as second language. She is currently an Assistant Professor at Institute of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia. She has published articles in journals, newspapers, newsletters and book chapters in the field of child development and education, Islamic education and qualitative research method. She has been invited as guest speakers to several seminars and conferences at National and International level, and currently active to appear in various Malaysian Radio and TV programs. In terms of leadership experiences, Dr. Mastura is currently the vice president of Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM) and act as the head of women affairs. She is also active as one of committee members of National Council of Muslim Women in Malaysia. She is also having experiences nominated as delegates to represent her country to attend programs/events at International Level such as World Conference Religion for Peace (WCRP), Asean and Asia Pacific Women Summit, UNDP etc.

Masud Ahmed Khan is webmaster for masud.co.uk, one of the world's leading English language websites for Traditional Islam. Since its early incarnation on the web, it has gained an international reputation for excellent and balanced scholarly material from the Muslim World's foremost scholars. In addition, Masud.co.uk has influenced and inspired other websites and internet initiatives. *The Guardian* has said "this one man site has some interesting and thought provoking articles by prominent clerics and thinkers," and the British Library recently called the site "an important part of British literary heritage." Over the last 10 years Mr. Khan has been involved in organizing lecture tours and various Islamically-orientated events. In addition to the website, he has a blog <http://masudblog.com/>, in which he airs his thoughts and concerns for the Muslim community and other topics.

Mr. Khan has an IT background with over 16 years experience. Due to his work with masud.co.uk and his frequent lectures, he is well respected by Muslims in the UK, and he contributes to various media discussions and programmes. He is also involved in his local community and is regularly consulted on strategy and future planning.

Mattias Rosenfeldt works in the field of religion and communication. Mr. Rosenfeldt has conducted several research projects focusing on Danish Muslims' use of the media and their responses to media coverage of Islam, as well as the general increase of religious references in public space. Since 2006, he has worked on various integration projects directed at ethnic minority groups in Copenhagen, focusing on education, sport and creative work. For example, he is a Steering Committee member for the *Noerrebronx* project, located in one of the urban immigrant ghettos in Copenhagen. He also helped to establish a Danish language Muslim publication in 2002,

where he was editor and led the steering committee. This biweekly newsletter was published in print and on the Internet in collaboration with one of the major Muslim umbrella bodies in Denmark.

Mr. Rosenfeldt holds an MA in Media Studies and a BA in Film and Media Studies from the University of Copenhagen. He is currently a graduate student at the University of California at Santa Barbara in Religious and Islamic Studies.

Maulana Mufti Saif Ullah Khalid is a religious scholar and son of the late Mufti Azam of Pakistan (Sheikh-ul-Hadith), Maulana Mufti Muhammad Kaleem Ullah. Maulana Saif Ullah is Chairman of Nizami Foundation (Pakistan), an organization founded by his father dedicated to research on the Quran, *tafseer*, *hadith*, *fiqh*, and other forms of Islamic knowledge. As mufti, he is a member of Ittehad Bain-ul-Muslameen Committee of Punjab.

Maulana Saif Ullah works for interfaith peace and harmony, in collaboration with the Great Ambassador of Peace, Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad and often participates in interfaith conferences. He is the editor of numerous prominent magazines. In addition, has designed the Holy Quran with color-coated Tajweed and Qirat reformations, which has been appreciated by people all over the world. Maulana Saif Ullah received his graduate degree from the Islamic University of Jamia Ashrafia in Lahore, and he was later posted as Examiner A.Q.S.F. in the University.

Melati Abdul Hamid is Federal Counsel at the International Affairs Division of the Attorney General's Chambers of Malaysia. Ms. Abdul Hamid studied law at the International Islamic University Malaysia, during which she represented Malaysia during the International Rounds of the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition annually held in Washington DC. In 2005, her team qualified for the final round of the Jessup Competition, beating over 100 other teams from 88 countries. She was named Best Oralist.

Although Ms. Abdul Hamid's professional concentration is public international law, she retains a keen interest on the understanding of Islamic Law in modern contexts. While at Harvard Law School, where she completed her Master's in Law (LL.M) as a Fulbright scholar, she wrote her LL.M Paper on Islamic Constitutionalism, discussing the separation of powers between the three main branches of government in an Islamic country. Upon passing the New York Bar Exam in 2007, Ms. Abdul Hamid returned to Malaysia to join government service, and she is now involved in negotiations for ASEAN Free Trade Agreements and bilateral investment treaties, in addition to the resolution of international legal disputes involving the Government of Malaysia.

Mesut Özcan is a Lecturer at Istanbul Commerce University in the Department of International Relations. Dr. Özcan has written extensively on Turkish foreign policy, European integration and Middle Eastern politics, including two books: *Harmonizing Foreign Policy: Turkey, the EU and the Middle East* (Ashgate, 2008) and *Sorunlu Miras Irak* (The Problematic Legacy of Iraq) (Küre, 2003). He frequently publishes on Turkish foreign policy towards the Middle East in international journals.

After graduating from the Department of Political Science and International Relations from Marmara University in Istanbul, Dr. Özcan received his Master's degree from the same department. He also studied in Oxford University, St. Antony's College with the EU's Jean Monnet Master Scholarship. He obtained his PhD from Bogaziçi (Bosphorus) University in Turkey. The title of his dissertation was "Harmonization of the Foreign Policies of Turkey and the EU: The Case of the Middle East."

Michael Privot is the Spokesperson and a Board Member for the Cultural and Educational Islamic Centre in Verviers, Belgium (CECIV), one of the most important mosques and community centers officially recognized and sponsored by the Belgian state. From the local to international levels, Dr. Privot has been actively involved in Muslim community in different capacities. For example, he is a member of the Steering Group for the Platform for Intercultural Dialogue and has served as General Secretary and Vice-President of the Forum of European Muslim Youth & Student Organisations (FEMYSO). He regularly contributes papers and opinion pieces on such issues as the integration of Muslims in European societies, the structuring of European Muslims' official representation, and the secularization processes in Islam. Dr. Privot worked as a Research Fellow for the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research before working for the European Network Against Racism as a Senior Campaigns and Networking Officer.

Dr. Privot graduated with a degree in Oriental History and Philology from the University of Liège in Belgium, with a specialization in Arabic and Islamic studies. After receiving a post-graduate degree in comparative history of religions and a Master's in Arabic, he completed his Ph.D. in Languages and Literature, which focused on classical Islamic philosophy, specifically metaphysics and theories of knowledge. His academic research concentrates on the philosophy of Ishrâq.

Mina Al-Oraibi is the Current Affairs Journalist at *Asharq Alawsat* newspaper. In addition to covering political events in London, Ms. Al-Oraibi has a special interest in Iraq and follows political, economic and security developments through Iraqi, American and British sources. Her past interviews dealing with Iraq have included former Iraqi President Ghazi Al-Yawar, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki, Assistant Secretary of State David Welch, and General Douglas Lute. She has also covered international conferences such as the Euro-Med Summit in Spain, the Forum for the Future in Jordan, and the World Economic Forum in Davos. Ms. Al-Oraibi has participated in several international conferences for sessions relating to the media, most recently the First Forum for the Alliance of Civilizations in Madrid. She makes regular appearances on news channels, including CNN and BBC, to comment on developments in the Middle East.

An Iraqi-Briton, Ms. Al-Oraibi was born in Sweden and raised in Iraq, Australia and Saudi Arabia before moving to the UK. She was awarded a Distinction for her MA History Dissertation on the 1958 *coup d'état* in Iraq from University College London, where she also completed her Bachelors of Arts in History, specializing in Anglo-American relations.

Mirza Mesic is professor of Islamic history at the Zagreb Madrasah in Croatia and Imam at the Zagreb Mosque. He is a committee member of the Association for Religious Freedoms as well as the Cultural Society of Bosniaks in Croatia. Mr. Mesic has participated in several conferences and roundtables on intercultural and interreligious dialogue throughout Europe and the world.

Mohamad A. Chakaki is an Environmental Consultant with The Baraka Group on environmental and community development projects in the US and Middle East. Mr. Chakaki is also an active member of two environmental networks in the Washington, DC area, the Greater Washington Interfaith Power & Light (GW IPL) and [DC Green Muslims](#). His passion for nature and people has led him to work in parks and gardens across the US, Central Africa (Peace Corps), and Syria (United Nations). Mr. Chakaki holds a Master's Degree in Urban Ecology and Environmental Design from Yale University and undergraduate degrees in Religion and Biology from George Washington University.

Mr. Mohamed Brahimi is Founder and Chairman of the Board of the Moroccan American Civic and Cultural Association (MACCA), a grassroots initiative that encourages civic engagement. Mr. Brahimi is also the founder and managing director of *Al Arab*, a newspaper catering to Muslims. He is well-known in the Boston area for his extensive community activism and advocacy work on behalf of Moroccans and Muslims. He has, for example, founded a literacy program for Muslims in the Boston area and serves as a board director in one of the largest cap agencies in Massachusetts whose mission is to fight poverty, eradicate homelessness, and empower minority groups. Mr. Brahimi is also a member of the Everett Multicultural Affairs Committee, an advisory committee working in coordination with the mayor's office to raise awareness about the Boston immigrant population and its concerns.

Mr. Brahimi earned a degree from the prestigious Al Qarawiyeen University in Fez, Morocco, as well as a degree in Communication and Journalism from Suffolk University in Boston. Currently, he is pursuing a graduate degree in political science and working for Harvard University as part of the "Islam in the West" research team.

Mohamed Cisse is Secretary of the International Center of the Investors and Economic Operators of the Diaspora (Cote d'Ivoire), where he works in synergy with town councilors, deputies, and mayors. In addition, he is involved in numerous projects dedicated to cross-cultural interfaith dialogue and creating social cohesion between religions. Mr. Cisse is also president of the Office of Coordination of 35 NGOs of social action and leading a project to improve Muslim women's education, supported by the Catholic Mission and Offices of the Pastors of the Evangélique Church of Ivory Coast. In June 2007, he was invited by the US government to take part in the U.S. International Visitors leadership programme.

Mohamed Nassir is Founder and Managing Director of Simplyislam.sg, a Singaporean Islamic educational center focusing on lectures, seminars, workshops, and Arabic-English translation and interpretation services. Mr. Nassir was also the mosque manager of the Abdul Aleem Siddique Mosque until 2008. Previously, he had served as Da'wah Executive Director and IT Executive Officer of Darul Arqam Singapore, the Muslim Converts' Association of Singapore (MCAS). He started his career as an IT programmer, later becoming a Systems Analyst and Systems Development Manager.

In serving with various Muslim organizations in Singapore, Mr. Nassir has worked with numerous distinguished scholars like Shaykh Hisham Kabbani, Abdal Hakim Murad, Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, Shaykh Nuh Ha Mim Keller, Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Habib Umar Bin Hafiz, Vincent Cornell, Ingrid Mattson and many more. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Information Systems from Staffordshire University, UK.

Mohamed Younis is a Washington DC-based attorney and expert in immigration and international and human rights law. Mr. Younis has previously served as Legal Advisor at Africa & Mid-East Refugee Assistance (AMERA-Egypt), the largest refugee legal aid organization in North Africa. During his tenure, he represented clients, primarily from the Horn of Africa region, in the Refugee Status Determination process before the UNHCR tribunal in Cairo. He is the author of *Daughters of the Nile: The Evolution of Feminism in Egypt* (Washington & Lee Journal for Civil Rights & Social Justice, 2007), a study of the role of Islam in the women's rights movement of modern Egypt.

As a youth in Los Angeles, Mr. Younis co-founded ELEV8, a grassroots organization focused on addressing the concerns of Muslim youth in Southern California. Among its many activities, ELEV8 empowered Muslim youth to use the arts to address challenges facing their communities. Recently, he traveled to Belgium, Norway and Ireland as a US Delegate of the Citizens Exchange Dialogue Program by invitation of the US Department of State. During the trip, he gave lectures on the realities surrounding Western Muslim life and the experience of American Muslim youth, and he attended numerous meetings with government officials to discuss Muslim integration in Western Europe.

Mr. Younis has lived and studied in Egypt and Saudi Arabia and is fluent in Arabic. He studied Sociology and Biology at the University of California, Riverside, and he holds a Juris Doctorate from Washington & Lee School of Law. He is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

Mohamed-Ali Bouharb is the National Muslim Chaplain for the French national gendarmerie, judicial, and military forces, the youngest Muslim chaplain in French history. In this capacity, Mr. Bouharb provides spiritual support to Muslim soldiers in the armed forces and offers his guidance to the French council on issues of faith. He also serves as director of the department, which reviews the Muslim chaplaincy within the military and trains chaplains for air, earth and naval forces, as well as the gendarmerie. In 2008, he organized the first-ever colloquium for the Muslim chaplaincy. He is also Executive Director of Espace Connaissance: The Knowledge Path Intercultural Center of Le Havre.

A graduate in sociology, Mr. Bouharb holds a Master's degree of science in Language and Communication from the University of Rouen. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D on Muslim military chaplaincy. He was recently selected to study "Religions, Secularity, and Cross-Country Race-Culture" at the University of Social Sciences and Economics (FASSE), part of the Catholic Institute in Paris. Mr. Bouharb recently spoke at Princeton University on "Being Muslim in Secular France."

Mohammad Ishaq Faizi is a Program Officer and Legal Consultant with Global Rights: Partners for Justice, an international human rights advocacy organization. In this capacity, Mr. Faizi heads legal training programs which have trained more than 600 young lawyers in Afghanistan, and he has established a young lawyer's forum, with a membership of more than 400 young lawyers. He also practices law as a defense lawyer and prosecutor in the justice system of Afghanistan.

Mr. Faizi teaches Procedure to Law and Sharia students at both Kabul and Al-Bironi University, and he has taught English at the English Language Center in Kabul. He studied at the Law Faculty of Kabul University, completing his thesis on domestic violence and criminal and civil law procedures.

Dr. Mohammad Shafi Oriakhil is Publication Manager with the Afghan Women Business Federation (AWBF), an independent and non-profit organization of community and business association leaders aiming to provide high quality services for women in Afghanistan. Dr. Oriakhil also works with Maryam Hospital as a General Practitioner, and she has been involved in community service and assisting the disabled and poor. She has experience working with the UNMACA as a Medical Trainer and the Afghanistan Relief Organization (ARO). She graduated from Kabul Medical University. I wish peaceful world for all humankind.

Muhammed Ali Adraui is a PhD Candidate and lecturer at the Institute of Political Studies in Paris. His research focuses on Islamist movements, especially Salafism in the West. He also holds a degree in Business and International Relations. He has written several reports, articles and book chapters dealing with world politics and has taken part in numerous conferences on dialogue between the West and Muslim world.

Mr. Adraui serves as city councilman for Vernon, France (population 25,000). He worked for two years at the Elysée Palace, where he belonged to the 24-hour media watch service of the President of the French Republic. As a French citizen born into a Muslim family, Mr. Adraui has devoted his personal and professional life to undermining the prejudices common on both sides. As a scholar and town councillor, he practically participates in the construction of a better, more fair and understanding world.

Mohammed A. Khan is the co-founder of Unity One, the first organization to broker truces between rival Blood and Cripps neighborhoods in Los Angeles. Mr. Khan has twenty years of experience in youth development work and interfaith dialogue and conflict resolution, especially in the gang environment. As a student, he gave *khutbas* to converts in prisons, influencing former inmates and gang leaders to devote their lives to gang intervention and peacemaking. He is on the Clergy Advisory Board of the Los Angeles County Sheriff. Mr. Khan has also pioneered interfaith work on college campuses and co-founded over 21 Muslim student unions and campus organizations across the US, including Muslim Youth of North America (MYNA), the youth wing of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).

Mr. Khan has served as media and politics advisor to Yusuf Islam (Cat Stevens) for the past eight years, and he currently represents Yusuf's NGO, Small Kindness, at the United Nations. Currently, he is working with the production partners who created the Family Animation Division of Universal Studios to set up a media fund to produce family-based animated movies. He is also doing screenings of "99 Names of Allah' The Treasure," a film he produced to show the spiritual side of Islam. The film was translated into Spanish and is currently being translated into other languages.

Born in South Africa, Mr. Khan remains involved in the upliftment of the South African people. He serves on the board of the African Diaspora Foundation, which focuses on peace education in Africa, as well as on the Economic and Poverty Alleviation Advisory Board for The Xhosa tribe King Sandile of South Africa.

Mohammed Wajihuddin is a Special Correspondent with *The Times of India*, India's largest English daily. Based in Mumbai, Mr. Wajihuddin has written extensively on Indian Muslim affairs, their aspirations in a secular, democratic society, and as an Urdu speaker, he regularly informs readers about concerns expressed in leading Urdu dailies. Through his work, he strives to combat myths on Islam and to communicate that it is a tolerant, inclusive and egalitarian religion. Before joining *The Times of India*, Mr. Wajihuddin worked with *The Indian Express* and *The Asian Age*. He has been interviewed and quoted by the several international news agencies, including the BBC, Reuters, and Cairo TV. He was named the best journalist by the Social Educational Welfare Association (SEWA) Award Committee in Mumbai, and his story on the children of Gujarat pogrom was awarded jointly by the Press Institute of India (PII) and the International Council of Red Cross (ICRC), in 2008

Mr. Wajihuddin was invited by the US State Department to join a three-week International Visitor's programme for understanding religious diversity in the US, and the UK Foreign Commonwealth Office invited him for a week-long programme called "Engaging with British Muslims." In addition, he has travelled to several Muslim countries, including Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, to report on how Islam is practiced there. Born in the remote village of Bihar in a poor North Indian province, Mr. Wajihuddin walked several kilometers on foot to attend school, and he graduated from a college in Patna. While in Patna, he wrote letters to the editor for numerous newspapers and

gradually became interested in journalism. Later, he earned a diploma in Journalism from K.C.College in Mumbai.

Mohammad Mohibul Haque is a Lecturer in the Department of Political Science at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), India. Mr. Haque has published research papers, chapters in books, articles, and poetry in a number of English and Urdu newspapers and magazines on such subject as human rights, terrorism, politics and religion. He has attended several national and international seminars and conferences on these subjects as well. Mr. Haque is also an active member of Amnesty International India, and he supervises and organizes the activities of Amnesty International on the AMU Campus. He has organized many programs to promote communal harmony and inter-faith understanding and founded the Forum for Human Rights. Mr. Haque is recipient of many awards, including the Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma Gold Medal from AMU.

Mohammad Mohiul Hoque is the Founder & Chairman of the Naziria Naymia Mahmudia Mission, a social welfare and charitable organization. Mr. Hoque has been serving as Vice Principal of the Naziria Naymia Mahmudia's Madrasa since 1998, where he established a computer-based education supported by an American center. He is also a Master Trainer at the Imam Training Academy. Mr. Hoque has written numerous articles and books on Islam and social issues, leadership, and Islamic banking.

Mr. Hoque is also Chief Imam of the Nur E Muhammadi Jame Mosque, and he recently received the Best Imam Prize, certificates awarded by the Honorable Prime Minister and President of Bangladesh. In 2007, he participated in the International Visitors Leadership Program on "The Role of Religion in the United States." He is a member of alumni.state.gov (US Department of State), the Imam Welfare Trust, the Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh, the Imam Training Academy, and the Imam Association.

Mr. Hoque has participated in numerous workshop, including "The Importance of Religious Leaders in Human Resource Development," organized by the UNFPA and Islamic Foundation; "AIDS Prevention Training" and "Mass Education and Imam Training" by the Islamic Foundation of Bangladesh, and the "Leaders Outreach Initiative Program" by USAID and the ASIA Foundation, among others. Born in Chittagong, Bangladesh, Mr. Hoque holds an MBA.

Mona Alalawi is a member of the Board of Directors for the Bahrain Women Association (BWA) for Human Development, the only NGO in the Kingdom of Bahrain with special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. Founded in 2001, BWA has a vision to empower leaders for the human development era. Ms. Alalawi has worked with BWA since its establishment and has participated actively in its various programs, including Environment Conservation, Earth Charter, Sustainable Development, and the WANGO Code of Ethics. She was elected a board member in 2008.

Ms. Alalawi had previously served as head of the standards implementation section in the Bahraini Ministry of Industry & Commerce, where she drafted regulations with an eye to preventing products that contradict Islamic values. She also initiated and wrote for a monthly newsletter addressing such topics as innovation, inspiration, teamwork, and self-value, and presenting them as a way of life for Muslims. Ms. Alalawi frequently writes articles and gives presentations at NGOs on different Islamic topics.

Mona Eltahawy is an award-winning columnist and an international public speaker on Arab and Muslim issues, based in New York. Her essays appear regularly in both the Western and Arab press. She is a columnist for Egypt's independent *Al Masry Al Youm*, Qatar's *Al Arab* and Israel's *The Jerusalem Report*. The *International Herald Tribune* and *Washington Post* have published many of her op-eds, and she is a panelist on WashingtonPost.com's PostGlobal forum and a frequent media analyst. Her public speaking took her to nine countries in 2008. Before Ms. Eltahawy moved to the U.S. in 2000, she was a news reporter in the Middle East for many years, including in Cairo and Jerusalem as a Reuters correspondent and she reported from the region for *The Guardian* and *U.S. News and World Report*. Ms. Eltahawy has reported for various media from Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Libya, Syria, Saudi Arabia, China and the U.S. In January, she will join the New School in New York as part-time faculty, teaching a course on social media and the Arab World.

In 2006, the Next Century Foundation awarded Ms. Eltahawy its Cutting Edge Prize for distinguished contribution to the coverage of the Middle East and in recognition of her “continuing efforts to sustain standards of journalism that would help reduce levels of misunderstanding”. Born in Port Said, Egypt, Ms. Eltahawy has also lived in the U.K, Saudi Arabia and Israel. She was the first Egyptian journalist to live and to work for a Western news agency in Israel.

Mona Kanwal Sheikh was the first Muslim woman nominated to the Danish Parliament (2001). Ms. Sheikh is an experienced debater and frequently gives lectures on issues related to integration politics, European Islam, religion, secularism and militant Islamism at various educational and religious institutions and other public forums. As an opinion columnist affiliated with different Danish national newspapers, she regularly comments on contemporary issues relating to the interplay between religion and politics.

Ms. Sheikh is a member of the European Network of Experts on Radicalisation and Violent Extremism advising the European Commission. As a consultant, she has been affiliated with the Danish Cultural Institute in Qatar and Bahrain and the Middle East/North Africa Department of MS Danish Association for International Co-operation. She has served as a board member for a number of organizations working for minority rights, such as the Association of Ethnic Minorities (POEM), the Documentation and Advisory Centre on Racial Discrimination (DRC), and Vice Chair of the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and the Integration Council of Copenhagen Municipality.

Currently, Ms. Sheikh is a doctoral candidate in Political Science at the University of Copenhagen and visiting research scholar at the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies, University of California Santa Barbara. Her research project is on religion and global conflict resolution, with a special focus on militant Islamism and the War on Terrorism in Pakistan. She has received an elite research prize from the Danish Ministry of Science and Technology.

Muhammad Hayat Sial is Executive Director of the Pakistan Welfare Society. With more than 15 years of experience in project development, Mr. Sial works with programs directly related to Pakistan’s marginalized communities, and he is responsible for coordinating all project activities and staffing. He holds a Master’s degree in Islamic studies.

Moushumi M. Khan is a leading voice on civil liberties, national security, religious accommodation, and interfaith relations, advocating for the Muslim American communities post-9/11. Ms. Khan worked with federal and local government agencies on outreach, and she advised them on counterterrorism policies. She has also advised companies and organizations on how to work with the immigrant community. Ms. Khan is a frequent speaker at various legal, public and private institutions on the impact of 9/11 and on improving America’s global image. Numerous national and international media, including *Slate*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Al Jazeera*, *Al Arabiya*, and others have sought her opinion on various topics. Ms. Khan has served on the Advisory Committees at the Council on Foreign Relations and participated in drafting the Council Special Reports “*A New Beginning: Strategies for a More Fruitful Dialogue with the Muslim World*” and “*The Economic Logic of U.S. Immigration Policy*.”

Ms. Khan is also co-founder and former President of the Muslim Bar Association of New York and is a Term Member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She is a Henry Crown Fellow at the Aspen Institute and is listed in the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations’ Global Expert Finder as an expert on Islam. She is also an active participant in community service, interfaith activities, and public diplomacy efforts involving the U.S. and Muslim World. Fluent in Bengali and English and with a working knowledge of French, Ms. Khan earned her Juris Doctor (JD) degree from the University of Michigan and received a Master’s in Public Administration degree at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where she was a Zuckerman Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership. She is admitted to practice law in New York.

Syed Muhammad Abd-ul-khabir Azad is the Khateeb and Grand Imam at the historical Badshahi Mosque in Lahore, Pakistan and Chairman of the Interfaith Council for Peace & Harmony (REGD). Mr. Abd-ul-khabir Azad has visited more than 30 countries, representing Pakistan in international conferences on global peace, interfaith harmony, and intra-faith Islamic issues in more than 15 countries. He has been granted numerous international

awards and honors for his work, including the Ambassador of Peace Award, which recognized his great service towards international peace at a conference held by the Universal Peace Federation in the U.S.

Mr. Abd-ul-khabir Azad has served as Chairman of a number of organizations in Pakistan, including Majlis Ulama-e-Pakistan, Universal Peace & Harmony, and the Sheikh Azad Welfare Foundation. He is Chief Advisor for the Interfaith Council for Health. Furthermore, he is member of the Global Peace Council, the Central Royat-e-Hilal committee (Pakistan), Ittehad ban-ul-Muslimen (Punjab), Ulama-e-Mashaikh council (Pakistan), and the Interfaith Advisory Committee (Punjab). He is the son of Hazrat Molana Dr. Syed Muhammad Abdul Qadir Azad, the Khateeb of Badshahi Mosque for over 30 years.

Muhammad Khalid Fayyaz is Program Manager for Social Mobilization for Integrated Development Action (FIDA) in Pakistan, where he has helped to formalize strategies to transform conflicts around the globe. After Pakistan became the most important strategic partner for the U.S. post-9/11, the work of FIDA has gained increased importance. Mr. Fayyaz has conducted meetings with traditional stakeholders of the tribal areas of Pakistan (South and North Waziristan), as well as with community and elders of different tribes and clans. He has also worked on a number of projects in the Frontier Region Dera Ismail Khan on such relevant issues as tribal youth in Pakistan, education, disaster management and preparedness, medical assistance in remote areas, social awareness and mobilization concerning conflicts, and building shelter for tribal migrants.

Mr. Fayyaz is also a member of the Dera Development Forum, which aims to facilitate development organizations at the district level, and he is member of the District Coordination Council, which coordinates advocacy campaigns at District level. He has visited Nepal with the Search for Common Ground. He studied Business Administration and Economics at the University of the Punjab.

Muhammad Yousuf Cajee is an Industrial Psychologist specializing in Organisational Strategy and Change. Mr. Cajee is responsible for managing the renewal of the Al Jazeera English Language Channel within the Office of the Managing Director of AJE.

Previously, Mr. Cajee has held several leadership, management and advisory roles. For example, he served as an Advisor for organisational development and communications to the Director General of the Al Jazeera Network, as a Member of the Gauteng Commission for Youth Development in the Office of the Premier of the Gauteng Province, as President of the Union Of Muslim Students Associations in South Africa, and as President of the Students Representatives Council of the University of the Witwatersrand. He was also the strategist and co-founder of the Independent Students Alliance (ISA), an innovative and widely representative political organisation of young non-aligned Social Democrats.

Mr. Cajee holds a Master's Degree in Industrial Psychology from the University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg, South Africa) and was nominated as one of South Africa's Brightest Young Minds in 2004. Originally from South Africa, he is currently based in Doha, Qatar.

Muna AbuSulayman is the Executive Director of HRH Prince Alwaleed bin Talal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud's newly established Alwaleed Bin Talal Foundation, which focuses on interfaith dialogue, empowering Saudi women, and combating poverty. The Foundation helps reframe perceptions of Islam and the West through dialogue, programming and educational centres around the world in order to promote a greater understanding between the different faiths and worldviews. It has taken the lead in empowering Saudi women, working with various partners to provide critical goods and services to poor areas in the Middle East, Africa and those affected by natural disasters.

Ms. AbuSulayman is a member of the C-100 Executive Committee and the recipient of numerous awards as Co-Host of MBC's *Kalam Nouam*, the number one Arab family TV show. She is also the first female Saudi UNDP Goodwill Ambassador. Ms. AbuSulayman holds a B.A. and M.A. from George Mason University, and she is currently a PhD candidate at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Mustafa Hamurcu is a Project Manager for the Dutch government and Board Member at Milli Görüs Netherlands, part of the international organisation, ICMG (Islamic Community Milli Görüs). Milli Görüs is a non-

profit social and religious organization dedicated to enhancing Muslim participation in Dutch society and to building bridges between the Dutch public and Muslims. The organization promotes peace, interfaith understanding and action through religious, social and cultural programs for members of the 46 affiliate *mosques* in Holland. Mr. Hamurcu has been active in local Milli Görüs departments for 15 years. In addition, he frequently lectures and serves on panels and has been featured in several local and national newspapers. Born in Turkey and living in the Netherlands for the past 27 years, Mr. Hamurcu acquired a Master's degree in Economics at the University of Amsterdam.

Musa Syeed is an independent filmmaker and writer. Mr. Syeed's most current film, *Bronx Princess*, about a teenager confronting her royal African heritage, recently premiered at the International Documentary Festival in Amsterdam. His previous film, *A Son's Sacrifice*, won Best Documentary Short from the Tribeca Film Festival and the International Documentary Association Awards in 2007. He is currently directing *The Calling*, a film about young religious leaders in America, which, along with *Bronx Princess* will be broadcast nationally in the US on PBS next year. As a writer, he has produced original theatrical work for the Children's Museum of Manhattan.

Mr. Syeed has also worked as an educator in schools, community centers, and prisons. He is currently an adjunct professor of cross-cultural documentary production at Williams College and has served as an advisor for film and television companies, including Thirteen/WNET. He was selected to represent the US at the 2008 International Public Television Conference in South Africa. He was also a Fulbright Fellow in Cairo, Egypt, where he focused on experimental filmmaking and Muslim identity. Mr. Syeed is an alumnus of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and the Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies Department.

Mustafa Kaygusuz is General Secretary of the International Interaction Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the social, cultural and exchange needs of international citizens in Turkey and contributing to an environment of exchange between Turkey and other countries. It aims to promote understanding of Turkish and other cultures and to foster communication and positive interaction through social, cultural and educational activities. Born in Turkey, Mr. Kaygusuz spent 10 years as a foreign trade expert in his own company, visiting more than 30 countries. He recently participated in the International Visitor "Young Muslim Leader" program organized by the US State Department.

Mustapha Kara-Ali proposed and led a government-community partnership, the Building Identity and Resisting Radicalisation (BIRR) Initiative. '*Birr*,' the Arabic word for goodwill and virtue, symbolises the energy channeled towards assisting Muslim youth in discovering their religious identity in the Australian context and in addressing the vulnerability factors leading some to extremism. Mr. Kara-Ali is the lead author of the publication titled "The Way Forward – an Islamic Mentoring Guide for Building Identity and Resisting Radicalisation," which was endorsed by a panel of academics and sponsored by the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

In 2005, Mr. Kara-Ali was appointed to the Prime Minister's Muslim Advisory Council. He has since been invited to present at numerous prominent events for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and others. In 2007, he represented Australia in Malaysia as a member of a DFAT organised delegation. *The Daily Telegraph* profiled Mr. Kara-Ali in an editorial, naming him "a voice of reason," and *The Australian* called him "a benevolent face of engaged Islam." He has also been introduced on ABC's Religion Report as "an agent for change".

Mr. Kara-Ali is currently completing his Phd. in International Relations and Islamic Studies. His research interest, Counter-Radicalisation, is a new area of academic research that studies measures to curb the precursor phases of extremist indoctrination and activation by focusing on the positive force of traditional Islamic doctrine. In 2008, he was awarded an Australian Endeavour Award scholarship from the Department of Education to be at the International Islamic University Malaysia. Mustapha graduated with a BE Honours and a Master's Degree in Informatics from the University of New South Wales.

Muzaffer Şenel is Vice-Coordinator and member of the Executive Board of the Centre for Global Studies (CGS). Mr. Şenel is also a researcher, teaching assistant, and PhD candidate at the Marmara University (Turkey) Department of Political Science and International Relations. He has also worked as a researcher and teaching assistant at the Department of International Relations at the University of Kocaeli. His research interests include

European neighbourhood policy, EU policies towards the Middle East and Cyprus, Turkish foreign policy, and security in Europe. Mr. Şenel writes for a monthly magazine, *Anlayış*, has published numerous articles related to these topics.

Mr. Şenel has worked as a visiting scholar in various research centers and institutions in Europe, including the Oxford University Center for Islamic Studies, the Teleki László Institute (Hungary), and Jagiellonian University (Poland). After graduating from Afyon (Lisesi) Lycee, he completed his undergraduate studies at Near East University in Lefkoşa (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus) with a full scholarship granted by Higher Education Council of Turkey. He continued his graduate studies in the same department and obtained his Master's degree from the European Union Institute at Marmara University. The title of his MA thesis was "European Union Politics towards the Middle East since 1980."

Nabil Ennasri is one of the leaders of CMF (Collectif des Musulmans de France), which works on questions surrounding the organisation of Islam in France. He also studies the Islamic sciences of Shari'a at the European Institute of Human Sciences at Château-Chinon. He is author of several articles published on various websites, including www.oumma.com, the most well-known Muslim website in France.

Mr. Ennasri has served as president of AEMA (Association of Muslim Students of Aix-en-Provence), an association dedicated to creating unity amongst Muslim students and educating about Islam. He holds a Master's degree in politics from the Political Science Institute of Aix-en-Provence and a licence in Arabic, obtained at the Letters University of Aix-en-Provence. He has successfully completed three internships in the Gulf region (United Arab Emirates and Qatar). He has written reports on students in Qatar and Muslim cults in France. Mr. Ennasri joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in France as a trainee and was recognized for his thorough knowledge of politics.

Sayed Nadeem Kazmi is Director of International Affairs and Chief Representative to the UN for Al-Khoei Foundation and Founder / Director of The Britslam Partnership, an innovative consultancy which catalyses change through cross-cultural engagement on policy issues. In 2005, Mr. Kazmi was part of the UK Government's Taskforce on Preventing Extremism, which led to the founding of The Britslam Partnership, as well as a national Muslim Communities Development Network, a project supported by the UK Government which he spearheaded.

Mr. Kazmi has published numerous essays internationally, and he is a boardmember or senior adviser to numerous committees and professional bodies working on international and community issues. These include, among others, The Toda Institute, The Royal Institute for International Affairs, Rights and Humanity, Amnesty International, Elijah Academy Board of World Religious Leaders, and The Faith and Ethics Network of the International Criminal Court (FENICC). Mr. Kazmi is also a documentary filmmaker, making such films as *Ten Days* and *Jazz Bridges: Music Without Frontiers*. He lives in England with his wife and four children.

Nadim Nashif is Founder and Director of Baladna, an independent association for Arab youth within the Palestinian community of Israel, which suffers from discrimination. Baladna has encouraged thousands of young Arabs to learn about their Palestinian heritage and gain confidence and pride in themselves and their nation. He has worked as a youth leader since the age of 19, taking part in voluntary work to aid both the Palestinian community and joining in projects with Israelis to promote peace and justice between the communities. In addition, for the past five years, Mr. Nashif has been involved in Youth Action for Peace (YAP), an international youth peace movement headquartered in Brussels. He holds degrees in Middle East history and Business Administration.

Nadira Artyk is a blogger, journalist, social media consultant, and women's rights advocate with extensive knowledge of Central Asia, Afghanistan and Turkey. Ms. Artyk's articles have appeared in the *International Herald Tribune*, *Women's eNews*, and other publications, and her latest work focuses on women's positions in Muslim cultures and Islamic feminism. As a journalist, she provides balanced and fair insight into Muslim cultures for both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences. Her latest work focuses on women's positions in Muslim cultures and Islamic feminism. As a women's rights advocate, Ms. Artyk is committed to empowering the Muslim women

of Central Asia by educating them about their rights from within the Islamic framework. Among other activities, she runs a blog for women in Uzbekistan, where she raises social issues of importance to local women.

Ms. Artyk began her journalistic career in Central Asia, where she covered the civil war in Tajikistan and the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh for Agence France Presse from 1991-1993. She then joined the BBC World Service in London, where she produced flagship news and current affairs programmes and reported from the Newsroom as part of the BBC's global news hub. She holds a Master's degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science, where she studied democracy and civil society building in post-socialist countries. Born and raised in Uzbekistan, Ms. Artyk currently lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Naveed Ahmad is a special correspondent for the Geo News Network and the former News Editor for the leading Pakistani daily, *The News*. Mr. Ahmad has reported for numerous international media outlets in such countries as Norway, South Korea, the UAE, and the US on a wide range of regional and global issues, with a special focus on Pakistan. He recently teamed up with the McClatchy Group of Newspapers' (US) international correspondent to investigate the situation of former Guantanamo Bay prisoners in Pakistan and was an integral part of a *Chicago Tribune* project on the forced deportation of Muslims, entitled "Tribune Special Report: Tossed Out of America," which earned the prestigious George Polk Award (2003). In 2001, Mr. Ahmad joined a select group of reporters at the Global Journalist Program associated with the International Press Institute and National Public Radio (US). His expertise in security sector reforms in new democracies led him to do consulting in Bangkok and Manila under the auspices of the Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform, DFID, and Cranfield University.

Mr. Ahmad has earned a number of fellowships, including the East-West Center's Jefferson Fellowship, focusing on "Challenges of Globalisation," and The Washington Press Center Fellowship on "Conflict Resolution and Nuclear Non-proliferation." He visited India as part of Panos Media Fellowship on Conflict. Holding an MSc in Defense & Strategic Studies from the Quaid-i-Azam University, Mr. Ahmad has participated in two month-long "National Security Workshops" at the Joint Services' Headquarters premier institution, National Defence College, in Islamabad. He also received training in investigative reporting from the Thompson Foundation (UK).

Naveed Baig is Vice-Chairman and Imam at the Islamic-Christian Study Center (IKS) and Co-Founder of Muslims in Dialogue (MID), the largest Muslim youth organization in Denmark. In addition to his civil society work, Mr. Baig has been quoted in various Danish newspapers and journals on such subjects as interfaith dialogue and spirituality. Furthermore, he has contributed to an anthology on the post-cartoon scenario in Denmark and participated in the month-long series "Islam's faces in Denmark" on *Danish Radio*. Mr. Baig is a recognized expert in hospital care, and he has written articles on developing an Islamic theology for spiritual care and counseling, sharing knowledge from his own work in hospitals and prisons. He recently published *Den muslimske patient*, a guide for hospital staff in meeting and understanding patients with Muslim background. Mr. Baig has organized and participated in various outreach ventures at universities, churches and for hospital staff. He is a visiting lecturer at the University of Copenhagen.

Nazeer Jamal is Co-Founder of People.Acting.Caring.Thinking (PACT), a South African non-profit networking organization that aims to work together to raise funds and awareness for conservation, wildlife, and the environment and to proactively create change at an institutional and groundwork level. Through PACT, he has coordinated a number of protests and the monitoring of governmental laws for animal rights and environmental protection. He is also a member of numerous projects dedicated to social upliftment.

Mr. Jamal is also known as MC Naz-Jam by the South African public, as he is a rapper and vocal percussionist for South Africa's only fusion *nasheed* group called Waahid. Each member of Waahid brings a unique diversity of cultures and races to the group, and it is Naz Jam's duty to provide the beats via beat-boxing. Waahid has launched three albums in their two years of existence, *Unity in Diversity*, *Rise Up*, and *Labbaik*. Mr. Jamal presented "The Nasheed Jam" on *Radio Al Ansaar*, and he was voted Best Male Presenter of 2008.

Mr. Jamal is a graduate of the University of KwaZulu Natal and has recently completed his Bachelor of Science Honours in Environmental Science. His thesis comprised a pioneering study of water quality and nutrient flux in the Isipingo Estuary, South Africa.

Nazreen Nizam is a Program and Legal Officer with Sisters in Islam, an independent Malaysian organization dedicated to promoting the rights of women within the framework of Islam and the principles of equality, justice, and freedom enjoined in the Qur'an. Previously, Ms. Nizam worked as Secretary to the Director-General with the London Central Mosque Trust & Islamic Cultural Centre. She holds a law degree from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.

Ndeye Andújar is Co-founder and Vice-President of Junta Islamica Catalana (Spain), which has organized such events as the 2005, 2006, and 2008 [International Congress on Islamic Feminism](#), held in Barcelona, Spain. In 2008, Ms. Andújar was named director of www.webislam.com, the most important Islamic website in Spanish. Since 1998, she has been working with Muslim communities, focusing on gender equality and educating teachers on Islamic education in the public educational system in Spain. In August 2008, she participated in a Conference on Secularism and Religions (vis-à-vis fundamentalist violence) in the European parliament.

Ms. Andújar is also an author and frequent lecturer on the questions surrounding women and Islam. She has spoken at numerous congresses and seminars, in addition to her articles and essays in the press and media. She has collaborated for the book *La emergencia del feminismo islámico* ([The Emergency of Islamic Feminism](#)) a selection of communications presented in both first international congresses of Islamic Feminism. She is currently preparing a book *Viaje por el islam femenino. Las mujeres en el Qur'an y en la tradición islámica* (*Journey to the Feminine Islam: The women in the Qur'an and the Islamic Tradition*).

Ms. Andújar is also secondary school teacher and lecturer at Camilo José Cela University on [Islamic Religion, Culture and Civilization](#). She graduated with a degree in General Linguistics from Barcelona University.

Necmettin Kizilkaya is Imam of the Haci Yakup Kazdal Mosque in Istanbul. Mr. Kizilkaya is a member of the Foundation of Marmara University School of Theology and Theological Research Association (ILADER) in Turkey, and he has been the recipient of a number of grants, including an MA scholarship by the Municipality of Istanbul, an Education Grant from the Presidency of Religious Affairs, a fellowship from the President of Marmara University, and an Education Grant from the Prime Ministry of Turkey.

Mr. Kizilkaya is currently a Phd student in Islamic law at Selcuk University, and beginning in 2009, he will be a visiting scholar at Columbia University and Imam of Iqra Masjid and Tradition in Brooklyn. He earned his Master's degree at Marmara University Institute of Social Sciences Department of Islamic Law, his thesis entitled "The Place of Legal Maxims in Kâsânî's *Badâ'iy*." He knows Kurdish, Turkish, Ottoman Turkish, Arabic, Persian and English.

Nedžad Mocevic is a Program Associate at the Salzburg Global Seminar (www.salzburgglobal.org), an independent, non-governmental organization that challenges present and future leaders to solve issues of global concern. Mr. Mocevic is also a board member for Muslim Youth Austria and the Human Rights Platform, and he is a member of the Austrian Association for American Studies. He has worked with several Austrian political parties and city representatives in the field of youth, migration and integration.

Additionally, Mr. Mocevic produces hip hop music, convenes and instructs hip hop workshops, and will soon start his own radio show at Freier Rundfunk Salzburg. He considers hip hop a means to help young people express their feelings and challenges and to educate the youth on sensitive issues like diversity, violence, racism, or drug abuse. Mr. Mocevic was recently appointed a member of the International Visitors Program by the US Embassy in Vienna. He is finishing his M.A. in history at the University of Salzburg.

Nisreen Shahin is Director General of OneVoice Palestine, a grassroots movement that aims to amplify the voice of the silent majority of Palestinians and empower them to seize back the agenda for conflict resolution. OneVoice supports and propels leaders to work vigorously to end occupation and achieve the two-state solution. In this capacity, Ms. Shahin oversees the Palestinian youth leadership development program, Democratization Drives, as well as town hall meetings and mobilization campaigns. She also coordinates the joint and International OneVoice programming with OneVoice offices abroad. She is a trained conflict-resolution mediator and instructor.

Prior to joining the OneVoice team, Ms. Shanin served as Public Relations Director for the Palestinian Authority's International Relations Department in the Ministry of Interior. She also acted as a coordinator for the EC Food Security Program in Jerusalem, and she is an active Steering Committee member with a forum that includes more than 50 Palestinian civil society organizations. Ms. Shahin holds a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Political Science and a Master's Degree in Business Administration from BirZeit University.

Noreen S. Ahmed-Ullah is a staff reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*. For the past nine years, Ms. Ahmed-Ullah has covered everything from politics to education. She has written extensively about Islam in America, including an award-winning series called the "Struggle for the Soul of Islam." After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, she was amongst a handful of Tribune reporters sent to cover the war in Afghanistan. Since then, she has returned to both Afghanistan and Pakistan several times to write about the lack of reform efforts in Pakistani madrassas, women's issues in Afghanistan, suicide bombings, acts of extremism across the subcontinent and the Pakistani elections of 2008. For the last seven years, Ms. Ahmed-Ullah has reported at length on the Taliban phenomenon in Pakistan's tribal areas. In writing about Islam in America, she looks for stories that reflect the life of an average Muslim and the challenges he or she may face. For example, she has written about the quest for halal fast food chains, a Muslim designer who wears the hijab but designs risqué clothing, and a Muslim grandma who spent seven years translating the Quran.

In 2004, Ms. Ahmed-Ullah was a German Marshall Fellow, traveling through Europe for three weeks and learning about the Muslim minority experiences in France, Germany, Belgium and Spain. She is often asked to speak on panels across the country about the Muslim-American experience. Born in the UK and raised in Toronto, Canada, Ms. Ahmed-Ullah is now based in Chicago. She graduated from the University of Toronto and Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. Ms. Ahmed-Ullah is also an adjunct professor, teaching journalism classes at Columbia College. She considers herself a shawl aficionado, and she owns a scarf and shawl store in Chicago.

Noura Mansouri is a PhD student at Queen Mary, University of London. She is writing her thesis on Carbon Management for Sustainable Development: An Examination of Potential Transition Paths of the Saudi National Innovation System to a Cleaner Energy Economy. Ms. Mansouri previously worked as a research assistant at the Centre for Global Energy Studies, a London-based centre chaired by HE Sheikh Zaki Yamani. She has participated in the 2007 Global Network for Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems (Globelics) PhD School in Lisbon, Portugal and recently participated in a panel on youth at the Al-Faisal Exhibition in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Ms. Mansouri received her MBA in Technology Exploitation and Management degree with distinction from Queen Mary, University of London. Her thesis was entitled, "Fuel Cell as a Disruptive Innovation: A Case Study of Saudi Aramco." She received her BSc in Management Information System with honours from Dar Al Hekma College in Jeddah. Ms. Mansouri was also part of a six-months diplomatic training on Diplomacy and International Relations, a programme of Dar Al Hekma College and The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

Nur Hidayat is Vice-Secretary of the East Java Nahdlatul Ulama Board, the largest moderate Muslim organization in Indonesia, where he is the youngest member of the Board. Mr. Hidayat has also served as Secretary of Rabithah Ma'âhid al-Islâmiyah (The Association of Islamic Boarding Schools/Pesantren) in East Java from 2006 to 2007. He also teaches the principles of citizenship at Seblak Pesantren, one of the most respected pesantren for girls in Indonesia. In 2006, he and his colleagues founded the Yayasan Dakwah Islam Ahlussunnah wal Jamaah Foundation. He also built and organized Dunia Santri, an online community portal dedicated to Muslim students and alumni of pesantrens (www.dunia-santri.net). In addition, Mr. Hidayat was a columnist at *Jawa Pos*, one of the largest newspapers in Indonesia. His writing focuses on education, decentralization and anti-poverty policy.

Nurzhan Albanov is an associate at Salans, one of the world's leading international law firms. Based in Almaty, Kazakhstan, Mr. Albanov specializes in banking and finance, real estate, corporate law, corporate finance, securities and M&A. He is a member of the Salans' Global Banking and Finance and Global Real Estate groups

and has extensive expertise in different types of cross-border financing deals. His work extends to advising on multilateral institution financing, structuring of transactions, foreign investment and various corporate matters related to investing and doing business in both Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

Born in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Albanov graduated from Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University. He had served as the chairman of the youth committee of the Kyrgyzstan Lawyers Association, where he initiated and coordinated a number of national youth programs. He was also involved in the nongovernmental Civil Group for Judicial Reforms, a group monitoring judicial reforms in Kyrgyzstan. In 2004-2005 he lectured at the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University Law School with concentration on civil and commercial laws. After that period, he earned his LL.M. Finance degree from Frankfurt am Main University, Germany, and started his law practice in Kazakhstan. Mr. Albanov has several publications in Kyrgyzstan newspapers and legal journals related to various legal issues, including development of national judicial system.

Ömer Faruk Albayrak is the President and Founder of the Istanbul Young Businessmen Initiative, dedicated to the advancement of young entrepreneurs who conduct business in an Islamic manner. Mr. Albayrak was one of the founding members of the Justice and Development Party Youth Branch in Istanbul, and he was the Secretary General and Vice President of the organization for over four years. He received a Bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Marmara and is a graduate student at Istanbul Culture University. His research interests include ethics and an Islamic approach to business and their application in contemporary contexts.

Osama Saeed is the Chief Executive Officer of the Scottish-Islamic Foundation (SIF), Scotland's best known and most dynamic Islamic organization. The organization has established a platform for action that works to increase public understanding of Islam and Muslims in a proactive and positive manner. The SIF's goal is to empower young Muslims to increase their contribution to Scottish society. Mr. Saeed has been involved in grassroots Muslim youth activity since the age of twelve. After the Glasgow Airport terrorist attack, he organized one of the world's first Muslim organized demonstrations against Al-Qaeda inspired terror. He has been described as "Scotland's most influential Muslim" by the *Sunday Times* and one of Scotland's "Brightest and Best" by the *Sunday Herald*.

Oumar Kanabein Yeo is the founder of the non-profit organization, University Action for Peace and Development (UADEP), a non-profit organization and human rights-focused movement founded in 2003 just after the beginning of the military crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. Mr. Yeo is also a member of Ivorian Muslim's High School and University, where he served as president from 2006-2008 and Vice-President of his Association from 2004-2006. In this later capacity, he organized numerous conferences to educate the Ivorian people on the values of peace, interfaith dialogue, action, and social justice.

In 2008, Mr. Yeo was invited by the U.S. State Department to participate in the International Visitor Leadership Program, "U.S. Political Process for Young Muslim Leaders." He plans to found the African Forum for Development and Peace (UADEP) to continue the work he began with UADEP. Mr. Yeo holds a PhD in the Sciences of the Language from the University Cocody-Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire.

Raheel Mohammed is leading the Young Foundation's Maslaha Project, which aims to inform Muslims, especially the youth, of ways to maintain their faith and practices in Western societies. Mr. Mohammed is a journalist who has worked with *BBC* and *Time Out Magazine*. He was the recipient of the Race in the Media award for a feature exploring race in London. Mr. Mohammed has worked with numerous interfaith and conflict resolution organizations such as Peace Direct and the Lokhai Foundation. He has helped to set up and run the award winning Offscreen Education Programme designed to raise awareness of Middle Eastern and Islamic culture through art. Offscreen is responsible for the ground breaking "Edge of Arabia" exhibition at the Brunei Gallery in London. Mr. Mohammed has taken part in the Religion and Democracy in Europe Initiative and has spoken at the Royal Geographic Society about global citizenship and democracy.

Rahim Moloo is a Washington DC-based attorney at the global law firm White & Case, practicing international law. Born in Canada, Mr. Moloo was a finalist in the nationally-televised competition, "Canada's Next Great Prime Minister," and he won the Canadian National Debating Championships and the World Public Speaking Championships. He was named a "Face of the Future" by *The Globe & Mail*, Canada's leading national

newspaper. Mr. Moloo is also a Steering Committee member and legal adviser to a United Nations Development Program international waters initiative sponsored by the Global Environment Facility. Through Focus Humanitarian Assistance and the Aga Khan Development Network, Mr. Moloo has also volunteered in an Afghan refugee camp and in a school in the northern areas of Pakistan.

Mr. Moloo obtained a bachelor's degree in Life Sciences with first class honors from Queen's University, a law degree from the University of British Columbia, and a Master's degree in International Law from New York University, where he was named the All-University Valedictorian.

Rajae Al Mouhandiz is a poet, singer, composer, producer and the founder of Truthseeker Records, an independent record label based in Amsterdam. Ms. Al Mouhandiz's debut album *Incarnation* was released in 2006, and she is currently finishing *From Rajae with Love*, to be released in 2009. She sings in Dutch, English, Arabic, German, and some French, and she has recorded music with several international producers.

In addition, Ms. Al Mouhandiz is a Community Producer, talent recruiter, and art director at TROI Studios, a company which produces in-company radio and television programming from employee generated content. She also serves as creator as well as developer of viral campaigns and multimedia platforms used by companies such as Nike, TNT, and SDU. In the next year, she will build a global creative community with creative souls based in New York, Shanghai, Sao Paulo, Johannesburg, Sydney, London, Dubai, Moscow, and Mumbai. She was classically trained at the Dutch Conservatory and was the first Moroccan-Algerian musician to study at the institution.

Rana Bilal Ahmad is a social entrepreneur and human rights activist. He is the chairman of Youth Alliance for Human Rights, a non profit organization based in Lahore, Pakistan. Mr. Rana co-founded Indo-Pak Youth Forum for Peace in 2004, which aims to improve relations amongst the youth of India and Pakistan. He is currently a board member of Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation and has worked with the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, USAID, and UNICEF. Mr. Rana graduated from Punjab University with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and Theory. He served as Secretary General of the Students Union while attending Punjab University.

Rasha Abu Saada is a Coordinator at the Volunteers Department of Reach Out to Asia Qatar (ROTAQ). Ms. Abu Saada is responsible for ROTAQ youth conferences, clubs, and youth camps. Before ROTAQ, she worked at the Doha Asian Games in the Marketing and Public Relations department. She has a degree in Business Administration with a Major in Finance at the Arab Academy for Science and Technology. Originally from Jordan, Ms. Abu Saada has spent her career working in Doha for various international companies.

Rashad Al-Sharaby is a Yemeni journalist, editor, and media specialist. A member of the Yemeni Journalists Union, Arab Journalists Union, and International Journalists Union, Mr. Al-Sharaby frequently writes articles, essays, and reports for various Yemeni newspapers, including *Annas*. He is an expert in freedom of speech, and he frequently writes stories concerning the state of free speech in Yemen for the Lebanese *Manasat* website, which specializes in freedom of speech in the Arab World. From 1999-2005, Mr. Al-Sharaby worked as a reporter for *Al-Sahwa*, covering the Yemeni Parliament, and he was the editor in human rights and freedom of speech for the newspaper. In 2005, when *Al-Sahwa* opened the first Yemeni electronic newspaper, he served as editor. He has also worked as an editor for *Annas*, the *Al-Asma* newspaper, and the independent website, *NewsYemen*. Mr. Al-Sharaby is also a trainer in media and communications for NGOs and political parties. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Media from Sana'a University.

Rashad Al-Sharaby is a Yemeni journalist, editor, and media specialist. A member of the Yemeni Journalists Union, Arab Journalists Union, and International Journalists Union, Mr. Al-Sharaby frequently writes articles, essays, and reports for various Yemeni newspapers, including *Annas*. He is an expert in freedom of speech, and he frequently writes stories concerning the state of free speech in Yemen for the Lebanese *Manasat* website, which specializes in freedom of speech in the Arab World. From 1999-2005, Mr. Al-Sharaby worked as a reporter for *Al-Sahwa*, covering the Yemeni Parliament, and he was the editor in human rights and freedom of speech for the newspaper. In 2005, when *Al-Sahwa* opened the first Yemeni electronic newspaper, he served as editor. He has also worked as an editor for *Annas*, the *Al-Asma* newspaper, and the independent website,

NewsYemen. Mr. Al-Sharaby is also a trainer in media and communications for NGOs and political parties. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Media from Sana'a University.

Rashad Bukhari is the Program Coordinator and Editor of Common Ground News Partners in Humanity at the Search for Common Ground. *CGNews* (www.commongroundnews.org) seeks to promote mutual understanding and opportunities for dialogue and constructive suggestions to facilitate peaceful resolution of conflict, and it publishes and promotes articles by local and international experts on current Middle East issues and the relationship between the West and Muslim communities. Based in Islamabad, Pakistan, Mr. Bukhari edits a quarterly journal entitled *West and Islam* in Urdu. He has also contributed numerous articles in national and international journals and magazines, as well as translated several books during his previous job with the Institute of Policy Studies. He has a Bachelor's degree in Journalism and a Master's Degree in Political Science from Islamia University, Bahawalpur.

Ridwan Kalla is head of the African National Congress (ANC) election committee at the University of Cape Town. He is also the regional coordinator of the Ramadaan Humanitarian Project (RHP), a project across South Africa raising money for the less fortunate. A former Chairperson of the Muslim Students Association (MSA), Mr. Kalla has been at the forefront of addressing ongoing Muslim challenges at institutions of higher learning. He was the recipient of the Good Fellowship Award, student editor of the university magazine and has served on the Student Representative Council, the highest decision making body at the university. He was also a delegate for the South African Nation and Provincial Youth Parliament. Mr. Kalla is in his final year, to complete a Philosophy, Politics, and Economics degree in June of 2009.

Riem Spielhaus is a professor in the South Asian department of the Institute for Asian and African Studies at Berlins Humboldt-University in Germany. Ms. Spielhaus is a researcher in the field of Islamic Studies with expertise in the religious practices and institutionalisation of Muslims in Germany and Europe. She is Research Coordinator of the Berlin research team in a comparative survey on political participation of Muslims in Europe and the United States. She is also a founding member of the Muslim Academy in Germany, an institution advocating for the participation of Muslims in society and politics. Ms. Spielhaus has set up a German-wide network of women's activists and is a member of several organizations headed by the German government such as Islamforum Berlin and the German Islam Conference. She will publish her doctoral thesis in early 2009.

Rima Khoreibi is a children's author and gender equality activist. She created *The Adventures of Iman*, a children's book series based on the main character of Iman, the first Muslim girl super hero. In her work, Ms. Khoreibi, portrays Islam in a positive manner, stressing the teachings of tolerance and peace in Islam, in hopes of building bridges of understanding between the East and West. Equally important, her books encourage gender equality in Islam. She is often invited to speak in schools and universities throughout the Middle East. Ms. Khoreibi's books have proved to be a huge success in the Arab region, as well as on an international level, and she has been featured in many publications throughout the Middle East, voted in a local magazine's top 100 people, and is included on the list of the 35 most influential women in Dubai. She has an upcoming spot with Current TV, ABC, and Al Jazeera International.

Riyaad Minty is part of the New Media Team of *Al Jazeera* network in Qatar, a group specializing in mobile and social media. At the age of 19, Mr. Minty founded a mobile technology company which brokered deals with various blue chip companies from every continent within its first year. Due to his early success he was appointed the Director of Mobile services for the *Cii Network*, the largest global Islamic satellite radio station, where he launched one of the first Islamic mobile content portals in the Muslim world. Mr. Minty is a regular lecturer on numerous radio stations, discussing the challenges and opportunities new technologies provide. Mr. Minty is frequently presents at workshops with community organizations, schools and radio stations on the challenges and opportunities new technologies provide.

Rubya Mehdi is a consultant on Islamic law and custom for local government, courts, advocates, and non-profit organizations. Ms. Mehdi teaches Islamic law at the Law faculty and has published extensively in the fields of Islamic law, gender and Islam, customary laws and legal pluralism, and the application of Islamic law in Europe. She is a Senior Researcher in the department of Cross Cultural and Regional Studies. Ms. Mehdi was awarded the Kafkatten prize in 2006 and has a Doctorate degree in Law from the University of Copenhagen.

Saadi Alkoutli is the Creative Director of TBWA/RAAD in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where he oversees a creative team of designers and art directors. Handling the company's projects for numerous global clients, Mr. Alkoutli promotes socially positive methods and messages through his work. He has worked with Saatchi & Saatchi in Beirut and as a Senior Art Director for McCann-Erikson in New York City, branding for top level clients such as Reckit Benckiser, Johnson & Johnson, Lowe's, and Major League Baseball. Mr. Alkoutli pursued a degree in Advertising at the San Francisco Academy of Art College and earned a Master's degree in Media Studies at the New School University in New York.

Saadia Qamar is a reporter for *The Nation*, a leading Pakistani newspaper. Based in Karachi, Ms. Qamar has been working in mainstream journalism for the past four years. Through her work, she seeks to improve the portrayal of Muslims and encourage the end of conflicts in a post-9/11 world. Ms. Qamar is convent educated and holds a Master's degree from the University of Karachi in International Relations.

Saadia Zahidi is the Head of Constituents at the World Economic Forum, responsible for the engagement of religious leaders, nonprofit organizations, labour leaders, women leaders, and gender parity groups. The Forum's mission is to improve the state of the world by engaging leaders in multistakeholder partnerships to shape global, regional, and industrial agendas. Ms. Zahidi leads the Forum's research on gender and faith issues, and she is the Founder and Co-author of the Forum's *Global Gender Gap Report* series, benchmarking countries according to the size of their gender gaps on health, education, economic participation, and political empowerment. She was previously an economist with the Forum's Global Competitiveness Programme. Ms. Zahidi holds a Master's degree in International Economics from the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland and was cum laude at Smith College (US), earning a Bachelor's degree in Economics.

Sabeur Mansar is a Business Development Manager for Shell Oil in Qatar. Dr. Mansar started his oil business career with Total in France and later joined Shell as a geophysicist. After a number of years in technical roles, he has since taken on more commercial and business roles dealing with strategy and business development activities. For example, he contributed to Shell's comeback in Libya through the maturation and negotiation of a major integrated gas project. Dr. Mansar has a Doctorate in Geophysics and Signal Processing from the Institute National Polytechnique de Grenoble. He is fluent in Arabic, French, and English and speaks some Italian and Dutch.

Sabrina Daoui is the Policy of Education Coordinator for a town hall educational project in a municipality in a Paris suburb. Ms. Daoui is responsible for the educational policy of the city and for setting up a program to promote the academic success of young pupils. She is also heavily invested in the Muslim associations in Normandy, and she has participated in the establishment of an interfaith exchange platform to promote increased understanding. Ms. Daoui has advanced training and experience in humanitarian work, recently volunteering in the West Bank, Palestine. She completed her graduate work in social development.

Safia Al-Souhail is an independent liberal politician and long-time human rights and democracy advocate in the Iraqi Parliament, where she is a member. She was a senior member of the steering committee for the preparation of the Transitional National Assembly and has been a major force in mobilizing Iraqi women in politics. In fact, she was instrumental in securing the 25% quota for Iraqi women in the Parliament. In 2004, Ms. Al-Souhail was nominated as the Iraqi Ambassador to Egypt, becoming the first Iraqi female Ambassador outside of her country.

Prior to the liberation of Iraq from the Saddam Hussein regime, Ms. Al-Souhail was active in campaigning for the freedom of the Iraqi people. For example, she attended most of the Iraqi Opposition Conferences throughout the 1990s and was elected a member of the Follow-up and Coordination Committee at the 2002 London Iraqi Opposition Conference. Ms. Al-Souhail was the Executive Director at the International Alliance for Justice, a network of 275 international nonprofit organizations from over 120 countries which struggled to bring Saddam Hussein and members of his regime to justice. She was also the publisher of the independent Iraqi newspaper *Al Manar Al Arabi*.

Ms. Al-Souhai studied Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Jordan. Her father, Sheikh Taleb Al-Souhail, chief of the Bani Tamim tribe, was assassinated by Saddam Hussein in 1994. She is married to Bakhtiar Amin, the former Minister of Human Rights in Iraq.

Saira Zuberi is Project Coordinator with the Resisting and Challenging Religious Fundamentalisms strategic initiative at AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development). The Challenging Fundamentalisms initiative seeks to produce a greater shared understanding of the ways in which religious fundamentalists operate across regions and religions, in order to strengthen collective responses by women's rights activists. AWID has recently produced three publications based on the research conducted by this initiative: *Shared Insights: Women's Rights Activists Define Religious Fundamentalisms*; *Religious Fundamentalisms on the Rise: A Case for Action*; and *Exposed: Ten Myths about Religious Fundamentalisms*.

Ms. Zuberi has an academic background in Islamic law and women's rights, focusing on reproductive rights. Her work and volunteer experience relates to the rights of minority groups, particularly with relation to immigrants and refugees, Muslims, racialised women and other marginalised communities

Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur is the creator of Malaria No More's faith-based programs and has built national and global partnerships to advance the Millenium Development Goals. In 2008, Ms. Abdul-Ghafur secured a commitment of ten million dollars to advance malaria control. She is also the founding Executive Director of "100 People of Faith," which convenes influential leaders representing the world's major religions to address local and global issues. Ms. Abdul-Ghafur is the Editor of the critically-acclaimed anthology *Living Islam Out Loud: American Muslim Women Speak*, a seminal collection of narratives from American Muslim women who are forging their own identities while contributing powerfully to public life. She has led and participated in a variety of actions to advance gender equality in Muslim communities, including co-organizing the historic women-led prayer in New York City. She sits on the advisory board of the second largest Habitat for Humanity affiliate and a member of the Faith, Feminism and Philanthropy steering committee.

Ms. Abdul-Ghafur is a frequent lecturer on Islam, women, interfaith relations, and faith-based activism, and she has been profiled in numerous publications including *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*. She is the recipient of the Kent Place School Young Alumna award and a graduate of Columbia University.

Saleh Suhail Hijazi is the Clinical Supervisor for the Al-Quds Human Rights Clinic at the Al-Quds University Faculty of Law. The Clinic works to teach and actively engage students in issues pertaining to human rights and international humanitarian law within the Palestinian Occupied Territories. Mr. Hijazi supervises student research projects and coordinates their work in planning and implementing campaigns that document violations to be sent to United Nations human rights bodies. He is currently working on developing the Clinic's Self-Determination Unit to work against illegal policies and actions towards Palestinians living in Jerusalem. Previously, he worked as a consultant for a development company in Ramallah and the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies at Birzeit University. Mr. Hijazi has a Bachelor's degree in Political Philosophy from Lawrence University and a Master's degree in Human Rights from the University of Essex.

Salim A. Al-Jahwari is currently studying at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University. Mr. Al-Jahwari has previously worked on the Correlates of War project, where he researched the trends and root causes of interstate and civil wars. He has also served as an Arab-Israeli Conflict peer mentor and advisor in the University of Michigan's Interactive Communications and Simulations program. He recently completed work at the United Nation's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in Mine Action Service (UNMAS).

Mr. Al-Jahwari was recently awarded the Davis Project for Peace Award after coordinating a week-long conference on interfaith work with a fellow Israeli resident from the International House in New York City. At the University of Michigan, he was designated the James B. Angell Scholar and awarded a Certificate of Excellence from the Ambassador of Oman. He was also awarded the prestigious Leroy T. Waterman award at the University of Michigan for being the best student in Hebrew and Judaic Studies.

Salim Rachid is a graduate student in International Relations at the University of Oxford, where he is researching NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue, with a special emphasis on the organization's socialization tactics in Jordan and Egypt. In addition to his studies, Mr. Rachid has done volunteer work in the Sabra & Chatila Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut and has been involved in numerous projects related to the rehabilitation of public spaces and schools in refugee camps throughout Beirut, as well as the dissemination of educational materials to underdeveloped Lebanese schools. Mr. Rachid was born and raised in Saudi Arabia, but has also lived in Lebanon, Canada, and the UK. He completed his undergraduate degree in Political Science and Public Administration at the American University of Beirut.

Maryam Semsar, or **Salome**, is an Iranian–Turkish rapper, one of the pioneers of Hip Hop music in Iran. Her music treats any topic involving Middle Eastern youth, including war and imperialism. She has collaborated with musicians from all over the world, including the Iranian–German rapper Shirali, with whom she has made two albums, both distributed in Germany and Iran. Salome has performed live at the “Iranian Intergalactic Music Festival” in Amsterdam. She is also a gifted graffiti artist who has painted the gray walls of Tehran, a T-shirt Designer, and a translator from Turkish to Farsi and vice versa.

Samer Saleh is a Fixed Income Trader at the Pension Board of the United Church of Christ (UCC) in New York City. Mr. Saleh co-manages and trades a fixed income fund for retirees of this non-profit organization associated with the UCC. Mr. Saleh's first job in the US was as an accountant for small firms while completing his Bachelor's degree. He later worked for Morgan Stanley at the World Trade Center as a performance analyst, before moving to Deutsche Bank as a senior performance analyst in the asset management division. He completed a business degree from Baruch College, after transferring from Alexandria University's Faculty of Commerce.

Saqeb Mueen works at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI) and is charged with RUSI.org's editorial direction and analysis. Mr. Mueen is also a Research Analyst for RUSI, focusing on radicalisation in Europe and the Muslim World. In 2008, RUSI was awarded *Prospect* magazine's Think Tank of the Year Award. Prior to assuming his current role, he was Deputy Editor of the *RUSI Journal*, responsible for its Reviews section. He remains an Associate Editor of the journal and is on RUSI's editorial board. Mr. Mueen has a keen interest in mainstreaming British Muslim culture and has helped organize several events, including London's Eid in the Square, held in conjunction with the city's Mayor, and Spirit 21 Events which organizes cutting-edge social and cultural events in London.

In 2006, Mr. Mueen became the chair of the Public Affairs Committee of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), the UK's largest and most diverse Muslim umbrella body. The Committee leads the Council's engagement with public policy as well as its campaign to increase civic and democratic participation amongst British Muslims. Amongst his policy papers written for the MCB, he has explored Muslim contribution to Britain, homegrown terrorism in Europe, participation in the democratic process and the role of faith in the public arena. Mr. Mueen holds a Bachelor's degree from SSEES University College London and a Master's degree in War Studies from King's College. He has written for the *RUSI Journal* and *RUSI Newsbrief* and has commented in the press and media, including the BBC, CNN and Voice of America.

Sarah Joseph is the Editor of *emel*, a dynamic Muslim lifestyle magazine with mainstream distribution in four international territories and subscribers in over sixty countries. Ms. Joseph has made numerous television appearances, including for the BBC, CNN, and *Al-Jazeera*, and she has lectured across the globe since her embrace of Islam in 1988. She has written for international newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Guardian* and has scripted and recorded for a variety of BBC and independent radio productions. Acting as a consultant on Islamic affairs to both private and public bodies, Ms. Joseph was a member of the Downing Street delegation in the aftermath of the July 2007 London bombings and a member of the Home Office Task Force on extremism. She was awarded an OBE in the 2004 Queen's Birthday Honour's List for her services to interfaith dialogue and the promotion of women's rights. She was listed as one of UK's most powerful Muslims in the “Muslim Power 100” by Carter Andersen.

Sarah Sayeed is Program and Communication Associate for the Interfaith Center of New York (ICNY). Ms. Sayeed is also a board member of Women in Islam Inc. and the Muslim Consultative Network. She has also worked at New York Disaster Interfaith Services and at the American Jewish World Service.

Formerly an Assistant Professor at the Baruch College School of Public Affairs, Ms. Sayeed graduated from Princeton University and earned her doctorate in communications from the Annenberg School for Communications at the University of Pennsylvania, where she specialized in public health communication. She is the author of numerous articles relating to women, Islam, and public health.

Sayyeda Mirza-Jafri is a Strategic Philanthropy Consultant. Ms. Mirza-Jafri was the Project Manager for “One Nation: With Liberty and Justice for All,” a collaborative philanthropic effort housed at the Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisor aimed at reframing perceptions of Islam and Muslims in the US through multimedia, strategic communications, and policy and civic engagement initiatives. Prior to One Nation, she was engaged in developing a Middle East and North African leadership program for the EastWest Institute (EWI). She has also served as Program Associate for the Bridging Leadership Program at the Synergos Institute, where she organized and co-facilitated global leadership training in South Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. At Synergos, she developed overall communications strategies and materials and engaged in research initiatives of conflict resolution, leadership development and systems thinking.

Ms. Mirza-Jafri also worked at the Council of Foreign Relations, focusing on issues related to Islam and working on the project “Pluralism in Muslim Societies,” sponsored by the Ford Foundation. She has a background in international economic development, specifically microfinance, and she has worked for the Grameen Bank/Trust in Bangladesh and India.

Born and raised in the US, Ms. Mirza-Jafri obtained a Master’s degree in International Political Economy from the London School of Economics, with a concentration on issues of economic development, investment and political barriers in developing countries to growth (specifically in the Middle East and North Africa). She graduated cum laude from New York University (NYU) with a BA in International Politics and Middle East Studies. Her language skills at various levels include Arabic, Bengali, Hindi, Persian, Spanish, Urdu and French.

Seemi Bushra Ghazi is a lecturer in Classical Arabic at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. She has a special interest in Islamic literature, culture and spirituality, as well as Islam and Gender. Ms. Ghazi is also a student in the Rifa’i Ma’rufi spiritual lineage and a performer of traditional Islamic arts, including recitation of the Qur’an and *Hamd*, or divine praise songs. She has lectured widely and her interviews and performances have been featured on BBC, CBC, NPR and PBS. Her Qur’anic recitation is available on the CD accompanying Michael Sells’ *Approaching Islam: the Early Revelations*, as well as on the PBS documentary “Islam, Empire of Faith.” Her article, “The Birth of Aliya Mariam,” has appeared in Praeger Press’ *A New Encyclopedia of Islam*.

Ms. Ghazi is deeply involved in interfaith work, including at The Centre for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University, and she currently hosts a monthly Unity Dhikr in Vancouver, British Columbia. She is a founding Board Member of the Rumi Society of Vancouver and the Vancouver Interspiritual Centre Society. Born in London, England and of South Asian origin, Ms. Ghazi was educated in the United States at Bryn Mawr College, the University of Chicago, and Duke University, as well as in the Middle East at King Abdul Aziz University (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia) and The American University in Cairo.

Sevinc Alkan Ozcan is Education and Media Director for the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF-DC), an institution affiliated with the OIC. Ms. Ozcan coordinated the First Islamic Youth Leadership Training Forum, held in Cairo in 2008, organized by ICYF-DC and the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) in partnership with Arab Academy of Egypt. She was also a member of the preparations team for the international conference Beyond Religious Differences: Islamophobia and Other Forms of Discrimination Based on Religion and Belief, the Consequences for Young People and Youth Work Responses, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, organized by CoE, ISESCO, Azerbaijan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ICYF-DC.

Ms. Ozcan graduated from Marmara University’s Department of Political Science and International Relations, in Istanbul. She received her MA from the same department with the thesis “A New Minority in Post-Soviet Space: Russians in Kazakhstan, Ukraine and the Baltic States.” She is currently PhD Candidate in International

Relations. Her dissertation topic is "Religion and State in Post-Communist Polish Catholicism and Russian Orthodoxy." In 2006, she was a visiting fellow at the Oxford Center for Islamic Studies.

Shaarik H. Zafar is a Senior Policy Advisor in the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties at the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), where he advises Department leaders on issues dealing with the intersection of civil rights and homeland security. Mr. Zafar regularly engages with the American Arab, Muslim, and South Asian communities to discuss ways to strengthen homeland security while protecting fundamental rights and liberties. He also works with other Federal agencies to strengthen the US government's civic engagement and public diplomacy initiatives. He has previously served as the Special Counsel for Post 9/11 National Origin Discrimination at the U.S. Department of Justice.

Mr. Zafar is the recipient of the DHS Secretary's Award for Excellence, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee's Friend in Government Award, the Association of Pakistani Physicians of North America's Freedom and Justice Award, the South Asian Chamber of Commerce's Community Service Award, and the North American South Asian Bar Association's Access to Justice Award. He is a Term Member of the Council of Foreign Relations and a graduate of the Plan II Honors Program at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Texas School of Law.

Shakila Mohammadi is President of the Organization of the Institute of Destitute Accused (OIDA) in Kabul, Afghanistan. Ms. Mohammadi provides training to national and international companies and non-profit organizations on grant writing and reporting, gender, and avoiding gender discrimination in the workplace. In 2007, she created a Gender Manual for Helvetas, which was circulated amongst both governmental and nongovernmental offices to provide information on gender and gender discrimination. Ms. Mohammadi is in the last year of her Bachelor's degree and holds over sixteen years of working experience throughout Afghanistan.

Shale Ahmed is Executive Director and a Founding Member of the Bandhu Social Welfare Society (BSWS), a national HIV/AIDS prevention non-profit organization in Bangladesh. Under Mr. Ahmed's direction, the organization has developed drop-in centres, outreach field teams, and clinical services throughout the country, as well as an advocacy and policy development program addressing the social, cultural, and legal impediments of sexual health promotion. Mr. Ahmed previously worked as the Project Coordinator for Naz Foundation International, where he led the conducting of surveys in order to develop a strategic response to the reproductive and sexual health needs of homosexual males (MSM) in Dhaka.

Alongside his work with BSWS, Mr. Ahmed has undertaken specialized training on issues related to HIV/AIDS and sexual health both nationally and internationally. For example, he participated in the 12th International Course on AIDS Prevention and Care in Asia (Japan, 2005). He has presented papers at several HIV/AIDS conferences, including "In and Out: Advocacy with Key Media on MSM." He is also a member of several advisory groups, including the USAID-funded Technical Advisory Group for developing regional MSM/ transgender sexual health clinic guidelines, the Advisory Committee for the Asia Pacific region at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the National AIDS/STI network of Bangladesh, and the committee that reviews and updates the HIV/AIDS strategic plan for the Government of Bangladesh.

Shannon Shah is the Columns and Comments Editor at *The Nut Graph*. Mr. Shah was also a columnist for various English daily newspapers including *The New Straits Times* and *The Sun*. In addition to his journalism, he began volunteering for various non-profit organizations such as the Malaysian AIDS Council, Sisters in Islam, and Amnesty International Malaysia early in his career. Since then, he has been engaged as a facilitator and consultant for various women's and human rights nongovernmental organizations, and he runs workshops for Muslim community leaders from South Asia, EU diplomats, the transsexual community, students, artists, activists, and young women. Mr. Shah is also a playwright, and his first full-length play, *Air Con*, premiered to a packed house and rave reviews in 2008. He debuted his first musical album, *Dilanda Cinta*, in 2005, and he won the Best Male Vocal in an Album award in 2006 at the Malaysian Recording Industry Awards. Trained as a chemical engineer, Mr. Shah was formerly an analyst with the Malaysian state-owned oil and gas company, Petronas.

Shaukat Warraich is Director for Right Start Foundation International, an organization supporting and facilitating major pan-Arab and pan-Muslim youth initiatives in the media, as well as social enterprise and community development projects. In this capacity, Mr. Warraich worked with the British Foreign Commonwealth Office for the “Muslim of Europe Conference,” a 2006 global initiative that resulted in a declaration against violent extremism. He is also the Chief Executive of Faith Associates, a pioneering enterprise for developing engagement and capacity-building programmes for ethnic minorities and faith-based communities in the UK. Mr. Warraich was the lead consultant commissioned by the UK Home Office for the national consultation and ultimate launch of the Mosques and Imams National Advisory body (MINAB). He served as a member on the UK Government's Taskforce “Preventing Extremism Together,” established after the 7/7 bombings, which compiled a [report](#) published to wide acclaim.

Mr. Warraich has lectured throughout Britain and other parts of the world on strategic management, human development, and issues relating to Islam and future challenges and opportunities for minorities. As a strategist, he has worked very closely with some of the leading Muslim media personalities, such as Amr Khaled. Mr. Warraich holds a Bachelor's degree from Kings College, University of London and a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) from Oxford Brooks University.

Sherin Khankhan is the Founder and Chairwoman of the Association of Critical Muslims. Created in August 2001, the Association is the first and only organization in Denmark that has promoted female Muslim leadership. Ms. Khankhan is also founder and executive director of Face to Face, a counseling service for Muslim women in Denmark. She is a former member of Co-existence of Civilizations, a think tank created in the aftermath of the cartoon crisis and co-founder of Mesopotamia, a consultancy firm that aids businesses in strengthening their communication with Muslims.

In addition to her professional work, Ms. Khankhan is an author, lecturer, columnist, and public speaker. She authored *Islam and Reconciliation: A Public Matter*, a book about faith and secularism from the perspective of Islamic activists. She is currently working on a new book called *Islam- History-Religion and Society*, which will be published by Pantheon in 2009. She has also contributed to several anthologies and has appeared in various media outlets for the past ten years.

Born to a Finish Christian mother and Syrian Muslim father, Ms. Khankhan holds an MA. in Sociology of Religion and Philosophy from the University of Copenhagen, and she specialized in contemporary Islamic activism in Europe and the Middle East. She is a former candidate to the Danish Parliament for the party “Radical Left.”

Sohail Nakhoda is Founder and Editor-in-Chief of *Islamica Magazine*, a leader Islamic periodical in English, and Advisor on interfaith affairs to HRH Prince Ghazi Bin Muhammad of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He is Junior Fellow at the Royal Aal Al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought in Jordan and the official archivist for the Common Word conferences at Yale, Cambridge/Lambeth, the Vatican, Georgetown, and in Jordan.

Mr. Nakhoda has 15 years of experience in publishing, designing and editing. Previously, he served on the editorial board of *Encounters: A Journal of Inter-Cultural Perspectives* and has also served as Assistant Editor for *the American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* and the *Muslim World Book Review*. He specializes in Muslim-Christian relations and was a former member of the Bishop of Oxford's Abrahamic Group and Co-Secretary General of the UK Chapter of the World Conference for Religion and Peace (WCRP).

His expertise in graphic design earned him a finalist position in the 2002 British Book Design and Production Awards for his design work on Nuh Keller's *Port in a Storm*, and between 2002 and 2006, he won several gold awards from the Calendar Marketing Association of North America for his work on the “Longing for the Divine” calendar published by Andalusian Arts. He recently designed the large volume, *True Islam and the Consensus on the Amman Message*, edited by HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, as well as other works for Jordan's Royal Court.

Mr. Nakhoda studied Government at the London School of Economics and Catholic theology at the St. Thomas Aquinas Pontifical University (Angelicum). He earned his MA in Protestant theology from the University of

Nottingham (UK) and is currently pursuing a PhD in Theological and Philosophical Hermeneutics. He is married with four children, lives in Amman and holds dual Jordanian and Portuguese nationalities.

Souheila Al-Jadda is an Associate Producer for Link TV, where she produces programs about the Middle East and Islam, including the Peabody award-winning television news program, *Mosaic: World News from the Middle East*. Ms. Al-Jadda's opinion pieces have been published worldwide in such newspapers as *USA Today*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Dallas Morning News*, *Arab News* (Saudi Arabia) and *The Daily Star* (Lebanon). She has appeared as a guest analyst on various radio and television networks such as CNN, MSNBC, CBS and Link TV. Ms. Al-Jadda also sits on the Board of Contributors of *USA Today*, as well as on the Board of Directors of *Illume Magazine*, a leading American Muslim magazine. She is founding president of SANO Group, a firm specializing in strategic communications and media, philanthropy, and public relations consulting.

Sukhrobjon Ismoilov is a Public Relations Officer for the Uzbekistan Rapid Response Group for the Prevention of Torture, the first independent Uzbek think-tank that informs citizens how to make decisions in the public interest. Mr. Ismoilov is an outspoken human rights activist and practicing defense attorney, and he has worked for a variety of human rights groups on issues of government regulation and interference in the freedom of religion and its practice in Uzbekistan, representing Muslim religious and community leaders who have been persecuted for their beliefs and practices. He has authored two shadow reports and over sixty articles on a broad range of human rights issues, including the freedom of religion and freedom from torture, and his two shadow reports were considered in an official session of the United Nations Committee Against Torture and Human Rights Council. Mr. Ismoilov holds a Bachelor's degree in International Public Law from Tashkent University of World Economy and Diplomacy. He was a Visiting Scholar at the Columbia Law School under the Public Interest Law Initiative Program.

Susan Carland is Co-Creator and a Panelist on the critically-acclaimed Australian national network television program *Salam Café*, a Muslim comedy panel and sketch show. Ms. Carland is also a lecturer in the School of Political and Social Inquiry at Monash University, where she teaches gender studies, politics, and sociology, with a special focus on Muslim women and Muslims in Australia. In addition, she is the co-creator of the Victorian Convert Support Service, and she has initiated and managed the Islamic Council of Victoria's youth wing, Grassroots. She is also a state coordinator for the Train the Trainers Course in Dawah and Dialogue. Ms. Carland frequently comments in the mainstream Australian media on Islam and Muslims, and she has spoken extensively to Muslims and non-Muslims around Australia and internationally on Islam, Muslim women, and the Australian Muslim experience. For example, she gave the International Women's Day address at the Victorian Parliament House and has spoken at Chatham House in London, the Muslim Professionals Forum in Malaysia, and as a panelist for Issues Deliberation Australia: Muslims and Non-Muslims in Australia. In 2004, she was awarded "Australian Muslim of the Year." Ms. Carland is currently completing her Doctorate after being awarded a teaching and research scholarship. She is researching the ways in which Muslim women in the West fight gender discrimination within their own traditions and communities.

Syed Amjad Ali Shah is an educator, social activist and intra- and interfaith leader. Mr. Shah teaches in various leading universities and institutes of Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province, including the IMS University of Peshawar, the Institute of Management Sciences, the Peshawar Business School, and Sarhad University. In addition, he is currently the Project Coordinator of Sustainable Peace and Development. He is also Director of the Minhaj Welfare Foundation, and he serves on the board of directors of various public, private, and non-profit organizations including the *Pakistan Post*, *Minhaj International*, *Karwaan*, and *CPN Network*. He has served as Editor for the quarterly magazine *Assalam*. An active member of numerous social and religious organizations such as Minhaj International, Ittehad-e-Khalil Grand Jirga, Mr. Shah has been involved in creating peace manuals for both youth and religious scholars. He is also the Executive Producer of *Karwaan*, a television drama series based on a peaceful relationship between Afghans and Pakistanis, and he has acted in different Pashto and Urdu productions, such as *Jugnoo* and *Street 96*. Mr. Shah has a Master's Degree in business administration.

Talgat Yessenkulov is the Executive Director of IZGI AMAL, a youth-driven Kazakhstan based nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the Islamic presence in Kazhakstani society. Mr. Yessenkulov participates

in various seminars and conferences on strengthening Islam in Kazakhstan and neighboring countries. For example, he recently participated in the “International Congress of Muslims” held in Kazan, Russia where he lectured on the interconnections of Islam and Law. Mr. Yessenkulov is a practicing lawyer and researcher on the impact of Islam on legal systems. He is also a regular contributor to *Nash Mir* (Our World), a Kazakhstani weekly newspaper that elaborates on philosophical, cultural, and religious issues.

Tayebeh Asadi has worked with several NGOs for the past seven years, including the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV), where she served as director of the Women’s Committee. At ODVV, she conducted a report on the roots of women and children trafficking in Iran, as well as the legal challenges to combating this practice. This project report was then sent to a legal committee within the Iranian parliament to prepare a bill. In addition, she worked on projects aimed at rehabilitating female victims of violence and provided legal training to those working with these victims. Ms. Asadi served on the Human Rights Committee at the Iranian NGO House of Culture and Sustainable Development, launching workshops on Islam and human rights, especially Islamic approaches to women’s rights. These workshops invited Muslim thinkers to discuss changing conservative interpretation of Islam and the Holy Quran with regards to gender and women’s rights. Ms. Asadi has also worked for a women’s rights magazine, writing legal gapes on Iranian civil and penal code regulations that are not based on gender justice and equality, challenging discriminatory laws and promoting women’s rights.

Ms. Asadi is currently Director of the Planning Committee for the Association for Protection of Refugee Women and Children (HAMI), which supports educational centers for Afghan children and illiterate women. She graduated from Mofid University in Qum, with a Master’s degree in International Law.

Tayyeb Shah is the Managing Director of Meem Music, a UK and U.S.-based *nasheed* (Muslim devotional music) label founded in 2002 to nurture and showcase well-known artists. Meem Music fuses the sounds of East and West, traditional and contemporary, through artists born and raised in the West. Mr. Shah has overseen the release of over fifty albums to date and is one of the pioneers of the *nasheed* scene for over a decade. Prior to Meem Music, he was the director of Yusuf Islam’s record company. He holds a PPE (philosophy, politics, and economics) degree from Oxford and a PGCE degree from Cambridge. He has a Master’s degree in Middle Eastern Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London.

Tilek Bekbasarov is Managing Director of investments for BI Group, one of the largest holding companies in Kazakhstan. BI Group has started development projects in Afghanistan and Qatar through road construction and real estate. Mr. Bekbasaraov is responsible for establishing partnerships with foreign companies, and he is focused on improving monetary policy, tobacco control, input-output modeling and state development institutes. He has worked with the National Bank, central government bodies, and numerous consulting companies. He has received numerous awards in education and professional work and has written over fifty economic and scientific publications, including two monographs.

Timur Suleymanov is a member of the Public Chamber of the Republic of Tatarstan (Russia) and Project Manager for the Tatarstan Republic Youth Social Fund “Selet” (TRYSF), which works with talented youth. He is TRYSF’s official representative for the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation. He was honored as the best student of the Republic of Tatarstan and declared “The Best Leader in Russia” at a contest held in St. Petersburg in 2004. Mr. Suleymanov is currently studying Economics at Kazan State University and spent a year studying at Granada University through an exchange program. He also studied at the Business School of Justus-Liebig University of Giessen in Germany.

Wael El-Gayar is a Policy and Strategy Adviser in the Ministry for Intergenerational Affairs, Family, Women and Integration of the State for the North Rhine-Westphalia region in Germany. In this capacity, Mr. El-Gayar deals with strategic issues of immigration and integration, focusing primarily on Muslim minorities and Islamic affairs in Germany and Europe. Prior to this, he served as Policy Adviser to the Federal German Minister of the Interior, where he supervised the German Conference on Islam. Mr. El-Gayar has a Master’s degree in Political Science and Middle East Studies from the Free University of Berlin.

Waqas Waheed is Secretary of the Islamic Cultural Center of Norway. He is also Director of the Ghazali Education Forum, a Norway-based non-profit organization targeting underprivileged students in Pakistan. Mr.

Waheed is an executive member of the Council of Urtehagen, a trust pursuing social, cultural, and youth activities in Oslo. He has authored articles published in *Urdu Monthly Magazine*, *NGO Times*, *Norway Times*, and *Quaid* and has guest media appearance on local TV, the *Voice of Islam*, *Aftenposten*, *Pakistani News*, and *Jazba International*. He is active in the political sphere and is a member of SV Norway, which he has advised since 1999. Born in Pakistan, Mr. Waheed has visited numerous countries to participate in dawah, cultural, educational, and interfaith dialogues and seminars, in particular Kuwait, Pakistan, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, and the UK.

Yahya Sergio Yahe Pallavacini is Vice-President and Imam of the CO.RE.IS (Comunità Religiosa Islamica) Italiana. He is Adviser to the Italian Ministry of the Interior (Council for Italian Islam) and has been involved in drawing up the “Charter on the Values and Significance of Citizenship and Integration,” promoted by the Minister. As a member of the Council for Italian Islam, he participated in the Constitutional Affairs Committee hearings on religious freedom laws and the Social Affairs Committee hearings on family in Italy. He contributed to the drafting and presentation of a parliamentary bill on a register of imams in Italy. Mr. Pallavacini is also President of the ISESCO Council for Education and Culture in the West and Global Expert of the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations. In addition, he served as a senior adviser of Vatican and Italian Affairs for “A Common Word between Us and You,” the a document signed by 138 international Muslim scholars and addressed to the Christian religious authorities. He is an alumni of the American Jewish Committee’s Interfaith Project Exchange.

Mr. Pallavacini is author of three books, including *Dentro la Moschea*, *L’Islam in Europa*, and *Riflessioni di un imam italiano* (Islam in Europe: The Reflections of an Italian Imam). The French edition of *Riflessioni* won the World Competition for Islamic Studies prize, awarded by the President of the Republic of Tunisia. Born to a Japanese mother and Italian father, Mr. Pallavacini works in Rome and Milan, where he lives with his wife and son.

Yahya Sakho is the technical advisor for the President of Senegal, His Excellency, Abdoulaye Wade. He briefs the President on national and international news. Mr. Sakho is a prestigious journalist, having published numerous articles on Islam, including a tribute to Serigne Abdoul Aziz Sy, the General Secretary of the Tijjaniya. He has worked as a reporter for *Le Matin* and *Le Carifard Libere*. Mr. Sakho studied law at the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar, Senegal and earned his Master’s degree in Journalism and Political Science from the Institut Supérieur des Sciences de l’Information et de la Communication.

Yama Helaman is National Programme Officer for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Afghanistan. He holds extensive experience in the field of democratic governance, capacity-building, and civil society empowerment. He has contributed to the design and implementation of the Gender Equality program in Afghanistan, which looks at women’s rights and the elimination of violence against women from the Islamic point of view. Mr. Helaman is currently pursuing his Master’s degree in Business Management from University 21 Global in Singapore. He is committed to the development process in his war torn country of Afghanistan.

Dr. Yasmeen Ashai heads the post-graduate Human Development Department at the Government College for Women in Srinagar, India, teaching undergraduate and post-graduate classes related to the fields of women and children for over twenty years. Dr. Ashai is also Coordinator of a women’s studies centre established in the College, and she has been invited as a trainer for capacity-building programmes for women managers in higher education. She has participated in seminars and workshops on topics related to conflict and peace, as well as the role of women in relation to Jammu and Kashmir.

In addition to her academic work, Dr. Ashai has been involved in a New Delhi-based NGO that promotes conflict resolution through dialogue. She has, for example, facilitated dialogue between women of different communities in Jammu and Kashmir and conducted trainings for adolescents on life skills and for teachers on conflict resolution in the classroom. Dr. Ashai has worked with such NGOs as WISCOMP, ASHI, and WAVE. She is currently working to build curriculum for peace education, a project undertaken by the University for Peace (Costa Rica), in collaboration with Miriam College in the Philippines. The project held its first workshop in 2008 in Manila.

For her excellence in teaching and research, Dr. Ashai was awarded the Master Karamchand “Best Teacher Award” in 2006. She holds a Master’s degree in child development, and she earned her doctorate on the behavioral problems of young children. She has numerous publications and papers to her credit.

Yasmina Dahim works at the Institute for the Study of Islam and the Societies of the Muslim World (IISMM), part of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. At IISMM, Ms. Dahim launched the Continuing Education program, where she has organized training sessions for civil servants, members of the business community, and the general public. For example, she co-led a seminar for American scholars on “Religious Diversity and Conflict in Everyday Life in France,” sponsored by the Council on International Educational Exchange. She has also participated in a European research program entitled “Muslim Communities in Europe, Security and Integration since September 2001,” which brought together Muslim and non-Muslim scholars. She recently convened public figures to view the international photographic exhibition, “Muslim Women, Muslim Men in Cairo, Tehran, Istanbul, Paris and Dakar.”

Ms. Dahim was recently named Muslim Chaplain of a French public hospital, where she provides spiritual assistance to patients and their families. She holds a Master’s degree in International Relations.

Yosra Sultan is a blogger and journalist for the project Egypt Blogs America, for whom she covered the 2008 U.S. presidential election. She has worked with prominent human rights NGOs in Cairo. Ms. Sultan is a graduate of the American University in Cairo (AUC), where she studied political science of the Middle East and philosophy. At AUC, she was very active in intercultural dialogue programs that brought together viewpoints from the East and West on divisive and emotionally-charged issues. As program leader for various organizations, she was also involved in campaign activities to raise awareness on issues pertinent to the region.

Youcef Mammeri is a Member of the Islamic Committee of Laïcité. Previously, he was an elected administrator for communication at CRCM PACA (the Regional Council of Moslem Worship) until 2005. He represented the Islah Mosque of Marseilles at the consultation on the Organization of the Moslem Worship in France with the Ministry for the Interior from 1999 to 2003. He is also a member of the Collective of the Moslems of France (CMF) and the Mediterranean Institute of Moslem Studies in Marseilles (IMEM).

Over the last decade, Mr. Mammeri has organized and participated in numerous conferences around issues of Muslim integration and Islamic education in France. He frequently appears and is cited in the French media, including reports, articles, and television and radio debates. His publications include: “Islam in French Society” in *Migrations and Companies* and “Islam in France” for *oumma.com*, amongst others

Youssef Azghari is a lecturer at Avans University in the Netherlands, specializing in intercultural communication, and a frequent commentator on Dutch and European media, such as Swiss TV and Deutschland Radio. Mr. Azghari is a well-known lecturer and recently participated in FACE2FACE in cooperation with The Netherlands Institute for Academic Studies in Damascus. He regularly publishes articles on issues of diversity, including “Identity and Diversity: Muslims in U.S. and Europe,” and he has been quoted in several print publications such as *The New York Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *Los Angeles Times*. Mr. Azghari is the author of *Culturally Determined Communication* (2005) in which he presented the bridge model as a method to improve intercultural contact and dialogue.

Yunus Sönmez is currently working as Director of the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation (ICYF-DC), an international youth organization focused on interreligious and intercultural dialogue. He has actively served in local and national youth organizations in Turkey to develop political awareness among youth. Mr. Sönmez was a member of the editorial board from 2001-2004 at *Anlayis*, and he published several articles on international relations issues for the monthly magazine. Mr. Sönmez graduated from Marmara University in Istanbul with a Master’s degree in Political Science and International Relations.

Yusuf Escuerdo Toby is a member of Al-Agua, a youth cultural association focused on cultural and interreligious affairs, and he has coordinated and mediated a number of events led by the organization. Mr. Toby is also a correspondent for *WebIslam* (working in Tunisia, Libia, and Yemen), a Spanish language website for Islamic news dealing with politics, sociology, religion, and mysticism. He has participated in the “Alliance of

Civilizations, Alliance for Peace” seminar and a number of summer fellowships offered by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science.

Mr. Toby holds a Bachelor’s degree in Islamic and Arabic studies from the University of Granada and a diploma in Arabic calligraphy from the prestigious Mosque of Granada Aljama. He is currently enrolled in the Faculty of Translation and Interpretation at the University of Granada, where he studies linguistic and communicative interpretation.

Yusuf Mohamed is a Founding Member and Trustee of the Muslim Students’ Association (MSA) of the Cape, a non-profit organization made up of diverse, multi-ethnic young Muslims, dedicated to spreading a more pure understanding of Islam. It seeks to assist Muslim youth in maintaining their Islamic identities and lead a righteous life through a correct understanding of the teachings of the Qur’an and the way of life of the Prophet (pbuh). Mr. Mohamed is also an executive member of the Hospital Welfare and Muslim Education Movement and a founding member and current deputy chairperson of the African Charitable Foundation.

Jan Zafar Ullah works for the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy (ICRD). His work concerns how the Islamic *Ummah* can effectively face the challenges of the twenty-first century and proactively seek points of compatibility with international norms and values. He has also worked as a student counselor for the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. His research, “Choosing a Career and its Requirements” seeks to empower the youth. Mr. Ullah represented Pakistan in the Jeddah Conference (2006).

Zaid Hassan is a Founding Partner in Reos Partners LLP, an international organization based in London dedicated to capacity-building for innovative collective action in complex social systems. Previously, Mr. Hassan worked at Generon Consulting, where he convened business, civil society, government, and community leaders, encouraging them to act and innovate collectively on such projects as sustainable food supply chains in North America and Europe, child malnutrition in India, and aboriginal relations in Canada.

Mr. Hassan is currently writing a book on active responses to the destruction of cultures. He frequently publishes on social change and innovation, and his most recent articles include “Laboratories for Social Change,” “Slouching Towards Flatland,” various contributions to the bestselling books *Worldchanging: A Citizens Guide* and *Connecting to the Source*, and an article for *The Systems Thinker*. Mr. Hassan also writes for *Shikshantar: The People’s Institute for Rethinking Development and Education in India* on issues of social change, democracy, politics, education, and the global food system.

Zainab Sadeq is Director of the Al-Mustakbel Center for Women, established after the fall of the Baath regime in Iraq and in the wake of the subsequent challenges faced by Iraqi women, including violence and sectarian conflict and poor economic, social and political conditions. During the rule of Saddam Hussein, it was not allowed for such a center to be established. In her work with Al-Mustakbel, Ms. Sadeq has managed numerous projects that target women and aim at motivating them to play a significant role on the economical, political and social levels and raising their awareness about their rights. Al-Mustakbel partners with many international organizations.

Ms. Sadeq has written numerous articles for newspapers about such issues as women rights in the Islam, the participation of women in elections and political life, improving the conditions of women, and violence against women, amongst others. In addition, she appeared on such television programs as Al Arabia, Al Sharqya, Al Iraqia, Al Marbid, and Al Harra, as well as various radio programs, discussing issues concerning women and their rights in Islam. Ms. Sadeq is trained as a lawyer, and she holds a Master’s degree in human rights.

Zakaria Saaliti works for Young Muslim, an Oslo-based non-profit youth organization dedicated to educating and empowering young Muslims in Norway and building bridges between Muslims and the general public. Mr. Saaliti lectures regularly on issues facing Muslims in Norway, particularly challenges related to finance and economics. His work and enthusiasm within the field has been noted by Norwegian media. Mr. Saaliti holds a postgraduate diploma in Business and Economics and is currently enrolled in a part-time master’s program in Oslo. His career and research interests include Islamic finance and banking and its application in Norway, interfaith dialogue, and contemporary issues.

Zakir Karim is President of the Islamic Youth (Cil Jovem), a non-profit religious, educational and cultural association dedicated to efforts supporting dialogue and interaction between the Islamic community and the Portuguese public. He is also co-founder of a number of interfaith initiatives, including Youth for Intercultural Dialogue, which promotes discussion between Muslims, Bahais, Buddhists and Hindus, as well as the Abrahamic Youth Forum, which brings together Muslims, Jews and Catholics. Active within the Lisbon Islamic community, he is a member of the Community Board. Professionally, Mr. Karim is a Marketing leader at Unilever Portugal, covering such brands as Axe, Rexona and Dove. Along with 100 leaders from across Europe and North America, he was selected by the British Council to join the Transatlantic Network 2020 for his leadership and potential future global influence. He studied Business Management & Computer Science in ISCTE University (Lisbon) and Hiroshima University of Economics (Japan).

Zamila Bunglawala is a Team Leader and Senior Policy Analyst at the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), London, where she leads policy analysis project teams in developing innovative policies for the UK government. Ms. Bunglawala is also a Fellow of the Young Foundation, with whom she recently published *Valuing Family, Valuing Work: British Muslim Women and the Labour Market* (2008), the UK's first policy analysis report detailing the employment aspirations and barriers facing second generation British Muslim women. Previously, she worked for the United Nations, developing and advising on in-conflict and conflict prevention programmes, and with the World Bank, implementing education and healthcare policies. She was based in Darfur, Sudan and Kathmandu, Nepal.

Ms. Bunglawala started her career in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (Cabinet Office), developing labour market and migration policies under the Blair administration. Her research interests and expertise include labour market, migration, socio-economic, faith and minority rights and development. She has published widely in the UK and overseas, including *Informing the Public in a Multi Media Age* (Cabinet Office, 2007), *A review of Employment Dispute Resolution* (DTI, 2007), *Unequal Citizen: Caste, Ethnic and Gender Exclusion* (World Bank, 2006), and *Aspirations and Reality: British Muslims and the Labour Market* (Open Society Institute, 2004), the UK's first policy report focusing exclusively on British Muslims.

Zana Muhammad is Co-founder and Manager of WAMA-Event and Education. Mr. Muhammad is a cultural and social entrepreneur working to eliminate the discrimination and prejudices facing minority groups in Swedish society. He has worked for Sveriges Unga Muslimer, Sweden's Young Muslims, where he served as Project Coordinator and Secretary. Mr Muhammad works to reduce the discrimination and prejudices in society and encourage young people to participate in building peaceful societies based on human rights, diversity and inclusion, in a spirit of respect, tolerance and mutual understanding. Mr. Muhammad was born into a Kurdish family and raised in Sweden.

Zarina Hassem works as a Psychometrist for the Health Professions Council of South Africa. She also writes a self-enhancement column for *Al Huda*, a local quarterly magazine. Ms. Hassem conducts self-enhancement workshops and has aligned with a Muslim women's group focused on current issues such as marriage, divorce, and parenting in Islam. She has worked as a counselor at Islamic Careline, a community based counseling center in Johannesburg. In 2006, she was part of a research team headed by AWQAF SA and South African National Zakah Fund, two South African non-profit organizations. The team studied "Muslim Contribution to Poverty Alleviation in South Africa" and presented its findings at the 2006 International Symposium on Islamic Civilization in Southern Africa.

Zarqa Nawaz is the Founder of Fundamentalist Films and creator of *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, which debuted to large audiences and tremendous acclaim in 2007. Previously, Ms. Nawaz worked as a freelance writer and broadcaster with CBC radio (Canada) and in various capacities with *CBC Newsworld*, *CBC's The National*, and *CTV's Canada AM*. She was an Associate Producer with a number of CBC radio programs, including "Morningside." Her own radio documentary, *The Changing Rituals of Death*, won first prize in the Radio Long Documentary category and the Chairman's Award in Radio Production at the Ontario Telefest Awards. Ms. Nawaz has made a number of short films, including *BBQ Muslims* and *Death Threat*, both of which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. Her other short film credits include *Fred's Burqa* and *Random Check*. In

2005, her documentary entitled *Me and the Mosque*, a co-production with the National Film Board and the CBC, was broadcast on CBC's "Rough Cuts."

Born in Liverpool and raised in Toronto, Ms. Nawaz studied medicine at the University of Toronto before switching degrees and receiving a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Journalism from Ryerson.

Zeba Khan is Strategic Initiatives Director at the List Project to Resettle Iraqi Allies, a nonprofit that aims to help U.S. affiliated Iraqis successfully resettle to the U.S. In this capacity, she created The List Project's Netroots online community, the first and only netroots community formed to help recently resettled refugees on the ground in the U.S. Ms. Khan is also a consultant for Ashoka's Youth Venture, an incubator of young social entrepreneurs worldwide. She is the founder of Muslim-Americans for Obama, the only major online grassroots community dedicated to mobilizing the Muslim-American community to support Barack Obama in the 2008 U.S. Presidential election.

Ms. Khan has a Master's degree in Development Economics and Conflict Resolution for the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, where she wrote her MA thesis on U.S. Counterterrorism Finance Policy with respect to U.S.-based Islamic charities. While at Fletcher, she served as the Editor in Chief of *PRAXIS: The Fletcher Journal of Human Security*. She also holds a joint AM/AB in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Chicago and is a former Fulbright scholar.

Zeeshan Khan is founder of the **SOCIETY** for Revival of Islamic and Public Spirit (SORPIS), an initiative led by young students and professionals who felt the blend of national spirit and Islamic thought can be a catalyst to initiate positive transformation in Pakistan. SORPIS aims to inject a progressive, dynamic and sustainable element of development in Pakistani society, while ensuring that the cultural, religious and societal norms are preserved. Mr. Khan has also worked with the United Nations Development Program. Mr. Khan holds a Bachelor's degree in Journalism and Education. He was a Senior Program Officer with a nonprofit organization while working towards his Master's degree in Development Studies from IQRA University, Islamabad.

Zhou Chuanbin is a professor at Ningxia University's Politics and Law Institute, specializing in Islam, Hui society, and China's policy towards ethnic minorities. He is a prolific author, having written books on Hui Muslim culture and religion and China's policies towards ethnicity and development. Dr. Chuanbin has published four books and ninety articles, including *The Theory of Minzu in China* (2008), *A Brief History of Hui Muslim Education in China* (2008), and *Islamic Culture in Tibet* (2005), among others. He is also a member of the Stand Committee of the Ningxia Islamic Association. Dr. Chuanbin has a Master's degree and Doctorate from the Central University for Nationalities in Beijing.

Zineb Benbrahim is the Vice President of Eden, a Rabat, Morocco-based nonprofit organization dedicated to social, cultural and developmental work with youth at the local level. The organization has grown from 60 members in 2005 to 120 today, and it is now expanding into the international arena. Ms. Benbrahim aims to increase awareness amongst youth of their community's problems and provide them with a chance to find solutions. She has been active in social work for the past seven years and began her devotion to nonprofit work with her first job helping cancer sufferers. She is currently pursuing her Master's degree.

Zulfikar Majid is a senior correspondent with *Greater Kashmir*, the largest circulating English daily of Jammu and Kashmir (India). He covers current human rights, ethnic, political, and socio-economic issues within the state, in addition to the situation along J&K's troubled border with the Pakistan-administered part of the divided state. Mr. Majid also covered the 2005 major earthquake, which killed more than 75,000 people across J&K. He has done work related to drug abuse and mental health in Kashmir and the impact of violence on youth, completing a research project on the menace of drug abuse in Kashmir under the guidance of noted psychiatrist Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Margoob. He has also worked as a research associate with the NGO Save the Children's project "Study of Children Affected by Armed Conflict." In 2006, Mr. Majeed was awarded by Home Minister of India for his work in the earthquake-affected areas of north Kashmir. He is presently pursuing a Master's degree in English Literature.

Zuriani 'Ani' Zonneveld is a singer/songwriter who uses her craft to educate people about Islam. She is the co-founder and Chair of Muslims for Progressive Values (www.mpvusa.org), a grassroots organization advocating progressive politics from the framework of a compassionate and humane understanding of Islam. Ms. Zonneveld is also the co-founder of an annual interfaith arts and music festival called God Loves Beauty. It is an event that celebrates differences as interfaith communities, with the goal of building solid relationships by working together. It also aims to nurture Muslim female artists by giving them a platform to promote their craft. Ms. Zonneveld is often sought out to educate people about Islam from local synagogues and churches to national organizations. She has two CDs released *Ummah Wake Up* and *One*. She has been interviewed numerous times by national and international newspapers and was most recently featured on BBC/PRI's radio program "The World." Ms. Zonneveld was born in Malaysia, raised in Germany, Egypt and India. She earned her B.A. in Economics and Political Science in the U.S. As a songwriter she has garnered many awards including that of a Grammy for a song contribution in 2005.

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CONFERENCE SPEECHES

Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi

Opening Speech, MLT Global Conference (Doha, Qatar)

Assalaam Alaykum.

I welcome you all to Doha, Qatar for this truly historical gathering! My name is Dr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi, and I am Director of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue, the sponsor of the 2009 Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow conference. We are so happy and proud to host all of you. As I look around the room, I see men and women from literally all corners of the globe. Even in this era of increased communications, how rare an opportunity it is to be sitting together, face-to-face, to discuss some of the most pressing issues facing our *ummah*. I am honored to be standing in front of this leadership group of young Muslims, all of you who carry out critically-important work in your communities and nations. The empowerment of young leaders must be a priority for both governments and civil society organizations, and I thank the American Society for Muslim Advancement for organizing this extraordinary conference. Furthermore, I thank the ASMA, Cordoba Initiative, and UN Alliance of Civilizations staff for working so hard to make it a success.

Many of you may wonder why an interfaith organization is hosting a Muslim leadership conference. Part of the DICID's mission is to encourage communication between followers of different faiths, to build bridges and understanding between these groups, and to encourage collaboration. We are especially active amongst the youth, as we encourage the next generations of Qataris to be open and trained to communicate with people of other faiths. We also hold an annual conference on interfaith dialogue, and we both receive and send groups of young people to do such activities all over the world.

How do these activities and our mission fit with the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow conference? I believe that dialogue and communication is habit, whether across lines of gender, nationality, and of course, religion. I envision the type of honest, fruitful, and important dialogue that participants will engage in over the next few days will be carried back to their home societies. This powerful experience of dialogue will follow all of us home as we interact with people of other faiths. In addition, I think we can all recognize that Muslims today are in need of intra-faith dialogue and what a better forum than here in Qatar with this dynamic group of young Muslim leaders.

My hope for the third annual Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow conference is, however, more than simply interesting dialogue. I desire continuity. I don't just want a conference where we can get together for three or four days and then go home with some nice memories of a beautiful country. Dialogue and the sharing of collective wisdom must be transformational. It must mean continued interaction amongst diverse people and the recognition that we must work together to find solutions to our most pressing problems. I encourage each of you to be open to the potentially transformational experiences of working together this weekend.

We would like to thank each of you for your commitment to leadership, service, and positive social change. Once again, I and the DICID are honored to host this remarkable group of young men and women. I wish you the best of luck, both over the next three days, and in your future work.

Daisy Khan

Opening Speech, MLT Global Conference (Doha, Qatar)

Assalaamu Alaykum.

First of all, I know some of you may be wondering, is *she* an MLT? Well, not exactly. I am, however, a “Senior MLT.” And when we started this program in 2004, I was an MLT – okay, maybe just barely – but I can at least call myself an MLT alumni! No seriously, I am Daisy Khan, the Executive Director of the American Society for Muslim Advancement, of which the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow is a program. Before I talk specifically about my vision of leadership for the MLT, I’d like to introduce myself and my own path to leadership, especially as it relates to the MLT program

I was born the third daughter in Kashmir, where I enjoyed all the rights afforded to a boy: I played sports, learned music, painted murals, and most importantly, my education was a high priority. When I look back on my childhood, it’s clear to me that my role models didn’t come from books; instead, they existed in my real life. My grandfather taught me justice; my mother modeled pure compassion and mercy (I try to practice this in my daily life, although with the conference planning, I must admit, I may have failed my mother at times!); my father imbibed in me the idea that ‘the world is my oyster.’ I grew up in a values and faith-driven family, where these values dominated our family life.

At the age of 15, I moved to the United States to gain a world class education. Consistent with the common immigrant experience, I focused my energies on this education and establishing myself there.

I began a successful professional career as an interior architect, eventually working for various Fortune 500 companies. But it’s remarkable how your life is moving in one direction, only to be dramatically altered by certain events. For me, this was 9/11. I had to make a choice: should I continue in the work I was already doing or am I being called to the work of empowerment and upliftment in my community. In reality, though, this wasn’t a choice. With a renewed sense of responsibility towards my fellow Muslims, I quit my corporate career and dedicated myself full-time to community service and building a movement for positive change amongst Muslims. My mandate was clearly defined.

This is **my story**. Throughout the next day and a half, all of us will here the stories of others in this room, both in plenary and track discussions, as well as informally, as we become friends and colleagues. No doubt, every single leader in this room has his or her own unique path to leadership. These individual stories of courage, passion, and service will inspire us, as Naif al-Mutawwa did last evening with his account of creating the 99 comics. Together, these collective stories form the **story of us**, the story of this group, the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow.

Why are we being called? What is our **story of now**? We live in a period of both tremendous challenges and unprecedented opportunity. Yet, the depressing situation in Gaza only reminds us how desperately our world needs to be transformed. This room of dynamic, brilliant, and passionate leaders brings us hope. This is our story of now: we’re all taking action to make our communities, nations, and world more tolerant, more just, and of course, if Gaza is a reminder, more peaceful. Our MLT story is about a movement, a vision for inspiring one another, for teaching each other how to become better leaders, and for collective change.

The MLT vision is empowerment. Of course, we recognize that every single man and woman in this room is already leading in their communities. As I myself took on the mantle of leadership, I realized, ‘Wow, I have no idea how to lead effectively, but I know I’m going to do it!’ Of course, I learned on the job, and as I grew in this position, I quickly recognized that I needed others. Our goal for the MLT is to enhance your ability to lead. This is *your* program. Be invested in it, use it for your benefit. And of course, give back.

I want to thank all of you for making the trip to Doha to be with us. I truly cannot express my excitement at having you all here. I know you will take these two and a half days seriously. I know you will. As conference organizers, we pray for your success and pledge to do our best to strengthen you in your important work.

Closing Speech, MLT Global Conference (Doha, Qatar)

Wow, what a fantastic 2 days! I can't tell if I'm exhausted from the lack of sleep or the constant adrenaline I've had from interacting with each of you. Either way, I'm thrilled with each of you and our conference. But this is just a jumping off point, a mere beginning.

When we created the MLT in 2004, a primary aim was to build a network of dynamic, successful and passionate Muslims active in the American community. This has now expanded to a global network. Networking is absolutely critical, and *ilhamdullilah*, the MLT has built up an impressive network, one which I hope you can all utilize and benefit from.

Over the last 2 days, however, I've realized that the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow has the potential for much, much more than simply a network. We are creating a community, a community for learning together, for supporting our common values and for building-capacity for collaboration and collective action. Perhaps most importantly, we're creating a community to celebrate each of you and learn from your individual successes.

I look around this room at the wealth of skills, experiences, and in some cases, resources. But we must work together. Many of you may be wondering: realistically, how can we create a community of people who live all over the world, working in disparate contexts? Well, certainly it won't be easy, but this vision is achievable. Moving forward, we must bind our community together and make it sustainable. We can do this in a number of ways: creating local MLT chapters and remaining connected and in touch virtually through the MLT website are two examples. And of course, we'll continue to meet in person.

Your successes are worth celebrating. We need to amplify your work, which we can do through our MLT updates and website. We need to facilitate knowledge-sharing, even mentoring, in order that information, skills, and experiences can become fluid and transferable within our community. The MLT will become a community as we effectively facilitate these public and private spaces, where we can share knowledge, encourage and celebrate one another, and eventually, collaborate on specific projects. No doubt, this is a process. But it has begun in earnest this weekend.

The *ummah* – no the world – needs the MLT and groups like the MLT. I thank you all for your commitment to social change. Perhaps I run the risk of exaggeration, but I truly believe this is true. This community of proud, thoughtful, and passionate Muslims has increased my faith: my faith in Islam, my faith in the Muslim community, and my faith in humanity.

Once again, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the DICID and other Qataris involved for their phenomenal hospitality and support, as well as their patience. And thanks to each of you for coming from all over the world to Doha. I hope you enjoyed and benefited from the 2009 MLT Conference as much as I did.

COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION

Comments from the Online Evaluation

a) Additional Comments on Website:

1. Add more documents, such as materials from the conference. -Have a discussions group or bulletin board section so people can post notices, announcements, requests
2. The MLT staff was highly professional, well-prepared and very helpful.
3. I would like to see an actual social network to interact and communicate more efficiently.
4. Discussion Forum, links to social networking sites, a forum area where MLT newsletter information is posted.
5. A little information on the professional and personal achievements of the MLTs
6. The press clipping need to be more creative. The member's page, you will not see more things in it other than the main site, and connote edit profile to change password.
7. Resources for personal development and growth
8. User friendly Forum
9. News from MLTs
10. procedure of how to get membership
11. The website needs lots of re structuring.
12. To display all the videos/sessions/pictures that has been taken so far in all MLT conferences, without exception, in the pursuit of plurality.

b) Additional Comments on Plenary Sessions:

1. The role of arts
2. The matter with regard to freedom or crisis evolving is the imperative need of the present prevailing situation which can be overcome through religious scholars/thinkers.
3. The role of our mosques and our institutions and how can we integrate them.
4. Leadership skills and thought team building network mobilization social mobilization
5. I sensed there was a desire to critique/discuss intra-Muslim diversities and divergences. There were also tensions that emerged along these lines, e.g. the MLT from Canada who was uncomfortable with other MLTs hugging etc. Within the MLTs already there was a contest of claims of who holds the keys to the Truth of Islam. It's going to be hard to cover this as a plenary session, but I think it's an area that begs to be explored, otherwise we will be caught in a conservative-liberal binary, which is very unhelpful
6. Exploring paradigms and how the use of language frames discourse.
7. Agree to Disagree, Diversity of Schools of Thoughts and Liberal to Conservative applications of Islam
8. Subjects that force the panelists to provide specific historical examples and specific solutions rather than subjects that simply allow panelists to share opinions.
9. The discussions were West-centric. We wish the diversities of culture should be encouraged and accommodated accordingly in future programs.
10. Terrorism and democracy in the Muslim World.
11. Leadership and democracy in Islam.
12. Developing potential of young Muslims -creative ways of bringing about change
13. Proactive planning versus reactive response to crises involving Muslim Politics of the Middle East - esp. Palestine & Iraq
14. It would be interesting to have a topic that focuses entirely on youth.
15. Developing internal capacity in the Muslim world
16. I think the subjects covered at the conference were the most important ones. Therefore, it seems it would be reasonable if the next conference covers mainly the same subjects but in other forms.
17. How can or what should we, as Muslim, do to better ourselves, Muslim fellows to better our place in the world society? Stop comparing Islam with the west. I think it is fruitless thing to do. Why do we need to

care so much about the west? Why don't we focus on why Muslims going down the drain and how to cope with it?

18. More working groups!!! I want two plenary not more! And more opinions to see - with the voting tools! This was fun AND very informative - then discusses why people answered that way!
19. More values of Islam How can we promote true cooperation within the Muslim world?
20. Bridging Cooperation between Islam and the West
21. Ideas for Ummah development and solidarities Gaza, Iraq, Afghanistan & all the innocent people killed in the Muslim country Ways to encourage and stimulate youth involvement using various attractive methods such as arts and music.
22. Fundraising activities for NGOs.
23. Strategies; how to manage the challenges
24. Youth involvement in Action influential and encouraging and successful experience from all over the 75 countries
25. Muslim Identity: Faith or Culture Muslim Philanthropy
26. Economic development of Muslims in the West as key for integration
27. There must be subjects that is common between western and eastern Muslims, because is some aspects it was hard to debate for me as a middle eastern, with western Muslims, since their issues are a lot different from what we face.
28. Issues on the development of Muslim human capital in Muslim countries and Muslim minorities
29. I would have liked plenary on 'Crisis of Leadership in the Muslim world'.

c) Additional Comments on Training Sessions:

1. I understand the concept of true muslim-leaders and connection with leaders from other part of the world, it was a great gathering, I'll strongly recommend that we should be focused, sincere and ready to carry others along, though we apply to establish a chapter here in Nigeria, we're still expecting reply.
2. Understanding systems of influence and learning effective approaches in making change.
3. How the U.S. Congressional lobbying machine works
4. Leadership
5. The use of Internet for news gathering.
6. That developing a concise, and clearly thought about message is more beneficial and effective than talking a whole lot about a topic or issue
7. The value of adding one's voice to blogosphere and reaching a much larger audience
8. The way to get your point across in a way that everybody feels included.
9. Start with your own story and combine it with the people's story.
10. How to communicate your message even better in the media
11. I learned basic rules for forming my message
12. How to structure a speech in order to engage the audience.
13. I understood that lobby is an effective way to get the advocacy goals
14. What blogging was about and effectiveness of the internet.
15. The importance of merging art with media to have a more powerful message
16. Strategies and planning for advocacy
17. The group was too internationally diverse for the topic to be relevant to everyone. Fortunately Jihad Saleh was in the room that jumped in for 10 minutes which help me tremendously.

d) Additional Comments on Moderators and Facilitators:

1. One observation as a western European. I was humbled that so many of our peers from Asia and Africa were invited and indeed able to attend the conference. However, I think a key lesson in cultural awareness stood out in that very few participants from these two continents participated in the plenary sessions or indeed spoke freely during the track sessions. I do not think this is a case of their lack of willingness to speak up rather a cultural reality that many of us from western continents speak so freely, passionately and perhaps do not appreciate more subtle communicative interactions of our Asian and African cousins
2. Yes! It was very easy to transfer the knowledge in a very effective manner.

3. It was informative.
4. I liked the diversity in most of the panels. I liked that people agreed to disagree, and I like that there was public discussion and challenging of points that people disagreed with.
5. The track sessions allowed participants to contribute to the topic. It was also interesting to hear different perspectives.
6. I liked how the track sessions grouped together people with similar backgrounds or bonds
7. The exchange of ideas and different views of the mlT participants were valuable. Given their different exposure, I was able to learn from them and share my own experience.
8. I was exposed to a more global version of my own religion which was locked back to the premises of my local community in my country
9. Knowing the other MLT better, how they think about some issues, was very valuable
10. Discussion from the audience after the plenary sessions
11. The session about speaking for TV was the best, other sessions were very weak.
12. It was too big a size of participants. The room was too noisy to concentrate on what people said. Track sessions were quite messy.
13. I like the way the groups were made, I happened to meet people from my own field. That's good.
14. Not valuable but to criticize: The panels were Western-centered! Concerning participants, issues and style of discussion/moderating.
15. To see such a bright and energetic group of people working for the same cause.
16. Doha Debate is the most valuable session for me.
17. Organization and discipline
18. Require better organization of track sessions. On many occasions the leader was not available and the sessions deteriorated into a tote a tote.

e) What is an idea, strategy, or technique you learned from one of the sessions that you found most useful for your work? Please describe why it was useful and how you applied it to your work.

1. Framing and messaging were the most beneficial things I learned about.
2. I thought the idea of track sessions was very helpful and I will most likely adopt it on my own line of work. It allows participants to share their ideas and discuss topics on a much smaller base. It is also a great way for networking and learning from others experience in their own line of work.
3. All of what Fenton discussed was very helpful
4. The concept of media, muslims here in west Africa don't bother about media, learn to be friendly with both print media and audio in other to give right information about islam, educate non-Muslims and accept others diversity.
5. I liked how Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur used her personal story and experiences to examine the larger complexities and diversities among Muslims worldwide. I think story-telling is very powerful, and I am very much encouraged to continue building on my story-telling as a journalist, playwright, and songwriter.
6. The importance of understanding systems of influence, networking with key people and having a clear action plan and its benefits. It helped me to re-focus my efforts and to think through carefully how I would achieve my goals in the medium to long term.
7. First, I attended the mlT in Denmark and I can confirm that the mlT Doha was much superior and creative in many ways (aside from being distinctively logistically handled by an understaffed team): the idea of training was brilliant; the survey was great and innovative. I found it interesting that we had the opportunity to interact with others participants between the sessions and brainstorm on important topics that would be used for our work.
8. I really found the new technology to be interesting and inspiring. I have not used it yet but plan to in my work.
9. I work in a media training center in a multinational organization I m constantly faced with inquiries about my religion now I am better at putting controversial issues in a clear humanitarian global context

10. Networking and how to collaborate with other organizations for effective volunteer work. I found the principles discussed in the training session "What is your message?" to be particularly helpful. It has assisted me in defining my objectives and talking about them in a clearer and more effective manner. How to use the internet for more effective online networking and make the most of sites like Twitter, Face book etc.
11. More time for personal attention and good debates in sessions stimulate and establish good relationships to work together and to come to new ideas
12. The session showed me how the media frames and how should I handle questions about Muslims and Islam's. Ever since I attended the session, I feel better equipped to debate the topics I am interested in.
13. covering the topic in the plenary sessions with the time relevant and appointment of the effective moderators
14. Nothing. The most valuable thing was to be able to exchange business cards with other MLTs and catch up with them later through email.
15. I will work more on European level instead of national now that I met more Europeans.
16. I just took with me a clearer idea of how different 'we' 'Western' Muslims are from the ones outside Europe and Northern America. But I found time to short to really get to this!
17. Framing issues makes the whole difference in how debates are won or lost
18. Faith in God and knowing all the peaceful thoughts helped me be a better person and optimistic for a better future
19. Concept presentation, audience feedback/questions, panel response and instant polling. Stage with differing perspectives but meaningful exchange
20. communicating your message from Fenton
21. For example, in one of the sessions (New Ideas and Competing values if I'm not mistaken) one of the UK sisters's told us how she uses "Local Adult role models" to promote Islamic values within the youth. I believe this is wonderful strategy that can be replicated in other communities.
22. How to create your message and be able to be effective with it.
23. For me, using the polling device is a new technique to get the quick feedback for each session. I'll try to adopt it in my organization's activities.
24. How to refuse something strongly & the same time respecting the other's ideas.
25. Public narrative was an eye opener. It gave me the confidence to narrate personal life experiences in my speeches without being too emotional as well as sticking with the topic.
26. Logical reason on very sensitive issues like extremism, values and ideas.
27. networking and team work
28. The importance of listening to others The importance of team work Using all the capabilities in the society to improve it on all levels
29. I found the Gaza Session very relevant and it helped me work on my new song about the latest situation in Gaza and gave me new ideas. I also benefit a lot from what's your message training session, since my work is all about giving messages.
30. I used advocacy to team up with established Muslim and non-Muslim human rights organizations.

f) Additional Comments on Conference:

1. I really wish there was time to network specifically with people in our field (arts networking, opinion networking, etc)
2. One can not underestimate the amount of attention to detail that is required in organizing an event of this scale and how much work is ongoing during the conference itself to ensure it runs smoothly. I therefore thought it intensely valuable that the organizers themselves attended all the sessions and were ready and always willing to listen to feedback and engage in key discussions, in addition to making sure the

event ran smoothly. This level of inclusiveness, visibility and engagement is profoundly important and I for one am most grateful.

3. There is no doubt that I had learned a lot of experience in attending this concerned and I shall tried best to spread my work
4. most of all the networking
5. Much of my work right now is in interfaith relations, so the conference was a little distant from that- though it is very compatible with my work in the community and helpful for my goals/vision for working intra-faith.
6. All about Doha conference are valuable information and all participants are resourceful people.
7. I have been very passionate about writing about Islam and telling stories that are often repressed or dismissed about gay Muslims, Muslim women, etc., and so it was great that I got to meet several other Muslims from around the world who were doing the exact same thing. It was nice to finally meet people whom I had always admired and respected - Imam Feisal, Mona Eltahawy, Saleemah Abdul-Ghafur, Ani Zonneveld, etc., and to also make new friends.
8. Having met people for such diverse backgrounds, it provided an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of issues in particular geographical regions.
9. The international Networking of like-minded people. Imam Feisul Abdul Rauf speech. Be humble serve god and be careful of my Ego.
10. I find the track session most effective when we were grouped amongst people from the same profession/academic background.
11. The organizing skill of the MLT conference has impressed me.
12. The caliber of attendees was astounding - learnt much from their experiences
13. The workshop about what's my message was the best because we were a small group so the trainers were able to deliver their experience at best and we as trainees benefited a lot
14. Yes, bringing in people like Naif Al' Muttawa and Azhar Osman, for instance, talking about and demonstrating creative ways to spread the message of Islam was inspiring and very valuable for me.
15. during the break and lunch time I had opportunities to share experiences and my ideas with the conference participants
16. It would have been valuable if the organizers treated all participants with chances to talk or express themselves equally. What happened was well-known or famous participants always got the microphone no matter his/her ideas were valuable to Islam or not :(
17. networking
18. There were positive people with positive energy
19. I had the chance to feel 'home' with fellow Muslims from all kinds of backgrounds, opinions and ways of life! People I never meet at home.
20. The diversity was unrivaled by any conference that I have ever attended, and I do attend many conference a year
21. Meeting all these Muslim leaders who want to make a change in the perception of the west really gave me strength to continue having hoped that our situation in Palestine might change positively one day.
22. I wish we had more time to interact with follow MLT's
23. I met a lot of wonderful people related to my works and useful for the development of my organization.
24. Sincerity and trust
25. Networking opportunities. To know Muslims from all around the world and share ideas with them and listen to their points, was a very valuable experience. And it was amazing to see how my religion is so global and how Islam united us.
26. Speaking to quiet people who do loud things.

g) Additional Comments on the Takeaways of the 2009 MLT Conference:

1. In opinion, that such like conference would be held from time to time, which certainly provides the opportunities in learning, sharing the knowledge and well practice to know the thinking of each leader.
2. Wished to have even more chance for learning from each other and sharing knowledge and best practices (opportunities were there, but as said, liked to have even more)
3. The good energy was very valuable. But I did notice some folks sniping from the sidelines. I suppose for a conference this big, you can't please everyone on everything. I enjoyed it, and even I have made critical comments on some issues - with the best of intentions.
4. Impressed by the commitment and dedication of many of the participants and also the organizers.
5. The unique approach Daisy Khan and Imam Feisal have. They are my role models.
6. Interacting with very interesting guests and trainers.
7. Imam Feisal opening remarks were very timely and set the perfect context for our meetings and the need for humility.
8. Getting out from the area to belong and work worldwide by connecting with others.
9. To a small Muslim person like me, I felt that the conference I have attended was a stage for me to watch other Muslims who knew each other came to meet and enjoyed one another company. No one cared much to make new friends. Small persons had to struggle on their own to get to know people around them just to get "Hi" then "smile+namecards" and "walk away". It was a cycle. Even many of the organizers were like that and had long time only for MLTs who have known them for long or already well-known in whatever society (American, Arab bla bla). Small persons felt so uncomfortable and not welcomed much. When we didn't get to know someone to a certain level, we would feel awkward to contact them through email later. We would worry if the person remember or recall us. Then we dropped the ideas of getting in touch with other MLTs and go on with our lives.
10. It was great idea to find 300 pioneers in one ballroom trying their best to promote Islam to the western. Private discussions on Islam in different parts of the world and challenges faced.

h) Additional Comments on the value of the MLT conferences:

1. With regard to develop a broader context and understand of issues facing the worldwide Muslim community, so in my opinion all the Muslim Scholars / Thinkers afoot the efforts individually in their respective countries/areas. It okay.
1. The opportunity to have discussions with individuals with diverse views.
2. Appreciation of what others are doing to serve God and Society. It humbles me.
3. Optimism and positive thinking
4. Networking with Muslims all over the world
5. Meeting activists and sharing ideas and connections.
6. I really liked the way the track and plenary sessions were organized and think that this format worked very well, giving everyone a chance to share their ideas and thoughts
7. The presentation of the two women on the plenary panel for Religious Authority
8. The conference was too much about American Muslims things.
9. The way you select the 'right' people to attend! I wish it was always MLT! Miss all of you!

i) Additional Comments for improving the content and design of future MLT conferences:

1. More time for structured networking and socializing.
2. Structured debate is important but also perhaps is the flexibility to speak about non-structured topics. I and others I'm sure had many meaningful discussions over coffee and dinner though sadly there often

seemed too little time for such off-key chats, upon which most lasting networks and friendships are built. So, perhaps, if possible do build in flexible time to the next schedule.

3. in this regard, I suggest the holding of such conferences which must provide changes in improving the various thought of design
4. I think it would have been great to have more of the Training and Capacity-Building component and less of the Plenary Discussions in the conference.
5. Yes, let's chat in person Inshah'allah I think the incredible network can be mobilized toward specific actions on certain issues beyond the valuable open letter
6. This conference was too big, the program full, there was not enough time to network or focus on serious matters.
7. It was very, very intense, the Doha meeting. Too many things crammed into too short pockets of time. I felt so stretched and suffocated with information at some point. I wished there was more time to just bond with the other MLTs. There are so many whom I felt a really heart-to-heart connection with and we had no time to deepen the connection. True, we have Facebook now, but then it's really not the same thing. If anything, I would really recommend having longer lunch and tea breaks, and longer dinner breaks (with no accompanying talks, etc.) for people to just get to know each other in a less formal setting. There could still be activities, e.g. the dinner sessions could incorporate some form of activity, but these would be activities that encourage pro-active interaction among the participants, and not merely sessions where information is passively digested. But you must absolutely get Azhar Usman again. The guy is a genius.
8. Perhaps more time during the conference to engage with other participants and reflect on the issues.
9. I think there should be Quarterly chapter events as a strategy
10. This questionnaire, like the conference, limited the possible responses. There plenary sessions, the messaging of the conference and the trajectory of the discussions were highly controlled. Despite their being a large diversity of people present, the views that were heard were not at all diverse.
11. Marketplace For Ideas runs itself just like a street market should, so a moderator is not needed. - We need more time for free thinking and free sharing of ideas. A suggestion would be to break down the civil/opinion/etc. leaders into smaller sub-groups of like-minded leaders (e.g. a journalist table, a scholar/aalim table, a business leader table) for a period of time (like the track sessions) and have them discuss and share information about what they do so that they may be resources for each other in the future.
12. It should be made more participatory and accomodative.2.Two days are not enough for such a big diverse group to discuss and share. 3. Journalists with their superficial understanding were dominating the discussions. Most of their observations were contradicting the established sociological and anthropological realities.
13. Follow-up action is important for mlt's credibility. Identifying funding to hold regular mlt conferences in addition to regional conferences. Media exposure is important. Mlt working in media should help. Suggestions that each mlt in their capacity should contribute to help mlt develop and grow. In this respect, identify who is doing what and approach respective mlt. This could be done through the mlt website. I am sure many will be thrilled to help in their own capacity. Muslim governments should be aware of mlt's activities, find a way to keep them up-to-date---remember they are a source of funding. Make sure geographical and gender distribution is ensured--include more mlt from the gulf, also Singapore, Malaysia as they will be approached for funding. It would be useful to get an update of mlt participants' respective chapters in their country and map this out and post it on the web for everyone to share and know. Is there a blog on the mlt web? (Sorry didn't have time to check) mlt should have an mlt reunion dinner once in a while so we can feel more the bound--just a suggestion.
14. There should be less plenary and more workshops and training. The plenary need to be more focused

15. We need more time to network and interact. The schedule was too packed in for me to be able to genuinely experience all aspects AND have time to recover from jetlag and reflect.
16. To ask for suggestions from MLTs and different scholars and activists to decide content.
17. More time. the conference was too short and all sessions were squeezed & crammed tightly
18. There should be provision for some sort of allowances.
19. We need more time in between panels to digest what we've heard and we need more free time during lunches and dinners to network and make connections. There should be presentations during meals so we can meet each other and learn about each other's work.
20. More time to network, the themes for discussion should be identified by session participants rather than the narrow agenda set by governments (such as violent extremism).
21. Program was very heavy, in future conferences we need at least one more day or we should decrease the number of sessions.
22. Most of the Muslims who attended the conference were already aware of most of the information given out during the plenary sessions. The need is for more in depth sessions with specialists who can add greater awareness to the individuals who are not specialists in those certain fields. As regards networking, there was very little time to do so except for the Marketplace of Ideas.
23. Having more debates about other important issues with more MLT with a clear opinion in the muslim world like the connection between faith and science.
24. I think it will be better to smaller numbers of participants. It will be extremely valuable if people can really make friends and develop relationships. 2. More diversity of participants on the stage. 3. Let MLTs hear more from Muslims who come from non-Muslim countries not only USA. 4. Share problems, issues in Muslim societies and brainstorm for better solution or acts that MLTs should take to improve Muslims lives that go with Islam teachings. 5. Provide time and place and encourage Muslims all over the world to pray together, tape it and broadcast it to the world. This is Muslims conference, isn't it? 6. However, I admitted and honored the organizers that this was a good effort and intention of you to Muslims as a whole. May Allah guide you to better way of doing it :)
25. Pre-work relevant to the MLT future, that how to work
26. More time for dinner, I had the feeling we had to leave quite fast. That's all. Normally I have many points for improvement. But this time I don't have any. :) Great job!
27. More discussions/working groups together!!!! Not only on the last day! We should definitely work on something during the conference.
28. More interaction and time for the participants
29. Marketplace of ideas needs tweaking to be more effective
30. I believe the building capacity idea very good and in future MLT conference it should be given more relevance.
31. I think we should have more time for questions and answers. People had a lot of things to say but there was not time to do so.
32. As the largest Muslim country, I hope the future MLT Conferences will invite more people from Indonesia. Otherwise, I'm hope the next MLT Conference will be held in Indonesia
33. Pray, all of us should pray behind only one Imam. Fix place to pray & take breaks in the time of Salah
34. I think every bit of the conference was ok except that there was no provision of any kind of allowance. I hope that it will be considered in subsequent ones.
35. To have more time to interact and to speak because there was no chance for most of the participants to speak and especially there was no enough time for questions
36. Try and obtain the services of more dynamic speakers who can inspire; not so many academics who are not used to speaking. Examples would be: Brian Tracy, Tom McCarthy, Tony Robbins, Nofal Al Mosarea etc Not Dr Steven Covey types...

37. The MLT is as usual a success, but this edition was somewhat difficult to really connect with people, because of the huge amount of persons, but also the mixing between Muslims from the West and from the Muslim World. In that sense, the 2006 edition was more valuable, as we had time to share and connect with nearly all the group, as most of them came from the West.
38. I think bringing Muslims from all around the world together is an amazing thing, but we should not forget that especially us Middle Eastern face a difficulty named traditions, that is a lot confused with Islam and bring its own issues. On the other hand Western Muslims face difficulties because of the media propogandas and terrorism etc. that we of course do not have in our countries. This list goes on and on. I know the idea is to focus on the uniting Muslims, and erasing the borders maybe, but it could be great if there was special sessions like, middle eastern talk to each other, Americans talk to each other, Europeans also so, and Africans and ... and they reach to conclusions and share them. It is also great to know other Muslims issues in other parts of the world, but this kind of sessions are necessary too in my opinion.
39. Require conference presenters/panelists to submit their comments in writing ahead of time to ensure comments are relevant to the topic and to create a written record of the session that is available in the future.
40. Match making sessions; For example, many people in the arts, Muslim Girl need funding. It would have been helpful to team up with financiers to help fund projects, bloggers and reporters to help promote the art work etc, thus creating a full picture. There should be regional reporting. It was too American centric. We didn't hear from the Africans at all. And again, women's issues should be mainstreamed. We are living in a parallel universe.

j) Please indicate which of the following would help you most in becoming an effective leader.

1. Attend a fundraising training
2. Networking, strategizing with other leaders!!!!
3. Case studies of organizational issues
4. Fundraising and management workshops
5. Attend UN/NGO debates/forums etc

k) Would you like to be involved with the MLT in 2009? If so, please choose one or more of the following.

1. I would like to interact and work together with other MLT's, both on a national level as on an international level.
2. I have intention to start my own programs to help and educate my Muslim fellows in Thailand at my own property in the heart of town (Chiang Mai). I need a guidance to start due to lacking of experiences in this area but full heart and intention.
3. Overall MLT excellence
4. Help MLT in promoting interfaith/intercultural dialogue and understanding between Muslim world and the West etc.

l) Do you have any other thoughts about the MLT program that you would like to share?

1. All my life, I've felt a struggle and an abiding connection with Islam, but I never felt I belonged, because the faith as it was presented to me seemed hostile towards Muslims like me. But the MLT conference in Doha made me feel like I belonged - that there were Muslims like me, too. I felt safe with many of these MLTs. I want to return to that safe gathering every now and then and just recharge my batteries and keep the fire burning. It's a space where we can all collectively rejuvenate and inspire each other. If we had all the money in the world, perhaps a retreat would be a good idea for the more committed MLTs.

2. Just to say Thank you to everyone... Rushda, Daisy and the whole MLT Team for working so tirelessly to organize such an excellent conference.
3. I have become more optimistic after attending the MLT, Doha.
4. MLT is about substance and working to make the Muslim community stronger, more visible and powerful and we are on the right track!
5. Thank you for allowing me to take part in a truly remarkable program. I commend everyone involved in making MLT happen for your service and dedication.
6. To encourage joint programs among MLTs. to teach Islam to Muslims (wisdom of Quran, wisdom of sera...etc) to focus on presenting Islam to nonmuslims. To explain the Palestinian issue to non-muslims.
7. It was overall an amazing and empowering experience. I do believe we should have added a paragraph about the war on Gaza to the Open Letter.
8. I couldn't understand why 300 Muslim people from all over the world, didn't say anything about Palestine issue. At least we had to show our solidarity for Palestine. In my opinion, Palestine session was not enough and we had to put something about Palestine issue into the Letter to World Leaders.
9. I think MLT should have a yahoo group which will allow for e mail discussions back and forth.
10. Yes, I'd like us, Muslims, think before they talk about Islam. Someone especially women and others from Arab, Iran, India etc. who made Islam sound so bad towards women. What they talk about is not about Islam but Islam that is mingled with the tradition, culture, and belief of her homeland. What happened to them back in their birth country is not thought at all in true Islam. The more they talks the more they darkens the religion. They should differentiate between Arab traditions and Islam. What they said happened to them in her birth country did not occur to Muslim women in Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries. Therefore, it is not Islam teachings that they should attack but their countries' belief or culture.
11. I think it's an amazing initiative and already made a huge impact on the international Muslim community. There are many new links which wouldn't be there without MLT. We need to know each other better, that's the start for a better Muslim community.
12. The MLT Doha conference could have had more of a reflective and spiritual nature. The only real reflection came from Imam Faisal during the opening remarks. The spiritual dimensions are vital for a harmonious and productive meeting.
13. I'm trying to ask Nahdlatul Ulama Headquarter in Jakarta to support Indonesia as the next place for future MLT Conference.
14. Supporting the situation in Gaza, I started a to convince the people to adopt the orphans in Palastine I achieved now 4 orphan from Gaza & 3 from Egypt My target is 100 orphan
15. I think those of us from Ghana need financial support to build MLT chapter in Ghana.
16. More mainstream representation of Islam. I felt that there were too many liberals and in order for us to maintain credibility etc, more orthodox, practicing Muslims should be invited.
17. Excellent work, excellent organisation... but too many people, difficult to connect. But again, congratulations and thank to give us this unique opportunity
18. Suggest hosting the next conference in Asia (Malaysia or Indonesia) or Africa (Senegal or South Africa). Suggest more time to have relevant site visits during the conference. It's a shame to visit these countries and not see the local culture, relevant models etc.
19. If our charter is: As Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, we proclaim our commitment to improving our communities and our world for present and future generations. Then why are we not talking about the obvious, that is, violence toward women in the name of Islam? This is not a women's issue. This is the society's issue. All the talking and discussion doesn't solve anything on the ground. And the men, especially those of leadership and religious stature need to step up and well...lead! For MLT to be taking a true leadership role then there should be an action. Yes, we wrote the open letter to leaders of today. But what are WE as an entity doing to make Our world better as the first step? Talking about action isn't

action. There is nothing more powerful than speaking collectively as one voice. I'd like to propose that as a precondition to attending MLT one has to come void of prejudice toward fellow Muslims. Given the amount of poverty and wars around us I thought the amount of food, the spread was insanely over the top. I was really bothered by the waste. Beyond that, I want to thank you for bringing together an incredible collection of people and for all the hard work you've put into this. Peace and love, Ani

Full Testimonials

Thank you so much for inviting me to a wonderful conference. I truly and sincerely regret not being able to stay longer. I never thought I would find a conference where that was the case! Kudos to your planning and execution. **Dr. Naif A. Al-Mutawa, USA, Kuwait**

I wanted to take a quick moment to thank you all for putting together such a stellar conference....I was so impressed by the conference itself and more than anything by the participants. I only wish that more people could have experienced the deeply critical conversations that were taking place in that room. **Darya Sheikh, USA**

...we are much more thankful of your so compassionate and great welcoming session & global MLTs conference that is why the inauguration was much useful and learnable for us we will do our best (In Shah All) to next generations and our communities in order to achieved to MLTs objectives/goals for realizing the real concepts of Islam, pluralism, humanity and real democracy once thank of you all. **Ab. Rahim Elham, Afghanistan**

...what a pleasure it was for me to share with you some good moments in Doha at the MLT conference. I hope you find the way to rest and I like to thank you for this great meeting we had. **Yahya Pallavicini, Italy**

...to express my gratitude and thanks for all the hard work and effort you put in. I am sure your work will fruit great rewards not just in this life but also the hereafter iA. The conference sessions were good and the workshops especially good - I will iA email Daisy, or whoever you advise best, with other suggestions as I forgot ... to do my evaluation form before leaving. Again many thanks for your hard work - it has been greatly appreciated by myself and no doubt all the MLT's who gained a lot from the conference. **Humza Yousaf, Scotland**

..thank you again sincerely for such a wonderful conference...You, Rushda...and the entire team (especially Josh and Courtney) did a magnificent job on putting together a virtually flawless event (especially in comparison to other 'Muslim' events). **Arsalan Iftikhar, USA**

Congratulations on such a great conference! I apologise I could only attend a day but it was my friends engagement on the 18th, and I really regret I could not stay longer. I'm so glad I had this incredible opportunity to be part of this amazing conference. It was an eye opener for me to see how matters are looked upon and progressing in North America and Europe. I have already started networking with several amazing people. Thank you so much for inviting me . I want you to know that I really appreciate it that you think of me for these events, and also that I'm sooooo proud of you. Your commitment, effort, and passion to unite us all in a great cause is truly nonparallel to anyone I've known. I admire you and would be lucky in my life time to accomplish a fraction of what you have done and remain to do. It was an absolute pleasure to see you, as always. **Rima Khoreibi, UAE**

Assalamalaikum everyone! It was a pleasure meeting all of you at the MLT in Doha. I feel as if I have friends from all around the globe now. ...May Allah help us all ignite leadership of wonderful human values in our individual circles of influence inshallah! **Anjum Babukhan, India**

I share in Anjum's sentiment - it was wonderful to meet all of you as well. **Zeba Khan, USA**

It was nice to meet you last week, albeit briefly. I wish we had gotten a chance to talk some more. I would have loved to hear more about the work you're doing. I'm glad though that I finally got a chance to see MLT in action,

after hearing about it for some time. I found the Saturday sessions very interesting and thought-provoking and saw many familiar faces. **Shadi Hamid, USA**

Thank you so much again for being part of a great conference in Doha. I have written an article about it in the daily newspaper Trouw. **Youssef Azghari, Netherlands**

Thank you all for all your hard work to pull something as big as Doha MLT. I could see the look of awe on every MLT. And thank you for giving the opportunity to help you out. Daisy, thanks for publicly thanking me. I was really feeling the heat that moment. What I did was nothing compared to your work. **Saadi Alkoutli, Saudi Arabia**

In Qatar I spent the best days of the last 10 years, not because of the country, but because I met real good brothers and sisters. It was a pleasure, a honor to meet you all. I miss you and I have no motivation to work here in this islamophobe country, Austria. Allah (cc.) protect you and your families and gives you all power to work and to be a good human being and moslem, insallah. **Attila Dincer, Austria**

I wanted to take a few minutes to thank you truly and deeply from the bottom of my heart for your tremendous hospitality in Doha. You all worked so hard to make MLT a success and an incredibly smooth transition for all the participants and it was a joy to be included in such an impressive, enlightened and celebratory gathering. I wanted to let you know that I thought the plenary sessions were superb: my favourite was the one on Religious Authority and particularly the two women speakers at the end of the panel. I also really enjoyed the track session I facilitated and the opportunity to witness the Doha Debates was a phenomenal one.

I had the opportunity to meet dozens of amazing young men and women during the conference, all of whom are doing such important work on the ground and also the opportunity to try and secure future funding for Muslim Girl while making those connections and I am beyond grateful for all of it. The accommodations and food were also fantastic as was the care you all took and the hospitality that every member of ASMA and the MLT team extended to every last one of us. We were thoroughly spoiled. Daisy – you are really going to change the world, and if I can hold a corner of your train as you do it, I'll be thrilled.

My very sincere thanks to Rushda and Khadija for all the hoops they had to jump through to get me there and for the once-in-a-lifetime experience. I've been to and organized dozens of conferences, but this by far outstripped them all. **Ausma Khan, USA**

THE REAL LEADER,

Thank you very much for all. I take this opportunity to appreciate your indispensable AND LEADERSHIP role in the overall management of this extraordinary event. You have really exhibited as a role model for all the MLT. Your personality is an impressive one with a multi-aspects/dimensional dynamism. Even in the face of such a busy and tough schedule you were continuously passing an inspiring and encouraging smile to every individuals of the MLT conference. We are all-proud of you and congratulate the ASMA management on being the superb and dynamic leadership, in the form of Daisy Khan. **Zafar ullah Jan, Pakistan**

Congratulation for the success of MLT conference. Our board member Mona was very happy and excited; she said it was very useful, and well organized. Unfortunately I couldnt make it and come to see you. Wish you all the best dear, you are so special and wonderful women. World needs people like you. **Dr. Wajeaha S. Al- Baharna, Bahrain**

This is a belated note of deep appreciation to you and other organizers for making the conference such an important experience for me and for everybody else. I would have never met so many outstanding Muslim leaders from so many different communities and backgrounds if it hadn't been for your ideas, vision and hard work. It was a hugely inspirational moment in my life, and I am already working on some of the ideas that came out of my conversations with sisters and brothers from other countries and communities....(see follow-ups for more comments). **Nadira Artyk, USA/Uzbekistan**

Many thanks for all the hard work that went into the MLT conference. It was a great weekend, I really enjoyed networking with some great people from around the world.

I would have liked to spend some more time with the MLT organisers to discuss a few ideas on how the web could be used very effectively to build the MLT network. One of the things I've noticed when trying to follow up with people whom I met in Doha was the lack of any serious online presence from most of the MLT's. Which to me is quite surprising, as MLT's we should be online to "market" our values, ideas and achievements. Not just on the MLT website, but well beyond that. I had a brief chat with Hussein about this and I'll try put together a general presentation on some online concepts. **Riyaad Minty, Qatar**

...I wanted to write and give you guys some honest feedback and input but was hesitating because I know how much hard work and effort it takes to put these things together. I have been so appreciative of all your efforts. I also know that the view from inside the team sometimes clouds perspective of how people outside see things. So for what it's worth, here's some outside perspective.

I felt that the whole conference came across as being very organised and responsive. I know things might seem chaotic and you all know what went wrong and what didn't work from a logistical point of view. But from my point of view the whole thing was very smooth. I was impressed by the speed and clarity of the communications the team sent out prior to the event. I was impressed that all elements of my personal travel and logistics worked so smoothly. I know how hard this is to do so from my perspective, I thought it was superb. So thank you for all that and thank you for making it all happen.

I was also really happy with the diversity of the participation and learnt a huge amount from meeting so many people from so many different places, so again, well done in your efforts to meet the criteria of diversity - which is often so hard to meet in our community. I spoke to one Imam briefly and got a sense that while he did not approve of everything happening (free mixing and so on) - the opportunity provided was critical and that we should all thank Allah for that. That I guess is a success.

I believe that our challenge is to figure out how to act collectively in the face of our challenges, to act in a way that is collectively - on questions ranging from, how can we together ensure that the MLT is sustainable? through to how do we best lobby around issues of concern? How does the MLT, at multiple levels, learn how to collaborate and act in solidarity? How do we get groups of diverse people to act collectively? How can we move beyond simply talking about things to doing things together?

The structure of the MLT Doha was almost 90% panel discussions. There are several very serious problems with this format. If you take a look at the attachment to this email, you will see that there are a number of different ways of talking and listening. Panel discussions sit in the lower quadrant, where, at best they involve some debate but they mostly involve people talking (downloading pre-formed opinions and ideas like from the internet) and listening politely. Ultimately, very little changes from these modes of dialogue - they are essentially concerned with re-enacting patterns of the past.

The other very serious problem with panel-based discussed in this context was that all of you had gone through such trouble to assemble an amazing group of people but there was very little opportunity in the formal sessions to access the wisdom in the room. Instead primacy was given to 6 "experts" sitting at the front of the room. Although we were talking about a crisis of authority, to take one example, the room was set up as if there was utterly no crisis of authority - it was like the undisputed ulema sat at the front of the room. In another example one of the moderators talked as much or more than the panelists and then cut participants off in the middle of sentences saying we had run out of time!

This really blew me away - why go through the trouble of assembling such an extraordinary group of people if they are largely going to do nothing but listen? The collective wisdom that came together in those rooms was tremendous, the potential for collective action was tremendous. I can't help but feel that it was largely wasted.

The final problem with panel discussions is that they only engage the rational mind - they do not engage the

heart. If people are to work with one another and trust each other to the point where they will take risks together, then they have to get beyond rational conversations. They have to know each other at an emotional level. You do not start working with someone because they made a clever point, you start working with people because you made an emotional connection.

There were several opportunities to take people into a more emotional space, but the format and the facilitation made this impossible. I can only conclude that the facilitators did not have the experience to cope with any form of emotion or conflict and hence it was all contained in very rigid structures.

It really pains me to say this but frankly speaking, I was stunned by the format. I don't understand why people with process-experience were not bought in to design the process? It seems that people with experience in the relevant areas were bought in for other areas, such as branding. Why a degree of professionalism in one domain and what I detect as very little in another?

In addition to the problems of panel discussions, because of the overall format, people spent most of their time in informal sessions either talking to people they already knew or spending a lot of time engaged in status interactions - in essence trying to figure out if someone had enough influence and authority to spend time talking to. One unintended consequence of this was that those participants who were new, less connected, had language issues or less used to networking really found themselves alone. I honestly believe that many of the African participants, many of the non-English, non-Arabic speakers found it very hard to gain any traction from the event. I feel they were left to sink or swim.

As I say all this, I also want to take responsibility with you. It really does pain me. I could have contacted you and offered my help in the design. I could have raised questions when I saw the programme and so on. Part of the reason I didn't do so was because I felt there was no invitation on your side. If there was, I would have tried my hardest to provide serious input and support to the programme.

I feel that you have undertaken a tremendous act of leadership in starting the MLT and with that comes a degree of responsibility. Unfortunately, if that responsibility is not spread then both the kudos of success and the pain of failure are yours alone. Ultimately there has to be a degree of invitation from all of you to share ownership.

All this begs the question, what do we do?

My request and plea is for the area of process-design to be taken as seriously, if not more seriously, than the other aspects of the MLT. If this does not happen then the MLT will remain a loose network and not a community with the potential to act collectively and powerfully, it was remain a network dependent on all of you being heroes. Ultimately this is unsustainable and disempowering.

Please know that I write not only out of a deep sense of fidelity to all the work you have done, but also with a sense of fidelity to this emerging community and its future. I need the MLT to work. My kids-to-come need the MLT to work. **Zaid Hassan, UK**

...I was just willing to tell you how much I appreciated the MLT 09 conference and the wonderful opportunities you have given us to move forward, confront our experiences, exchange expertise and reinforce our networks. It was really extremely encouraging.

I would like also to stress again my admiration for the organisation of the whole event and its flawless logistic from a participant perspective. Considering the small team you were on site, you've been doing an amazing work that needs definitively to be praised. You've all been wonderful. thank you so much for keeping smiling and helpful under such a pressure and extreme fatigue. May God bless you for all you did and are still doing.

With regard to the content of the conference itself, I'd say that it was a bit too packed to give a chance to in-depth exchanges, but what I personally would like to look more attentively at are the huge difference in perceptions of a number of issues between Muslims from the East and the West (the debate on values was very interesting in that regard - not so much about the Islam/West so-called divide but about the Islam West and East divide: that

would be a great area for the future MLTs to look at if we would like to build up something consistent between us). **Michael Privot, Belgium**

...I was very happy to be part of a moslem community I never got to witness. It reinforced my faith. *I think as you mentioned to prof. Ganz, a community organizing training workshop would be much needed for the MLTs. All the stories I coached show how they already are community organizers and have great exponential growth potential if they were to receive more community organizing training.* Thanks again to you and I owe you for meeting such impressive men and women who are proud and open minded Moslems. Good luck and keep up your great work. Your passion and dedication inspire me. **Nisreen Haj Ahmad, USA**

Congratulations on successful and historic conference! I thank you for the great opportunity....it was a great privilege to attend and be in the company of such accomplished individuals working towards a common cause. It was an amazing exchange of ideas and sessions and I am excited to work on future initiatives. 15-20 of the MLT's were on the flight back and we congregated near the back of the plane and discussed chapter building, mentor ship, strategic planning and other outreach initiatives that we would love to collaborate with you guys, when you have recovered and rested :). It as 15 hour long brainstorming session! As an organizer I was impressed with the attention to detail on so many levels. *I wanted to share feedback on the program and can do so in a separate email . Ms Khan thank you for keeping me in mind for the training with Nisreen.* It was very beneficial and the critique afterwards was very insightful. Rushda, thank you for all your support and emails. It was inspiring to see the ASMA team in action and look forward to working on future projects. I want to thank everyone on the team that contributed to make this happen, especially those worked behind the scenes. Ms Khan, the MLT's are determined to make your vision a reality. Thank you again. **Farhan Latif, USA**

I wish to thank you for the wealth of relationship and energy you have secured for this inspiring MLT group. I am looking forward to staying engaged with the effort. As we press forward with conviction, and God willing with increased success, it is with great relief that I inform you that we have recently been able to pass the below resolution now properly commemorating and recognizing Bosnian genocide in the European context leaving greater hope for the future generations. *This is to say that one of our future critical topics should be developing capacity and opportunity to be active participant in legislative effort in respective countries MLTs live and work.* **Haris Hromic, USA**

Thank you for organizing a very interesting conference in Doha. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting the delegates - it was certainly a very diverse bunch of individuals gathered in the room. I hope that you have managed to get some rest from what must have been a very tiring and punishing schedule and I thank you for a very well put together and stimulating series of discussions.

Due to my change of plans, I was only able to come to the conference at the last minute and as an observer. I was under the impression that this was a technical accounting categorization and that I would be taking part in all the sessions. I was indeed able to participate but I was disconcerted upon arrival to note that I was not included in any of the working groups and that my name was not included in the biographies. I was told by your colleagues that this would be rectified. **Nazia Hussain, UK**

Thank you very much for your kind and encouraging words. "The beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder". It was really something great and extraordinary at Doha and all cos of your efforts and team work. We all have enjoyed and appreciated and left Doha with new zeal and commitment. Again I congratulate you and ASMA/Cordoba/AoC Teams. I am in touch with MLTs and prospective MLTs to coordinate/share for the greater cause in accordance with guidelines of MLT/ASMA and our commitment at Doha. I will be happy to know the schedule/your guidance regarding MLT Chapter Building in Pakistan. **Zafar Ullah Jan, Pakistan**

Would like to thank me warmly with you to all for the great organising. I have enjoyed the conference. Has also got to know interesting people. **Gonca Aydin, Germany**

MLT Conference is a wonderful meeting that I ever attended and I will always stay involved with the MLT. Many thanks for all ASMA team and MLT committee. May Allah SWT bless us in our daily activities. **Nur Hidayat, Indonesia**

...Hussein Rashid told me that you've secured the funding for the second WISE conference - congratulations! As a complete convert into ASMA's ideas and projects, I'd be more than happy to lend my time and energy to assist ASMA in the research and organization stage of the event. *(more comments in Leadership)*. **Nadira Artyk, Uzbekistan/USA**

It was a great pleasure for me to be a MLT and participate in Doha 2009. I have fond memories of the three days I spent with my brothers and sisters in Islam who came from around the globe. On behalf of the Mouvement Citoyen, I express my deepest gratitude for the privilege of being selected. I measure my responsibility as a young Muslim leader who must contribute to the success of his community. I know you have hope in us. I pray to Allah to ensure that your hope grow and exceed your expectations. **Mamadou Bodian, Senegal**

Thank you all for all your hard work to pull something as big as Doha MLT. I could see the look of awe on every MLT. And thank you for giving the opportunity to help you out. All of you. **Saadi Alkouatli, Syria**

For my part the networking was super-valuable as always – indeed, I have engaged some of the newer MLTs in a project that we hope to present at Davos in Switzerland this week insha'Allah at the WEF Annual meeting.

Likewise, some of the sessions on the media and framing one's message were very beneficial; I have kept in contact with the team from Fenton Communications as a result of that. So all in all, a great conference and thanks once again for all your hard work in organising it and putting up with us being a constant pain in the neck. **Abu Esa Niamatullah, UK**

...I want to thank you and the team for a wonderful event. I wish it had gone on for longer! Particularly because there were so many excellent people there, and I didn't get round a decent fraction let alone all of them. Nevertheless, some hopefully lasting friendships and concrete partnerships were made. You'll get all the reward for the good that comes from this! **Osama Saeed, Scotland**

Thank you very much for your hard work and making a successful conference. It was a great journey to gain knowledge, sharing Idea, Participating in a long friendship and relationship between all leaders. Your hard work made us to fulfill a successful trip to Doha QATAR.

I can never forget this great moment and your kindness cooperation. This Conference made me happy, encourage me to do better and more for the People who are waiting for help and develop. I can say I have a strong platform and theory to stand for the people. Our journey has began from Doha to develop and create peaceful and meaningful societies now it is our duty to make it. Hope, we must be success Insha Allah to create peaceful and meaningful societies in the world which we are serving for. Thank you again and grateful to Allah and you along with All staffs of ASMA for giving me opportunity to learn more and more, sharing new Idea. Our relationship be long live. Please keep in touch. **Mahin Hoque, Bangladesh**

I wanted to take this chance to thank you, the team, Ms. Daisy, Imam Faisal and ASMA society for giving me the opportunity to meet many wonderful people whose presence was both humbling and inspiring. Please do pass my thanks to them; may Allah bestow upon all of you His Mercy and Grace. **Abdullah M. Hamidaddin, Yemen/Saudi Arabia**

Thank you dearly for the work you put into arranging this great event. God bless you and hope to see you again soon. **Amir Farmanesh, Iran/Canada**

One brief mail to thank you for the MLT opportunity. I really thank ASMA Society for having designed one top network that will make history. The conferences were so interesting and guests very bright. French MLTs will try to ensure MLT promotion in our country. **Mohamed-Ali Adraoui, France**

I would like to congratulate you and The ASMA Society on a very successful and well planned conference, I like many others have learned a lot from the plenary discussions and I thought the topics you have chosen were very relevant to the challenges that our Muslim community is facing nowadays. One of the components of the

conference I have benefited from the most was the Training and Capacity-Building session we had on Sunday afternoon. I attended the Effective Issue Advocacy presented by Randy Benn, he spoke extensively about Lobbying in Washington, how it's done and what do young Lawyers who are trying to get into Lobbying need to do to become more effective. There was a small group of us in the room so the flow of the information between us and Randy was faster and easier, we got to hear and learn of some of the experiences the young MLT lawyers had in DC and we all walked away with new knowledge. I think it would have been great to have more of the Training and Capacity-Building component and less of the Plenary Discussions in the conference. **Samer Saleh, USA/Egypt**

I wanted to say, first of all, that it was great pleasure to finally meet the person I was bothering so much, over the phone and by email, in regards to my late registration and hotel reservation. Once again, thank you for having me in such a short notice and for all your support. On the other hand, I wanted to thank you and everyone else who helped organize the MLT Conference in Doha. I really think it was a memorable event for several different reasons and I will consider myself indebted to all those who helped organize it. **Arifo Amada, Portugal**

Thanks very much and special appreciating for invitation Afghan delegation and me, really this MLT conference was perfect and historical for all human not only for Muslims because first we are human and than Muslim, we are living in one community with each other, we need to be union. Am thanks full from you and those who arranged this nice conference, it was very important for us in this situation and we met numbers of experienced people over seas and learn from each of them. **Malina Fahiz, Pakistan**

It is with genuine pleasure that I address you with the words: Assalamu Alaikum. Also, I would like to say that it was an honor, a privilege and an opportunity to have met you all, to have shared a few moments of dialogue and to have participated in Muslim brotherhood. To that which concerns the different relative proposals at our support in Gaza, I stand with them, without any reservation, as a humanitarian, a Muslim and above all, an African. Because it cannot be ignored that Africa was and continues to be a victim of false prejudices, of racism and even the exploitation on behalf of self-proclaimed powers from the Western world with the unfortunate complicity of a number of states, say Muslims. This is why, I condemn all forms of oppression, from wherever it may be from, and I invite the Arab brothers to turn towards Africa to invest their millions of dollars, like they did in China and India, and in particular, instead of depositing it in Switzerland, where the money can finance the development of this miniscule country and also of other Western countries.

Finally, I would like to propose to all my MLT Sisters and Brothers these three choices:

- 1- To quickly actualize our active support to the martyred people of Palestine. To do this, my country, Senegal -which asserts the presidency of the OCI- would be able to be a platform for the launch of a strong and audible message across the world. In this sense, I propose that the MLT address a letter to the President, Abdoulaye WADE, the leader of Senegal, to request that he become our spokesperson and even welcome an MLT delegation.
- 2- I would also like to propose the opening of an MLT chapter in Africa to further echo the ideals and philosophy of our organization. Naturally, as a Senegalese, I am for the establishment of this chapter in Senegal to account for all of Africa.
- 3- Finally, I wish that the next MLT conference is held on African domain. It would also be an honor if my country, Senegal, could house the conference.

With that, I promise you that I will make a great effort in English, and even in Arabic, all in hopes that you make the same effort in French or Peulh, my mother tongue.

In conclusion, I will leave you to reflect on a quotation from the Ghanaian, Kofi Annan, ex-Secretary General of the UN, which I got from Brother Amadou Djibril of Niger:

“Dialogue can triumph over discord, diversity is a universal benefaction and the people of the world are further unified towards their common destiny, if they do not become divided by their individual differences.” –Kofi Anan **Yaya Sakho, Senegal**

Thanks very much and special appreciating for invitation Afghan delegation and me, really this MLT conference was perfect and historical for all human not only for Muslims because first we are human and than Muslim, we

are living in one community with each other, we need to be united. Am thanks full from you and those who arranged this nice conference, it was very important for us in this situation and we met numbers of experienced people over seas and learn from each of them, **Malina Fahiz, Afghanistan**

It was an enriching experience to be part of MLT Doha conference ... I think the things that we discussed must be followed up. I will be privileged to help in every future initiative of MLT. Take care and pls keep me posted on MLT's future activities. **Mohammed Wajihuddin, India**

You have honored me by this invite and you have catalyzed my thinking on a number of issues. I have taken away many ideas from the MLT, which I will share with a number youth initiatives I'm currently involved with in different parts of the world. **Shaukat Warraich, UK**

Thank you very much for your hard work and making a successful conference. It was a great journey to gain knowledge, sharing idea, Participating in a long friendship and relationship between all leaders. Your hard work made us to fulfill a successful trip to Doha QATAR. I can never forget this great moment. This Conference make me happy, encourage me to do better and more for the People who are waiting for help and develop. Can say I have a strong platform and theory to stand for the people. Our journey has began from Doha to develop and create peaceful and meaningful societies now it is our duty to make it Thank you again and grateful to Allah and you along with All staffs of ASMA for giving me opportunity to learn more and more, sharing new Idea. Our relationship be long live. Please keep in touch. May Allah bless you.

Mohammad Mohiul Hoque, Bangladesh

Thank you for giving us chance to participate in MLT conference that was great experience for us. Afghan youth want changes after decades of war and extremism now we are in transition period. This struggle can't be succeed without help of our Muslim brothers and sisters. Majority of Afghan youth is support MLT vision and mission and they want that let them chance to be an active member of MLT especially from ASMA Society to assist Afghan youth and we will appreciate it . **Dr. M. Shafi Oriakhil, Afghanistan**

Plenary & tracking sessions - Good - Overall, the quality of the discussions was actually quite good, and I think having the ability to poll on the spot was a useful tool. However, I think it might be worthwhile to consider more focussed topics in future conferences. For instance, perhaps we can start taking more proactive approaches, trying to hold panel discussions that, more than opinion-sharing, actually seek to outline some of the major lines of thinking on such issues as addressing violent extremism/religious authority/etc., keep with the structure of more in-depth discussions around the roundtables, and then seek to use the voting buttons as a way of passing actual resolutions/statements by MLTs. I don't know if aiming at consensus-building on contentious subjects is too ambitious a goal, but at the same time, if we only sit together and offer up our own opinions, it allows for some interesting discussions but not for a more proactive or results-focused agenda.

With respect to which topic was most valuable in my particular area of work: n/a - None of them directly dealt with the particular field I work in at the moment (women's rights), which I think is a shame. While it may not be the main aim of the MLT program itself, I think it is worthwhile to dedicate a plenary /track session to some aspect relating to gender in consideration of the fact that there are a great many debates and discussions regarding women's roles going on among Muslim communities around the globe.

Trainings - Very good - I think the Advocacy session facilitated by Randy Benn was very well presented. The subject is one that we could easily have taken more time discussing. As Randy's experience is very focussed on Washington and though the basic principles are similar, it would be interesting to have two presenters giving their insights on working in lobbying/advocacy in two different contexts, in consideration of the fact that participants are coming from very diverse parts of the world.

Overall - Very good - My main constructive criticism here would be that with the revised two-day agenda, the schedule became very packed, and I think the conference needs a bit longer.

Ways to get involved - I'd like to join a local or establish a local chapter, or be involved in any media-related activities or advise on the strategic direction of the program.

Etc. - -would be great if you could pass this on to whoever is dealing with these matters; there was some mention of setting up an MLT Facebook group, but I just did a search and couldn't find it. (is that still in the plan?) **Saira Zuberi, Canada**

It is with great pleasure that I write to thank the Almighty Allah for you for given me the great opportunity of meeting all those wonderful Muslim brothers and sisters from around the world.

It was one meeting I treasured a great deal and will never forget it, those of us from the great country called GHANA have already started putting plans together to form a MLT Ghana in the coming days. Also the event was published in the Daily Guide Newspaper and The Democrate in Ghana. **Adam Abdul Fatah, Ghana**

It was great to come to know your organization and wonderful people from 4 corners of this planet with noble attitudes and interesting missions. **Farid Pouya, Belgium**

I wanted to congratulate you again on the successful conference- I was very impressed by the entire event and am looking forward to keeping in touch with my fellow MLTs and ASMA. **Zeba Khan, USA**

I write to this email to thank you for the excellent arrangements that you made and the sincere effort you put in to make the conference successful. It was truly an unforgettable experience and meeting with all denominations of the Islamic sphere helped me to dispel some of my own prejudices. I genuinely look forward to meeting you all at the next conference sometime in the near future (InshAllah). **Mohammed Daniel, Kuwait**

From the luxurious accommodation to the five-star meals, and "on-demand" services, the efficiency with which the travel arrangements were made and the perfect organization of the entire event, I think that mere thanks are not enough. However, showing appreciation for the hard work put in by so many dedicated individuals is the least that I can do. As a participant I was unable to convey my thanks to everyone involved for allowing me the opportunity to have had this amazing experience, and I have therefore decided to do that now (after getting re-organized and settled in).

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to have met so many wonderful and inspiring individuals from all over the world, and I am honoured to have learnt some very valuable lessons from them. The panelists chosen to speak in the various sessions were inspiring and motivating, and the track sessions allowed us to share different perspectives, learn new viewpoints and even engage in healthy debate. It is my belief that this event brought together people from such unique backgrounds, and I know that I would not have had the chance to engage in discussion with such a diverse range of people in another context.

Although I am aware that conferences such as these warrant continuous action and follow-up in order for the goals and aims to become a reality, I for one have been inspired and motivated to do more and to play a more active role in my community, assisting to combat the various challenges encountered. I am a volunteer for a South African NGO (AWQAF SA) and we have already been discussing a mentoring programme for young Muslims in South Africa (particularly the Johannesburg area where I am based). I am certain that being a part of the MLT community will play a crucial role in this and hopefully we will be able to set up an MLT Chapter in South Africa in due time.

In short, I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank every single individual involved for their hard work and dedication. I pray that you are all rewarded in abundance by the Almighty Creator and May all your efforts bring about positive action. **Zarina Hassem, South Africa**

Hope you will be fine. Many thanks for sending the packet of MLT. Things are very beautiful and seemed me, I was in that MLT conference. Thanks a lot again. **Muhammad Hayat Sial, Pakistan** (could not attend MLT conference but received conference package)

Online Evaluation

Please see following pages for full report.

2009 MLT Conference Evaluation


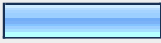
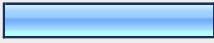
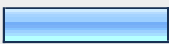
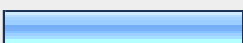
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Country:	<input type="text"/>		100.0%	139
			<i>answered question</i>	139
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2. Please rate the following components of 2009 MLT Conference.							
	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree somewhat	Do not agree	Not applicable	Response Count	
Travel Arrangements (DNATA Travels) were easy to make.	50.4% (59)	33.3% (39)	13.7% (16)	1.7% (2)	0.9% (1)	117	
Hotel and meals were satisfactory.	80.2% (93)	19.0% (22)	0.9% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	116	
Shuttle to and from airport was efficient.	63.5% (73)	25.2% (29)	7.8% (9)	2.6% (3)	0.9% (1)	115	
Email communications from the MLT team were professional and timely.	70.7% (82)	24.1% (28)	5.2% (6)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	116	
Polling devices added an interesting and beneficial dimension to the conference.	61.7% (71)	32.2% (37)	4.3% (5)	0.9% (1)	0.9% (1)	115	
						<i>answered question</i>	117
						<i>skipped question</i>	22

3. Please rate the following conference handouts.					
	Very beneficial	Beneficial	Somewhat beneficial	Not beneficial	Response Count
Bio booklet	69.6% (80)	25.2% (29)	5.2% (6)	0.0% (0)	115
Conference program	60.9% (70)	30.4% (35)	7.8% (9)	0.9% (1)	115
MLT brochure	50.0% (57)	40.4% (46)	8.8% (10)	0.9% (1)	114
Plenary concept papers	38.1% (43)	41.6% (47)	19.5% (22)	0.9% (1)	113
	answered question				115
	skipped question				24

4. Please rate the MLT website for the following components.					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree somewhat	Do not agree	Response Count
The MLT website is an effective tool for staying connected to fellow MLTs.	43.8% (49)	42.0% (47)	9.8% (11)	4.5% (5)	112
The MLT website is easy to navigate.	23.4% (26)	52.3% (58)	24.3% (27)	0.0% (0)	111
The MLT website is user friendly.	26.8% (30)	52.7% (59)	18.8% (21)	1.8% (2)	112
	I want the following additional features on the MLT website:				27
	answered question				112
	skipped question				27

5. Please rate the following components of the 2009 MLT Conference in supporting your professional development as a leader.					
	Very beneficial	Beneficial	Somewhat beneficial	Not beneficial	Response Count
Plenary Sessions	35.6% (37)	46.2% (48)	15.4% (16)	2.9% (3)	104
Track Sessions	33.0% (34)	43.7% (45)	20.4% (21)	2.9% (3)	103
Trainings and Capacity Building	43.1% (44)	36.3% (37)	19.6% (20)	1.0% (1)	102
Networking	75.5% (77)	21.6% (22)	2.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	102
	answered question				104
	skipped question				35

6. Which plenary was the most valuable to you in your own work?				
			Response Percent	Response Count
Values to Action: Story of Us and What We Stand for			16.0%	16
New Ideas and Competing Values			17.0%	17
Freedom or Crisis: Evolving Forms of Religious Authority			23.0%	23
Tackling Violent Extremism: Our Responsibility?			18.0%	18
Framing and Messaging in the Media			26.0%	26
What subjects would you like us to cover in future plenary sessions?				42
<i>answered question</i>				100
<i>skipped question</i>				39

7. Did the training sessions support your professional development as a leader? Please rate ONLY the training session you attended.						
	Very beneficial	Beneficial	Somewhat beneficial	Not beneficial	Not applicable	Response Count
Leadership and Movement Building: Nisreen Haj Ahmed	37.8% (17)	33.3% (15)	15.6% (7)	2.2% (1)	11.1% (5)	45
Influencing Perceptions in the Arab World: Ramzi Khoury	25.8% (8)	41.9% (13)	9.7% (3)	3.2% (1)	19.4% (6)	31
Effective Issue Advocacy: Randy Benn	26.3% (10)	52.6% (20)	7.9% (3)	2.6% (1)	10.5% (4)	38
Writing for TV: Abdallah Schleifer	24.1% (7)	27.6% (8)	17.2% (5)	10.3% (3)	20.7% (6)	29
What's your Message: Fenton Communications	42.6% (20)	34.0% (16)	8.5% (4)	4.3% (2)	10.6% (5)	47
Blogging and New Media	31.3% (10)	43.8% (14)	9.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	15.6% (5)	32
What is the most valuable thing you learned from the training you attended?						42
<i>answered question</i>						96
<i>skipped question</i>						43

8. Please rate the following special sessions of the 2009 MLT Conference.						
	Very beneficial	Beneficial	Somewhat beneficial	Not beneficial	I did not attend	Response Count
The 99 NAMES Presentation: Naif Al Mutawa	42.6% (40)	29.8% (28)	10.6% (10)	1.1% (1)	16.0% (15)	94
Short movie: Zarqa Nawaz	10.2% (9)	46.6% (41)	20.5% (18)	9.1% (8)	13.6% (12)	88
Special Gaza session	17.9% (17)	44.2% (42)	24.2% (23)	6.3% (6)	7.4% (7)	95
Marketplace of Ideas	42.6% (40)	34.0% (32)	12.8% (12)	8.5% (8)	2.1% (2)	94
Comedy performance: Azhar Usman	33.7% (31)	40.2% (37)	10.9% (10)	5.4% (5)	9.8% (9)	92
Emir Abd el-Kader book: John W. Kiser	9.2% (8)	43.7% (38)	23.0% (20)	17.2% (15)	6.9% (6)	87
Doha Debate	47.4% (45)	37.9% (36)	5.3% (5)	3.2% (3)	6.3% (6)	95
	<i>answered question</i>					101
	<i>skipped question</i>					38

9. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree.					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree somewhat	Do not agree	Response Count
The topics covered in the plenary sessions were timely and relevant.	49.0% (50)	37.3% (38)	10.8% (11)	2.9% (3)	102
The plenary moderators effectively guided the session.	45.1% (46)	42.2% (43)	11.8% (12)	1.0% (1)	102
I was able to understand what was said in all the sessions.	47.1% (48)	46.1% (47)	6.9% (7)	0.0% (0)	102
Track session facilitators effectively guided conversation.	30.7% (31)	46.5% (47)	18.8% (19)	4.0% (4)	101
Trainers were knowledgeable and effectively conveyed this knowledge.	39.6% (40)	46.5% (47)	13.9% (14)	0.0% (0)	101
	Is there anything else you found especially valuable about the sessions?				22
	<i>answered question</i>				102
	<i>skipped question</i>				37

10. What is an idea, strategy, or technique you learned from one of the sessions that you found most useful for your work? Please describe why it was useful and how you applied it to your work.		Response Count
		40
	<i>answered question</i>	40
	<i>skipped question</i>	99

11. For each of the following statements, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree.					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree somewhat	Do not agree	Response Count
I had opportunities to share experiences and ideas with my peers at the conference.	63.0% (63)	26.0% (26)	7.0% (7)	4.0% (4)	100
I had sufficient time to step back, think, and reflect.	18.0% (18)	33.0% (33)	35.0% (35)	14.0% (14)	100
I learned things that I will be able to use in my work.	50.5% (50)	35.4% (35)	13.1% (13)	1.0% (1)	99
	Is there anything else you found especially valuable?				29
	<i>answered question</i>				100
	<i>skipped question</i>				39


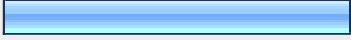

12. Please indicate how well the 2009 MLT Conference achieved the following.

	Extremely well	Well	Somewhat well	Not well	Response Count
Changed how I think of myself as a leader	28.0% (28)	53.0% (53)	14.0% (14)	5.0% (5)	100
Increased my visibility as a Muslim leader	36.4% (36)	44.4% (44)	16.2% (16)	3.0% (3)	99
Introduced me to other Muslim leaders I would not have met otherwise	77.0% (77)	20.0% (20)	3.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	100
Introduced me to specialists and trainers I would not have met otherwise	47.5% (47)	39.4% (39)	11.1% (11)	2.0% (2)	99
<i>answered question</i>					100
<i>skipped question</i>					39


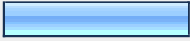
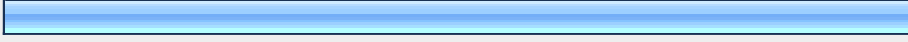
13. Please rate the following takeaways of the 2009 MLT Conference.

	Very beneficial	Beneficial	Somewhat beneficial	Not beneficial	Response Count
Interacting with a diverse group of Muslim leaders	75.0% (75)	24.0% (24)	0.0% (0)	1.0% (1)	100
Getting motivated to act	54.5% (54)	37.4% (37)	8.1% (8)	0.0% (0)	99
Learning from each other and sharing knowledge and best practices	65.0% (65)	30.0% (30)	4.0% (4)	1.0% (1)	100
Belonging to the worldwide MLT community	73.7% (73)	22.2% (22)	3.0% (3)	1.0% (1)	99
Is there anything else you found especially valuable?					16
<i>answered question</i>					100
<i>skipped question</i>					39

14. How would you rate the overall value of the MLT conference?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Extremely valuable		59.0%	59
Very valuable		38.0%	38
Somewhat valuable		3.0%	3
Not valuable		0.0%	0
		answered question	100
		skipped question	39






15. Please indicate the MLT conference(s) you attended.

		Response Percent	Response Count
New York, 2004		4.0%	4
Copenhagen, 2006		20.2%	20
Doha, 2009		100.0%	99
		answered question	99
		skipped question	40

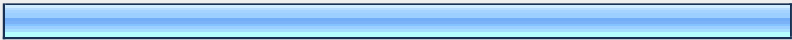

16. Please indicate how valuable you found the conferences for each of the following.					
	Extremely valuable	Valuable	Somewhat valuable	Not valuable	Response Count
Making close and lasting connections with some of my peers	60.8% (59)	36.1% (35)	2.1% (2)	1.0% (1)	97
Gaining valuable strategies that I have been able to use in my work	32.0% (31)	54.6% (53)	12.4% (12)	1.0% (1)	97
Developing a broader context and understanding of issues facing the worldwide Muslim community	55.1% (54)	40.8% (40)	3.1% (3)	1.0% (1)	98
Clarifying my vision for the work I am doing	43.3% (42)	45.4% (44)	11.3% (11)	0.0% (0)	97
Learning how to have difficult conversations with other Muslim leaders	41.5% (39)	43.6% (41)	13.8% (13)	1.1% (1)	94
Is there anything else you found especially valuable?					14
<i>answered question</i>					99
<i>skipped question</i>					40

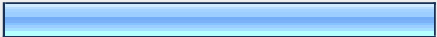
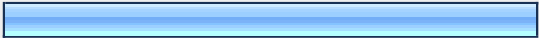
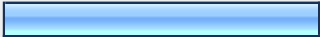
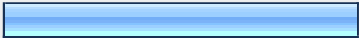

17. Do you have any suggestions for improving the content and design of future MLT conferences?	
	Response Count
	51
<i>answered question</i>	51
<i>skipped question</i>	88

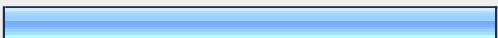

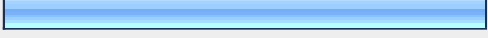


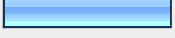
18. How comfortable do you feel introducing yourself as an MLT?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Very comfortable		52.0%	52
Comfortable		35.0%	35
Somewhat comfortable		6.0%	6
Not comfortable		5.0%	5
Not applicable		2.0%	2
		<i>answered question</i>	100
		<i>skipped question</i>	39

19. Do you wish to sign the "Open Letter to World Leaders of Today?" (<http://www.muslimleadersoftomorrow.org/openletter>)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		87.0%	80
No		13.0%	12
		If yes, please sign name below:	74
		<i>answered question</i>	92
		<i>skipped question</i>	47

20. Please indicate which of the following would help you most in becoming an effective leader.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Attend a media training		47.4%	45
Attend a leadership retreat		58.9%	56
Attend a public speaking seminar		34.7%	33
Attend a conflict resolution training		38.9%	37
Attend an organizational development training		44.2%	42
		Other (please specify)	7
		answered question	95
		skipped question	44

21. Would you like to be involved with the MLT in 2009? If so, please choose one or more of the following.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
I would like to help establish a local MLT chapter.		54.3%	51
I would like to help build the MLT mentorship program.		38.3%	36
I would like to be involved in MLT media-related activities.		53.2%	50
I would like to be involved in building the online component of the MLT community.		13.8%	13
I would like to advise on the strategic direction of the MLT program.		38.3%	36
I would like to help the MLT in fundraising and sustainability.		18.1%	17
		Other (please specify)	7
		answered question	94
		skipped question	45

22. Do you have any other thoughts about the MLT program that you would like to share?

		Response Count
		26
	<i>answered question</i>	26
	<i>skipped question</i>	113